



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

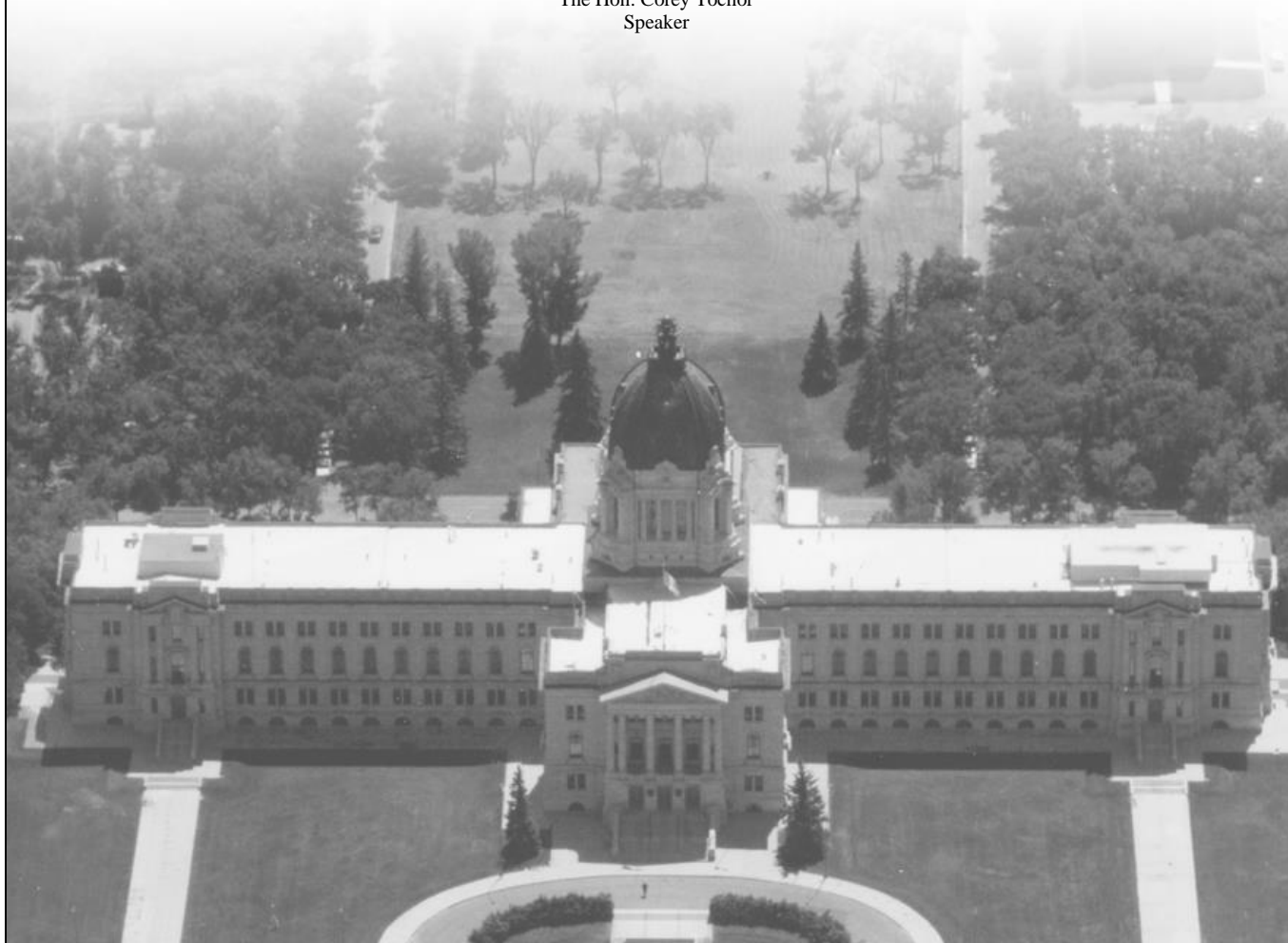
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Corey Tochor  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**1st Session — 28th Legislature**

**Speaker** — Hon. Corey Tochor

**Premier** — Hon. Brad Wall

**Leader of the Opposition** — Trent Wotherspoon

**Beaudry-Mellor**, Hon. Tina — Regina University (SP)

**Beck**, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

**Belanger**, Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)

**Bonk**, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

**Boyd**, Bill — Kindersley (SP)

**Bradshaw**, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)

**Brkich**, Greg — Arm River (SP)

**Buckingham**, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

**Campeau**, Jennifer — Saskatoon Fairview (SP)

**Carr**, Lori — Estevan (SP)

**Chartier**, Danielle — Saskatoon Riversdale (NDP)

**Cheveldayoff**, Hon. Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

**Cox**, Herb — The Battlefords (SP)

**D'Autremont**, Dan — Cannington (SP)

**Dennis**, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)

**Docherty**, Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)

**Doherty**, Hon. Kevin — Regina Northeast (SP)

**Doke**, Larry — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)

**Duncan**, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

**Eyre**, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

**Fiaz**, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

**Forbes**, David — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

**Hargrave**, Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

**Harpauer**, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)

**Harrison**, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)

**Hart**, Glen — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

**Heppner**, Nancy — Martensville-Warman (SP)

**Kaeding**, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

**Kirsch**, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

**Lambert**, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

**Lawrence**, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

**Makowsky**, Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

**Marit**, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

**McCall**, Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

**McMorris**, Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

**Meili**, Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

**Merriman**, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

**Michelson**, Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)

**Moe**, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

**Morgan**, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

**Nerlien**, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

**Olauson**, Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)

**Ottenbreit**, Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)

**Phillips**, Kevin — Melfort (SP)

**Rancourt**, Nicole — Prince Albert Northcote (NDP)

**Reiter**, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

**Ross**, Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

**Sarauer**, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

**Sproule**, Cathy — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

**Steele**, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

**Steinley**, Warren — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)

**Stewart**, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

**Tell**, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

**Tochor**, Hon. Corey — Saskatoon Eastview (SP)

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**Wall**, Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)

**Weekes**, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

**Wilson**, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)

**Wotherspoon**, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

**Wyant**, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

**Young**, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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**Party Standings:** Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 50; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 11

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

**Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel** — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

**Principal Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyak

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions. The first, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, a delegation from the Government of Ukraine who are visiting Canada to learn best practices as they develop and launch their export development program.

In the Speaker's gallery are six officials from the Ukraine Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. The purpose of their working visit is to learn about trade promotion and export programs from Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership. They are Khrystyna Popovych, Olesya Zaluska, Alexei Mikhailitchenko, Iryna Datsyuk, Dmytro Nosov, Tetyana Miskova. And they're here today with STEP's [Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership] VPs [vice-president], Angela Krauss and Brad Michnik.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to STEP, the Ukraine delegation will be meeting with officials from the Ministry of the Economy, Agriculture, and Intergovernmental Affairs. And STEP will follow up this week's visit with a mission to the Ukraine later this year. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to acknowledge and welcome these visitors to the Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, members of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, they are — and I'd ask if they could maybe give a wave as acknowledged — Ken Swann, Luc Kadziolka, Scott Kerr, Glenn Harbaruk, Kim Skjonsby, Mike Berkes, Justin Yawney, Carolyn Bagnell.

These MCAS [Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan] members, who represent an important sector in our economy, have met with several ministers, myself included, a caucus policy committee and members throughout the day and will be hosting a reception for all members this evening. I trust the meetings were productive; I know definitely my discussion with representatives very much was. And I would ask all members to welcome these individuals to the Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the government here today, the minister opposite, in welcoming the delegation that's here from the Ukraine. Thank you for your presence in Saskatchewan. Thank you for your presence in Canada. Thank you for the presence in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

Moreover, thank you for the partnership, the relationship that Saskatchewan and Canada enjoys with the Ukraine. Our ties are on many fronts: economic, educational, but also strong allies in ensuring an independent, a democratic Ukraine. And those are strong ties that bind and relationships that are lasting.

And it's also fair to say that Ukraine and that Ukrainian Canadians have left their mark on our province, have been builders of Saskatchewan and continue to build Saskatchewan and Canada. And so thank you for that relationship.

It's also a pleasure to welcome Angela and the representation from STEP here today. It's very important work that STEP engages in, supporting our exporters, supporting our province, representing us around the world, and introducing new business ties, new relationships that strengthen our province. So I ask all members to join with me in recognizing STEP, but very importantly, this delegation from the Ukraine here today.

While on my feet, it's my pleasure to also welcome the delegation from the Saskatchewan mechanical contractors construction association. To this association and to these builders of Saskatchewan, I say thank you. You're literally, quite literally, the builders of Saskatchewan. You're on the front lines of ensuring that we have the infrastructure that we require, on the front lines of supporting economic growth within our province.

We value your contributions and, on behalf of the official opposition, we say thank you. And we look forward to our meeting a little bit later here today with you along with your representative, a friend to this Assembly as well, Joel Peterson here today. So I ask all members to welcome this association and Mr. Peterson to his Assembly, their Assembly.

Who's left up there, Mr. Speaker? I see Brett Estey I'd like to welcome, Mr. Speaker, an insurance broker with Knight Archer Insurance here in Regina, someone who's been highly involved in the cancer society, someone who's an avid Rider fan, season ticket holder, a Habs fan — I hate to say that though, Mr. Speaker. A big Pats fan; of course we're on a good run here right now. And someone who of course was also our candidate in Regina Rochdale in this last election, and someone who continues to just be an exceptional leader within our community, and somebody I'm proud to count as a friend.

So I ask all members to join with me in welcoming Mr. Brett Estey to his Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan along with the Minister of the Economy and on behalf of the minister . . . Being the minister of Ukraine relations for the province, I want to join with the Minister of the Economy and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming the delegation from the Ukraine.

And while I'm on my feet I also want to welcome a friend and local businessman from Yorkton, Mr. Justin Yawney. He's — I think he lives out at the lake right now — but he's got a very

successful business in Yorkton. He's a great driver of the economy, employer in the province. And I just want to thank him for his investment in Yorkton and area and the province, and welcome him to his Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Steele:** — Thank you. Great, Mr. Speaker. It brings a great pleasure to introduce the grade 6 to 9 class from the Cabri High School in the west gallery. Give them a big wave.

**An Hon. Member:** — Cabri.

**Mr. Steele:** — Cabri. Cabri, yes. Accompanied by their teachers, Ms. Debbie Thomas, Ms. Kayla Klassen; and their chaperones, Cheryle Moffat, Denise Block, Julie Pederson, and Alisha Lloyd-Lussier. Welcome to your legislature.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to recognize and welcome Ms. Kelsey Morrison to her legislature today. She's in the east gallery and she is a student in human justice. She also works three jobs to get through school — lots of challenges affording education in the province these days. And she's part of the leadership of the SMAC group, Students Mobilizing Against Cuts, who have a series of positive actions this week bringing . . . highlighting some of the challenges for students that are faced in the current budget. So I'd like to thank Ms. Morrison for her leadership and welcome her to her legislature.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from the citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. And I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Estevan, Arcola, Bienfait, Benson, Midale, and Macoun. I do so present.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present a petition opposing the Sask Party's cuts to spiritual care. Mr. Speaker, it was interesting, yesterday in committee we had a brief conversation about spiritual care. The minister told me that it wasn't something offered across the province, so they cut it, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't fair that not all regions had this very important service, so instead of expanding it, Mr. Speaker, they cut it.

The petitioners point out that with this last budget the Sask Party has eliminated funding for spiritual care services within Saskatchewan's health facilities. They point out that we will be the only province, Mr. Speaker, the only province within Canada to not fund this support for patients, residents, and their families seeking wellness. They point out that the Sask Party hid their plan to scrap funding for spiritual care services in the last election. Not a single word, Mr. Speaker, about this cut.

They point out that spiritual care responds to the spiritual and emotional needs of patients and residents and provides a compassionate listening presence in times of crisis. The petitioners point out that spiritual care supports families, patients, and residents in making difficult decisions, and that spiritual care can provide support for all families, patients, and residents in obtaining comfort and support, regardless of their faith or belief, Mr. Speaker. It's not about religion; it's about spiritual support, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan immediately reinstate the funding for spiritual care services in this province's health region facilities.

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by citizens of Humboldt. I so submit.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition today to help support the people advocating for passing lanes on Highway 7 west of Rosetown to the Alberta border:

Whereas Highway 7 from the Alberta border to Rosetown serves as a major industrial and commercial corridor between Calgary and Saskatoon and also serves as a major connecting highway between communities for education and medical purposes, as well as serving families who live and travel rurally;

And whereas, as a result, traffic volumes on this section of highway continue to grow. 2015 Ministry of Highways stats show average annual daily traffic counts are reaching as much as 4,090 on portions of this highway;

And whereas the communities, industries, and farms along this corridor have contributed financially through taxes to the province;

And [Mr. Speaker] whereas the current single-lane highway is a traffic safety hazard, as the SGI stats show that between 2011 and 2015, along Highway 7 from Alsask to Rosetown, there were a total of 403 collisions resulting in 100 injuries and 14 deaths, not to mention the thousands of dollars in insurance claims.

So, Mr. Speaker, people in their area that have had enough, they want the government to:

Take immediate action to add passing lanes along Highway

7 west of Rosetown to the Alberta border.

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

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today in support of my colleague from Prince Albert Northcote who has another important petition to present. But this is a very important petition as well, and so I'm answering her call for presentation here in the Assembly.

This is a petition, Mr. Speaker, for a second bridge for the city of Prince Albert. Mr. Speaker, this is not just for the city of Prince Albert, obviously. It's for all the citizens of Saskatchewan. The reasons they are bringing the petition are as follows: the Diefenbaker bridge in Prince Albert is the primary link that connects the southern part of the province to the North. With no other crossing, heavy-truck traffic must be rerouted, adding a significant amount of cost for the businesses in and around Prince Albert in terms of losses or added expenses. Current residents, businesses, and tourists in Prince Albert and northern communities require safe and efficient transportation infrastructure. That includes adequate bridges.

Sask Party government has refused to stand up for Prince Albert and this critical infrastructure issue. And local municipal governments, as you know, Mr. Speaker, have limited resources and require the second bridge to be funded through federal and provincial governments. Support of the people and the municipalities of Prince Albert and the neighbouring communities for a second bridge is overwhelming and has been joined by support from industry groups, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, and many others across the province.

[13:45]

So the need for a second bridge for Prince Albert has never been clearer than it is today. Prince Albert, communities north of Prince Albert, and businesses that send people and products through Prince Albert require a solution.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan ask that the Sask Party government stop stalling, hiding behind rhetoric and refusing to listen to the people calling for action, and begin immediately to plan and then quickly commence the construction of a second bridge for Prince Albert using federal and provincial dollars.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed today from citizens from Prince Albert and Big River. I so submit.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition concerning pay equity here in Saskatchewan. And the

undersigned residents of this province want to bring to our attention the following: that the citizens of this province believe in an economy that's powered by transparency, accountability, security, and equity; and that all women should be paid equitably; and that women are powerful drivers of economic growth and their economic empowerment benefits us all.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know that the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives found that in Saskatoon in 2016, women earned on average 63 cents for every dollar that a man makes, and in Regina women earned on average 73 cents for every dollar that a man makes. According to the most recent StatsCan data, the national gender wage gap for full-time workers is 72 cents for every dollar a man makes.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan eliminate the wage gap between women and men across all sectors where the Government of Saskatchewan has jurisdiction, provide a framework under which this can be done within the term of this Assembly, and that the Saskatchewan government call upon workplaces within Saskatchewan within the private sector to eliminate the wage gap between women and men.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing the petition today come from the city of Regina. I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to present a petition to increase the funding to Prince Albert mobile crisis. Prince Albert mobile crisis unit has had to close its door during daytime hours, resulting in a loss of resource to people in distress. They needed to make these tough decisions because they had a cut in funding, Mr. Speaker.

And we know that having a 24-hour crisis service is very needed in Prince Albert. And because it's Mental Health Week, I want to talk a little bit about how mobile crisis plays an important role with addressing mental health concerns in our community. The workers that work for mobile crisis are trained to identify individuals struggling with mental health issues, and they're aware of all the services in the community for individuals who are needing to access mental health services. But a very important part of the training that they receive, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that they are trained to use the suicide risk assessment tool, and that tool will help them assess the level of risk for suicide for clients and make sure that they get the services that are needed pertaining to that level of risk.

So, Mr. Speaker, the daytime closure of Prince Albert mobile has put stress on Prince Albert Police Service, Victoria Hospital, and other agencies who are not trained and/or qualified to provide this type of counselling and intervention services to clients. I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to increase the funding to

Prince Albert mobile crisis unit so they may once again offer 24-hour emergency crisis service.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this particular petition come from the city of Prince Albert. I do so present.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling for a reversal of cuts to the Lighthouse program in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker:

In the prayer that reads as follows, the petitioners respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately reverse their cuts to funding that allows extremely vulnerable people to access services of the Lighthouse stabilization unit in Saskatoon; and revisit their imposition of a strict and narrow definition of homelessness in November of 2015 which forced the Lighthouse to cut back its hours of essential service in February of 2016; and to take immediate steps to ensure that homeless people in Saskatchewan have emergency shelter, clothing, and food available to them before more lives are lost.

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by citizens from the good city of Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to ensure job security for victims of domestic violence. Saskatchewan has the very dubious distinction of having the highest rates of domestic violence by intimate partners amongst all Canadian provinces. One in three Canadian workers have been impacted by domestic violence, and for many of them the violence will follow them to their workplace. Employers lose \$77.9 million annually due to the direct and indirect impacts of domestic violence.

And, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has already enacted legislation very similar to our private member's bill that we've tabled a few weeks ago, and Ontario is on its way to enacting legislation that ensures job security for victims of domestic violence. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enact legislation that requires all employers to provide a minimum of five paid workdays and a minimum of 17 weeks unpaid work leave with the assurance of job security upon return for all survivors of domestic abuse in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing the petition today come from Swift Current, Rosetown, and Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition calling on the government to restore funding to post-secondary

institutions. We've seen the Students Mobilizing Against Cuts group with their actions this week. They join many in the province who are very concerned about the increased costs the students will be facing, as we see this budget cutting \$36.8 million from post-secondary education, 6.4 million from technical institutions.

We've already seen job losses among the colleges in this province, Mr. Speaker. We've also seen deep cuts to student aid funds and scholarships — \$8.2 million removed from that budget, Mr. Speaker. And we've also seen the breaking of a 2016 election promise with the cancellation of the first home plan. Mr. Speaker, all of these present serious difficulties to post-secondary education already posing difficulties for affordability for residents of Saskatchewan. I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately restore funding to Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions and stop the damaging cuts to our students.

The individuals signing today's petition are from Regina. I do so submit.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. The people who have signed this petition are opposed to the Sask Party's plan to scrap and sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. They would like us all to know that STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] provides a vital service to many seniors, workers, and families throughout the province, and that by scrapping STC out of the blue and without asking permission of the owners, the Saskatchewan people, the Sask Party is sending a clear sign about how little they care about protecting our Crowns like SaskTel; and that STC helps to drive the economy with its parcel service that serves farms and other businesses. Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately stop the plan to scrap and sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, and to resume transportation services to the people of Saskatchewan.

It is signed by thousands of people and supported. I so present.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand in the House today and recognize the Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan. I, along with some of my colleagues, had a productive meeting this morning with some of the representatives.

Mr. Speaker, since 1919, MCAS has been representing the interests of our province's mechanical contractors, their suppliers, and professional partners. MCAS is a provincial non-profit trade association affiliated with the Mechanical

Contractors Association of Canada and represents plumbing and heating contractors in their relationship with the construction industry, legislative departments of provincial and municipal government, and other industry-related bodies.

Mr. Speaker, MCAS and its members have a long history of helping build our province in the fields of plumbing, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, control systems, and refrigeration. Mr. Speaker, they are here talking today with various ministers and MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] about the industry and to discuss the challenges and opportunities they see as a sector.

The MCAS will also be hosting a reception for members this evening. I have no doubt this will be an excellent opportunity for further dialogue.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the people and businesses represented through the Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan here today and the work that this sector has done to keep Saskatchewan strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Mental Health Week**

**Ms. Chartier:** — Mr. Speaker, this week marks the Canadian Mental Health Association's Mental Health Week, an annual event that encourages all to reflect on issues related to mental health. But reflecting is simply not enough. That's why the theme for this year's mental health week is Get Loud.

Mr. Speaker, people facing mental health issues from across Canada have been waiting far too long for adequate mental health care. Psychotherapy, counselling, community-based mental health programs, and affordable housing options are lacking in many Canadian communities, along with basic acknowledgement and respect for those who are suffering.

Mr. Speaker, our province is no exception. Saskatchewan is amongst the lowest of provinces in funding mental health services. We have the lowest number of psychiatrists per capita in Western Canada, and our lack of access to proper mental health care in our rural and remote communities has led to a tragic and preventable epidemic of suicides in the North.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, the CMHA [Canadian Mental Health Association] is encouraging Canadians to get loud by writing to their government representatives, speaking out on social media, and donating their time or money to mental health services. By using our voices, we can help create change and build mental health support for people across Canada and here at home.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognition of national Mental Health Week, and in getting loud, raising awareness, and creating change for those suffering with mental health issues here in our province. Thank you.

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

#### **Regina Real Canadian Superstore Grand Opening**

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the great pleasure of bringing greetings to the real Canadian store grand opening. Mr. Speaker, shoppers have been waiting patiently for the store to open as it was the first Superstore to open in the south end of the city of Regina. More than 200 excited shoppers were lined up outside of the doors of the new grocery store on the morning of the grand opening.

The southwest area of Regina and Harbour Landing area has increased in population by 350 per cent, Mr. Speaker. New housing, new businesses, and new employment opportunities are becoming more and more available every day to serve our growing communities. Especially here in Regina, there is a new community or family growing every day. This store is a true reflection of growth being seen in this city as Regina is one of the fastest growing cities in all of Canada.

This government investment and support of innovators and around the world will continue to grow population, economies, and communities. I ask all the members, please join me in congratulating the grand opening of Real Canadian Superstore as well as encourage all, enjoy the new location and services it provides to the people of Regina. Thank you.

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

#### **World Press Freedom Award Winners**

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House today to congratulate the winners of the 19th annual press freedom award. The co-winners of the award included Patrick Lagacé of *La Presse* and the Saskatchewan iTeam, Geoff Leo and Paul Dornstauder, with an honorary mention to Paula Simons of the *Edmonton Journal*.

Each year the Canadian Committee for World Press Freedom gives this award to Canadian journalists who have made an outstanding contribution to the cause. It recognizes those people in the journalistic community who work through adversity to find the information, the truth, that Canadian people deserve to know.

Mr. Speaker, Geoff Leo and Paul Dornstauder were awarded this honour for their months-long investigation into this government's controversial GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal where two well-connected businessmen made millions of dollars at the expense of Saskatchewan taxpayers.

These journalists have had to work against this government's consistent opposition, lawsuits, and delayed responses to access to information requests, yet they continue to publish stories on this land scandal so that the people of Saskatchewan can learn the truth.

Mr. Speaker, with threats to freedom of the press occurring around the world and as recently as Sunday from the Trump administration, we need to celebrate this recognition.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members of the House to join me today in congratulating this year's winner of the Press

Freedom Award and to recognize the importance of our Charter of Rights here in Canada — rights like freedom of expression — and the need to protect them. Thank you.

[14:00]

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

#### **4-H Club Leader Inducted Into Hall of Fame**

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 4-H is something that a number of members sitting here today, including myself as a former member of the Churchbridge Beef Club, have been in 4-H clubs of various kinds. It should be noted that 4-H Saskatchewan is celebrating 100 years in 2017. I think one or two of our members may even have been on the original founding committee.

Often when you hear about the 4-H Club, you automatically think about the young people involved today. However I'd like to highlight a local 4-H leader who was recently recognized for his contribution to 4-H across the generations. On March 25th Wes Van Caesele was one of three individuals inducted into the Saskatchewan 4-H Hall of Fame. This Langenburg cattleman has been sharing his knowledge of the beef industry with 4-H members for many years.

Wes was a part of 4-H during his youth, from age 10 to 21 with the Marchwell Beef Club. After graduating, he volunteered as a leader and eventually started teaching. He then became the general leader of the Gerald Multiple Club where he'd been involved throughout the years.

Wes also served in various capacities in the 4-H district council. Although Wes wasn't able to attend the official induction ceremony because he was calving on his ranch, friends and club members got together at the beginning of April to celebrate his induction.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that represents Saskatchewan better than our amazing volunteers, and Wes Van Caesele is one of them. I would ask that all members join me in thanking Wes for his contributions and congratulating him for his induction into the Saskatchewan 4-H Hall of Fame. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

#### **New Sacred Heart School Opens in Regina**

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand in this House and announce that the new Sacred Heart School opened its doors this past week. The total cost of the project was \$27.5 million, coming in under budget.

The brand new building does not disappoint. Mr. Speaker, we've heard students all week talk about how amazing the school is, one even saying that it's like walking into a dream every day, Mr. Speaker.

The new school was designed to meet current and future classroom needs, with a variety of new moveable furniture such

as chairs, stools, ottomans, beanbag chairs, and desks that can be reconfigured. Wide hallways, multi-purpose rooms, and doors linking the early years classrooms also offer flexibility for teaching. The open concept design also includes a chapel, a community hub, an industrial kitchen that serves breakfast and lunch, an auditorium, and gender-neutral bathrooms.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud of this investment. Many of us remember when the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre stood on his feet and presented over 50 petitions calling for the gymnasium to be replaced, yet voted against the budgets that included funding for the new school. The members opposite had the chance to replace the almost 90-year-old school but did nothing. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in celebrating the opening of the brand new Sacred Heart School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Evraz Regina to Supply Pipe for Trans Mountain Pipeline System**

**Mr. Steinley:** — Mr. Speaker, Trans Mountain announced this morning that Evraz Regina will be supplying 75 per cent of the pipe for the Kinder Morgan project. That's 800 kilometres, Mr. Speaker. This is great news for the thousand workers at Evraz and their families. It's a Canadian project moving Canadian resources creating Canadian jobs, including hundreds of Saskatchewan jobs here at Evraz. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to quote Stephen Hunt, United Steelworkers union director: "With decades of experience making high quality steel and pipe, we will make this the safest and most environmentally sound pipeline possible."

We want to congratulate Trans Mountain and Evraz on this agreement. Now we need to ensure the pipeline gets built, Mr. Speaker. We know that BC [British Columbia] is in the middle of an election campaign and the BC NDP [New Democratic Party] have campaigned on stopping this project. Premier Notley has stopped Alberta NDP MLAs and staff from campaigning in BC because she recognizes what the BC NDP would do to Canada's energy sector. We've seen the Saskatchewan NDP debate actions against pipelines at their conventions until they're forced to disappear, Mr. Speaker. They can't bring themselves to support pipelines, but they know Saskatchewan people want pipelines to go forward.

So my question is to the interim leader of the NDP. Has he banned his party members from supporting the BC NDP's work against Saskatchewan families? Will he put Saskatchewan's interest ahead of the NDP's ideology?

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Details of Land Transactions**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, of course we've always fought for pipelines and will continue to for Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.



But it's getting harder and harder for Saskatchewan people to take the Sask Party at their word. During the election they said the finances were fine, but they knew the reality. They knew the mess, the mismanagement that they had created. They said they weren't going to sell off our Crowns, but they're already selling them off and already letting, it would appear, big corporations come in and measure the drapes.

And, Mr. Speaker, their GTH scandal just keeps getting uglier. Nuns, landowners, and Saskatchewan people got ripped off. Two wealthy and well-connected Sask Party donors made off with \$11 million of profit. And while the deals get pushed through in the dark and behind closed doors, Saskatchewan people lose out and the wealthy and well connected seem to win, Mr. Speaker.

To show some willingness to finally clear up the record and to be straight, will the Deputy Premier at least acknowledge that the CP [Canadian Pacific] Rail land giveaway happened a full two years after the Sask Party formed government, and so this scandal is theirs to answer for, and pretending that any piece of paper says anything else is simply not true?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well of course the Leader of the Opposition well knows that the relocation of CP to the GTH was pivotal and essential for the success of the GTH. It was something that was recognized by the members opposite when they were in government in fact, Mr. Speaker. The Deputy Leader of the NDP put forward this plan. We canvassed this in the House, and he well knows that he put forward this plan to his cabinet. That cabinet approved that plan, a \$33 million expenditure for the relocation of CP, amongst other expenses associated with the starting up of the GTH.

We put documents on the table to that effect and the member himself knows that that's the case. He should turn to his interim leader of his party, explain that that's the case, and settle the matter once and for all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Status of SaskTel

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, it's sad. We have the Deputy Premier ducking that question as the Premier of Saskatchewan ducks day after day after day. Yesterday I asked the Premier when he learned that the Minister Responsible for SaskTel sat in this Chamber and gave an unequivocal answer that was equally unequivocally wrong.

Mr. Speaker, the minister who is responsible for overseeing SaskTel said, no, no, no, there was no work being done to prepare the sell-off of SaskTel. Mr. Speaker, he was as wrong as he could be. What he actually meant to say was, yes, work is being done to prepare for selling off SaskTel, a complete betrayal of what they said to Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

So I have two questions for the Deputy Premier. First, when did he learn about, or when did cabinet call for work being done to prepare for selling off part of SaskTel? Second, when did he

learn about what the minister said in committee?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And in the absence of the Minister Responsible for SaskTel, I will be taking that question on behalf of the government. And the members opposite well know — they were here in the Chamber yesterday — the minister was very clear in terms of his responses. He responded in detail and he responded repeatedly to the members opposite with respect to the particulars of the matter raised.

What I can reiterate, Mr. Speaker, is that there have been no formal discussions as to what a transaction may or may not look like, and there have been no formal offers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Another refusal to answer. Saskatchewan people deserve to be able to trust what they're hearing on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and the Sask Party needs to be straight about their plans to sell off SaskTel and our Crowns with Saskatchewan people. Yesterday the Premier defended the minister by saying, "And immediately upon revisiting the situation and information that had been provided to the minister's office, he sent out a note to the critic clarifying the matter, correcting the matter . . ."

Mr. Speaker, moments later the minister admitted that simply wasn't the case. He learned that he was wrong the same very night, before continuing on in committee that very night. So to the Deputy Premier: when did the minister, when did the Deputy Premier and cabinet . . . or why did the Deputy Premier and cabinet wait until the next day after question period, after Royal Assent, and after business ended in this House for the weekend to finally tell the truth?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well of course, Mr. Speaker, the premise of the question is nonsense. The minister clarified his comments in the House yesterday. He responded to the questions put to him in detail and repeatedly. And I will reiterate what the minister said, that there have been no formal discussions as to what a transaction may or may not look like, and no formal offers. And you know, as I said, I responded in the absence of the minister.

There's a very exciting announcement being made today, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the formal grand opening of the first new potash mine in this province in 40 years — an investment worth billions of dollars; an investment that will create 400 permanent jobs in this province, 2,500 jobs during the construction phase, Mr. Speaker. And do you know what's ironic about this, Mr. Speaker? This was the very company, K+S, that was chased out of Saskatchewan by the members opposite. They came back to Saskatchewan under this government, and they are investing billions of dollars in this province.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, these are the most basic questions. Let's be clear. The minister knew Wednesday night that he was wrong. He certainly knew at 10 in the morning the next day. He could have done the right thing. He could have stood in his place and corrected the record. He could have admitted to a gallery full of concerned Saskatchewan people, the Saskatchewan Party's already looking to carve up SaskTel. But, Mr. Speaker, that's not the culture over there. From finances to the GTH scandal, it's politics before people, and covering up before fessing up.

Will the minister buck the trend? Will he take the opportunity as soon as he can to come clean and admit that he was wrong, and will he correct the record?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, that's precisely what the minister did. The minister corrected the record immediately. The minister sent a letter, and I'm holding it here, dated April 27th, 2017, addressed to the Opposition House Leader, correcting the record, Mr. Speaker. He did that immediately. He explained in detail the circumstances in this House yesterday, Mr. Speaker, which the members opposite very well know.

And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, this government continues to be focused on the economy. We've had great news again today, which the member for Walsh Acres talked about in a member's statement. More good news, opening up K+S in a formal way today, Kinder Morgan announcing that Evraz will be producing 75 per cent of the pipe for the Trans Mountain pipeline. This is a \$7.4 billion project, Mr. Speaker, 37,000 jobs that are going to be created over the course of the project.

Great support from this side of the House. I have to say support in Alberta as well. But we know that there's one party, there's one party opposed to this project, Mr. Speaker, and that's the New Democratic Party. If the NDP are elected in BC, we know that this project is not going to go forward. I encourage the member . . . He said even earlier today that they support projects, pipeline projects. He needs to get on the phone. He needs to call Horgan, the leader of the BC NDP, and he needs to tell him that they need to support this project. It's going to create thousands of jobs in Saskatchewan and BC, Mr. Speaker.

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

[14:15]

### Reporting of Political Donations

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mistakes happen. We can all accept that but, Mr. Speaker, minister after minister has refused to be straight about the plans for selling off our Crowns. The Minister of Justice uses words like "not to my knowledge." And the Minister for SaskTel says a meeting with a telecommunications company in his office is not really a meeting because the real meeting was with his chief of staff, and in the Sask Party's world that doesn't count. The minister

says it was a chat about golf. Mr. Speaker, that dog don't hunt.

When will the Sask Party finally come clean? When will they show they want to put these questions about backroom deals behind them? When will they support our bill to get big money out of politics?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, we have a significant piece of lobbying legislation in Saskatchewan so that people in this province know who's lobbying their elected officials, Mr. Speaker. All registered parties, Mr. Speaker, are required to report donations and expenses and that's very transparent, Mr. Speaker.

We have no problem with the way that the legislation is drafted right now, Mr. Speaker. It shows transparency and it shows openness, Mr. Speaker. And that openness and that transparency was shown by the fact that this government, Mr. Speaker, through the course of the negotiations and discussions with respect to the lobbying legislation, agreed with generally all the points that were brought forward by the all-party committee in drafting that legislation.

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

### Funding for Community-Based Organizations

**Ms. Chartier:** — How about getting big money out of politics, Mr. Speaker? That was the question.

The Sask Party doesn't want to put Saskatchewan people first. Just look at their heartless cuts. The Minister of Health demanded a 10 per cent cut to community-based organizations. When asked to explain this cut, the minister blurted out, and I quote:

That doesn't mean a 10 per cent across-the-board CBO cut. There might be some areas where there's no cut to a CBO's funding and other areas where there's a larger cut than that or . . . even an elimination of funding.

Mr. Speaker, we know CBOs were on the chopping block, but a total elimination of funding takes things to the next level. So to the Minister of Health: which health organizations does he plan to cut deeply and which ones does he plan to eliminate entirely?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to the member's question, as I've said all along, there's a 10 per cent funding reduction target for CBOs across the province to all the health regions. What's happening right now is the health regions will be consulting with the CBOs. The health regions are working on their budgets right now. They will be making some recommendations. Those recommendations will go to the Ministry of Health. The budgets aren't due until June, Mr. Speaker. At that time the ministry will look through, they'll make some recommendations as well, and final decisions will be made.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the good work that CBOs do across the province. We're in a situation right now because of a shortage of resource revenues, Mr. Speaker, that health is the largest expenditure in the province. So, Mr. Speaker, obviously there's going to be some impacts on the health system. We're going to be very cautious how we proceed. But, Mr. Speaker, there are difficult decisions to be made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Once again, Mr. Speaker, this minister chooses to duck and cover. It's not the health regions making these cuts. These are Sask Party cuts. Make no mistake about that. The minister knows cuts are coming, so whose funding are they eliminating? Is it Planned Parenthood? Do they intend to cut funding to women's health? Is it the Canadian Mental Health Association? Is it the Autism Resource Centre and the supports they provide to children with exceptionalities? Or is it the All Nations' Healing Hospital and indigenous health care?

This government's moral compass is broken, so it's hard to tell what direction they'll take and who they will go after next. So I ask again: who is being eliminated, and when will the minister provide some clarity to his cuts?

**The Speaker:** — Before we hear from the Minister of Health, I just want to caution the member on the characterization of the hon. members in this Chamber. I will now call upon the Minister of Health for his reply.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I've said, none of those decisions have been made. We've asked the health regions to look at that and make recommendations. We're going to follow through with the process, the proper process, before any of those difficult decisions are made.

And, Mr. Speaker, for the member opposite to speculate that, well, maybe it's this organization that will be cut in its entirety and maybe this one won't be . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, they don't want to hear the answer, but it's the answer. It's the truth, Mr. Speaker. It's scare tactics that the members opposite use. It's no different than the critic, who again doesn't like to listen to the answer. She likes to heckle nonstop.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's like a few weeks ago on the hearing aid plan. She portrayed it as cochlear implants wouldn't be covered. Mr. Speaker, not the case. It's the same case here. She's speculating on where the cuts will be. Mr. Speaker, there's difficult decisions to be made. We'll make those decisions in due course, and we'll be very transparent about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Provision of Funeral Services

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, when the Sask Party announced plans to cut funeral services for people on social assistance and SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability], they

claimed these changes would bring Saskatchewan in line with other provinces. Well, Mr. Speaker, it turns out that's not remotely the case. In committee, the minister admitted that other provinces don't have a flat rate, and there's not a single province that doesn't cover funeral services.

In a budget of this size, these cuts save almost nothing but they cost families their chances to say goodbye to their loved ones. It damages them and it damages the reputation of the entire province. Will the minister admit that these unnecessary cuts are beneath us? Will she reverse these heartless cuts?

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. There's been some very hard choices to be made in this budget, and we decided to focus our resources on keeping the lights on, food on the table, and roofs over people's heads, Mr. Speaker.

We are going to provide for basic disposition for funerals or cremation at a rate in line with the rest of the country for that same service, Mr. Speaker. Over and above that, Mr. Speaker, this flat rate, we will also support embalming services when legislatively required, Mr. Speaker, extended travel, and grave liners or hermetically sealed caskets where required by municipal bylaw, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister continues to fail to justify these cuts because they simply can't be justified. As well, and now we're hearing, just now that perhaps she's starting to do her homework, but up until now we've heard nothing of being able to meet the legal implications of these moves. Industry stakeholders say that these cuts undermine the government's own legislation. There's a legal requirement for the body to be viewed before it's cremated, to say nothing of the requirements that many face to have the final goodbye the last several days.

Mr. Speaker, how can the minister stand by these cuts when it's so clear she didn't do her homework on the context or on the consequences?

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again I thank the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, under section 93 of *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*, it requires for bodies to be ID'd [identified] prior to cremation. Where embalming, as I've already indicated, is legally required we'll continue to pay the actual cost for that service. I understand it is also required in cases where there's been a communicable disease.

Mr. Speaker, one of the difficult choices that was facing the government in this budget was to really look at the benefits we offer in addition and beyond providing basic needs like food and shelter. With this reduction to a flat fee of \$2,100, Mr. Speaker, we can continue to support 67 individuals with disability on the SAID program, Mr. Speaker. That's food,

clothing, and shelter for one year for 67 individuals who are in the SAID program, Mr. Speaker.

I believe our choice was a balance, Mr. Speaker, and continuing to provide for basic dispositions for individuals and also continuing to provide for people who are vulnerable. Thank you.

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

### Support for Municipalities

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Mr. Speaker, minister after minister refuses to admit that they just don't know or don't care about the consequences of their cuts. The Minister of Government Relations wants us to believe municipalities are fine with her plan to cut grants-in-lieu. Well SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] said, "Our members are outraged and so are we." I'll take their word over hers any day of the week.

Will the Minister of Government Relations finally admit that she needs to quit contradicting the leaders in our cities, towns, and villages, needs to scrap Bill 64 and stop the cuts to our municipalities?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, as always there is absolutely nothing new in that member's question. I have said time again that difficult decisions had to be made in this budget, and that we required a number of sectors to help with getting our books back to balance in three years, Mr. Speaker. I have said time and time again these are difficult decisions, and we had looked for our municipal partners for 2.5 per cent of the deficit that we are facing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, for the member opposite to stand and say that we have done this to municipalities and no one else is simply false. She has stood up and said that we have tore up 109 contracts; that is simply false as well. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work with our municipal partners, Mr. Speaker. And we know these are difficult decisions, but we have, year over year over year over year, increased funding to our municipalities until this year.

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

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Lots of talk, Mr. Speaker, but no answers for municipalities who are being forced to pay for their decade-long run of mismanagement, scandal, and waste. Yesterday the minister tried to downplay the importance of the agreements with our towns and cities, and we saw her do that just again today.

Mr. Speaker, whether it's a contract or a letter of agreement, they've got the government's signature at the bottom. And the fact is, Mr. Speaker, she doesn't like these agreements, so she scrapped them. Will the minister admit that if she really thought she was on good ground, she wouldn't be tying the hands of

municipal leaders with Bill 64 and the immunity clause that stops our cities, towns, and villages from defending themselves and Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, I am quite looking forward to when we go to committee on this bill because the member opposite obviously does not know this file. Mr. Speaker, there are 19 contracts. There are 9 contracts with SaskEnergy, all of them have termination language within the contract. There are 10 contracts with SaskPower. There's one letter, and in the letter it states that SaskPower is not obliged to make that payment, right in the letter. For the other hundred communities, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing. There is . . . [inaudible] . . . in paper. There is no letter. There is no contract. There is no deal that was made, Mr. Speaker, and the member opposite needs to recognize that.

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

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Mr. Speaker, the member can deflect all she wants, but she should be listening to the mayors and councillors who aren't buying what she's selling. The Saskatoon tax hikes, that's Sask Party tax hikes. The service cuts in Regina, those are Sask Party service cuts. In Yorkton and North Battleford where taxes are going up and badly needed upgrades are being put on hold, that's on the Sask Party. And, Mr. Speaker, in Prince Albert, where after 10 years in government, the Sask Party still hasn't built a second bridge.

Well it's clear how little the Sask Party cares about communities and the economy and Prince Albert and the North. After a decade of Sask Party mismanagement, scandal, and waste, how can the Sask Party justify forcing our hometowns to pay the price?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, in the city of Saskatoon, two and a half times the revenue-sharing money that they received under the previous NDP government, that's Sask Party increases. Mr. Speaker, in this budget alone, \$15 million to Saskatoon for a bridge. That's Sask Party's money that's funding, that's going into Saskatoon's bridge.

Mr. Speaker, we have increased revenue sharing overall across the province by over 100 per cent. That's over double, Mr. Speaker. It's even higher for all of our urban communities. Mr. Speaker, we have spent a record number of dollars on infrastructure in this province because it was totally neglected by the NDP government previous. Mr. Speaker, we have given tax breaks within this province. There used to be tax breaks around the entire province, Mr. Speaker, under the NDP. We have changed that as well.

Mr. Speaker, that is how she thinks we misspend money, really? It went to municipalities.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Prince Albert

Northcote.

[14:30]

**Ms. Rancourt:** — The minister keeps saying that these agreements are, in her words, unfair. She keeps using that word. I do not think it means what she thinks it means. Mr. Speaker, here's an easy question for the minister. What is unfair about municipalities being fairly compensated for giving up their utility networks because that's what the payments are for? And, Mr. Speaker, what does the minister think is fair about her rewriting the rules, ripping up agreements, and forcing municipalities to pick up the tab?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, when she talks about the payments that were made to the small urban centres, it was for gas. They didn't have gas distribution companies, Mr. Speaker. There was none in the province. And when I talk about it being unfair, how is it fair that Lanigan received a payment? You go down the highway, Viscount does not. And you go a little further down the highway, Colonsay does. You go a little further down the highway, Clavet does not.

Mr. Speaker, what is fair about that? None of them had a gas distribution company. They had nothing to sell. So there is no agreements. There is no letters. There is nothing on the grants-in-lieu from SaskEnergy that she's referring to, Mr. Speaker. She needs to get to know her file.

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

#### Government's Fiscal Management

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, throughout question period we saw members of the opposition standing up for Saskatchewan people. What we see the Sask Party doing day in, day out is standing up for the wealthy and well connected. And that's a choice they made in this budget with a cut, if you can imagine, to the tax rate for the biggest corporations in Saskatchewan, at the same time as they put at risk and attack the most vulnerable in this province, at the same time as they pound families with tax hike after tax hike, ripping up agreements. Yes, agreements with our municipalities all across Saskatchewan.

To pretend otherwise is a load of nonsense, Mr. Speaker. I've sat with mayors all across this province. I've sat with the mayor of Yorkton who handed to me a contract, a contract and agreement that that government signed. They ripped it up. How does the Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan defend ripping up these contracts, pounding families, attacking the most vulnerable, all while giving big giveaways to the wealthiest and the most well connected?

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

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Here we see again the blarney and the bluster of the Leader of the Opposition, the interim Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, who last week, that party over there could not take a position on the school system in this

province, Mr. Speaker. We had the Education critic go out there in front of the media and say one thing, and then the Leader of the Opposition hauled her out yesterday and said, no this is our position; well we think this is our position on the school system in the province, Mr. Speaker.

He will not confirm what the NDP position is on the school system in this province, Mr. Speaker, expecting parents to pay 10 to \$12,000 if they are a non-Catholic student attending a Catholic school in this province. Mr. Speaker, that's a problem for that interim Leader of the Opposition, which is why he will not be running for the full-time job, Mr. Speaker.

On the province's financial situation, on the province's financial situation, Mr. Speaker, this party over here, this government has a three-year plan to get back to balance, Mr. Speaker. Just today, just today the Dominion Bond Rating Service, DBRS, put out their news release evaluating our fiscal position in the province. They said . . .

[Interjections]

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

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Mr. Speaker, DBRS said today:

The Province's fiscal position and economy have been challenged by weaker commodity prices in recent years. However, DBRS believes that the Province's plan to restore balance over the medium term is credible and will limit the further accumulation of debt. Saskatchewan's ratings remain well supported by the relatively low debt burden, responsive fiscal policy and underlying potential of the province's economy.

DBRS believes that the three-year plan to return to balance is credible and coherent. I look forward to the Alberta report, Mr. Speaker.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize a member of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Steinley:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 52, *The Meewasin Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be considered in the Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and this bill will now be read a third time.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in the Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 52 and

that the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 52 — *The Meewasin Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2017*

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that this bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 52 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 14:36 until 14:38.]

**The Speaker:** — All those in favour please rise.

[Yeas — 44]

Moe	Wyant	Reiter
Morgan	Harpauer	Doherty
Beaudry-Mellor	Hargrave	D'Autremont
Heppner	Boyd	Cheveldayoff
Marit	Tell	Eyre
Merriman	Harrison	Ottenbreit
Weekes	Hart	Kirsch
Bradshaw	Steinley	Makowsky
Phillips	Lawrence	Wilson
Campeau	Docherty	Michelson
Doke	Cox	Olauson
Steele	Young	Fiaz
Dennis	McMorris	Bonk
Carr	Nerlien	Lambert
Buckingham	Kaeding	

**The Speaker:** — All those opposed please rise.

[Nays — 10]

Wotherspoon	Vermette	Chartier
Belanger	Sproule	Forbes
Rancourt	McCall	Sarauer
Meili		

**Principal Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion,

44; those opposed, 10.

**The Speaker:** — This bill is carried.

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

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 360 through 362.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled the responses to questions 360 to 362. I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 363 and 364.

**The Speaker:** — The Whip has ordered responses to questions 363 and 364. I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to 365 through 370.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled the answers to questions 365 to 370.

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 70 — *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2017*

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

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2017*. This legislation implements various provincial sales tax changes that were announced on March 22nd, 2017 as part of the 2017-18 provincial budget. These PST [provincial sales tax] measures create a broader sustainable revenue base and reduce government's reliance on resource revenues. The PST rate has been increased from 5 per cent to 6 per cent effective March 23rd, 2017. Effective April 1, 2017, PST will now apply to real property services, restaurant meals and snack food, children's clothing, and the full price of new and used light vehicles on which the PST has not previously been paid. Effective July 1, 2017, PST will also apply to insurance premiums. Mr. Speaker, this legislation includes a new section which adds offences and penalties for persons failing to become licensed to collect and remit the PST.

Some housekeeping items are included in the amendments which strengthen and modernize the Act to sustain the province's revenue base in today's ever-changing business environment. These housekeeping amendments include: repealing the definition of "computer services," which will be

added to the regulations to enable a more proactive approach to the ever-changing digital environment; defining the term “lease” to help identify, distinguish, and clarify a rental of tangible personal property; amending the definition of “tangible personal property” to include gasses, which aligns with definitions used in other jurisdictions; limiting refunds on construction contracts to the tax amounts paid in error; and enhancing the definition of “vendor” to include e-commerce businesses selling and shipping goods into the province.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2017*.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Finance has moved second reading on Bill No. 70. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. From the official opposition perspective, I want to offer our initial comments around Bill 70, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act*. And as the minister alluded, there isn't a tax that the conservatives across the way will not find and increase for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want all the people in the province to know this: this budget, this budget, Mr. Speaker, and all the sales tax identified in this particular bill is an attack on the middle class people of the province of Saskatchewan. And everywhere you look, whether it's insurance premiums, children's clothing, construction labour, restaurant meals, Mr. Speaker, there isn't a tax that the Saskatchewan Party cannot find and raise, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

About the only thing that the Saskatchewan Party's done that was proper in terms of royalty, Mr. Speaker, is they've followed the formula developed by Lorne Calvert and the New Democrats when they wanted to attract the oil and gas sector and also attract the potash industry here, Mr. Speaker.

And we told them at that time, do not mess with that formula; it works. We're seeing a lot of investment in the oil and gas sector. We're also seeing a lot of investment in the potash sector, Mr. Speaker, so do not mess with that formula. It was designed by the people of Saskatchewan under an NDP government and, Mr. Speaker, that's about the only advice that we see them taking on this side of the Assembly. And we also said, protect the most vulnerable people in the province, Mr. Speaker, and they have not done either.

Now I stood, I listened with great interest as the Finance minister was talking about his three-year plan during question period. And all I can see, Mr. Speaker, in all the projections, in all the plans that they have done, is that at very least they have consistently provided Saskatchewan with deficit after deficit after deficit, year after year after year. So for the next three years, Mr. Speaker, the next three years it's going to be more debt, more cuts, and more waste, compliments of the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. And you notice how they try and deflect. And I tell people across the province very clearly, a very clear message is, how is it that as a party, how is it as a party that you come into power in 2007, you find two and a half

billion dollars in the bank left you by the people of Saskatchewan under the NDP government, and then you inherit a booming economy, a growing population, and a short nine years later we're now facing debt of \$23 billion in three years? Mr. Speaker, we're also finding we're growing deficit after deficit. There is cuts happening left, right, and centre, Mr. Speaker.

So to the fiscal conservative out there, I tell them this: the Saskatchewan Party not only have provided the people of Saskatchewan with deficit after deficit after deficit. They have increased our debt to 23 billion, which is the projection for 2022. We are now going through the P3 [public-private partnership] phase in which they're going to continue to punt some of that debt on some of the P3 projects in our province, including the bypass and some of the other projects that we made reference to, Mr. Speaker, they're going to punt that debt further down the road.

So what is happening here? I'll make it very crystal clear. As a result of their mismanagement, as a result of the simple fact, from my perspective, they don't know what they're doing, the Saskatchewan people will pay and pay and pay and pay. Now here is the worst part, Mr. Speaker. They're going to be paying more on insurance premiums. They're going to be paying more on children's clothing. Now the construction labour is being taxed in the province. Now you're going to have restaurant meals that are going to be taxed, Mr. Speaker. But the worst part of this all, Mr. Speaker, is all of us in Saskatchewan continue to pay more. And again I'll say this in the Assembly, that there isn't a tax that the Sask Party does not like. They will find anything that they can possibly tax in the province of Saskatchewan; they will search for that. And, Mr. Speaker, we're finding evidence that Bill 70, that now they've expanded the tax, increased the tax and, Mr. Speaker, the worst part is the fiscal conservatives out in Saskatchewanland, Mr. Speaker, that's not what they view the Saskatchewan Party as the party that should be doing that. Quite frankly, they're very angry. They are very angry.

Now I want to also point out, Mr. Speaker, on the municipal front as well, the minister responsible for the cities and towns and villages sits in her place and talks about her file, Mr. Speaker. She took money from the towns, the villages, and the cities, Mr. Speaker. She reduced their operating grants through grants-in-lieu. So what's going to happen in the cities like Saskatoon, Regina, and a number of other communities is that they're going to have to do two things. The cities have two choices. They can either cut services or increase property tax. And based on the amount of money the Sask Party is clawing back from our municipalities, now they're forced to do both, Mr. Speaker. They are forced to do both.

So now to the people of Saskatchewan I will say that all the tax hikes, whether it's municipal, children's clothing, whether it's restaurant meals, are Sask Party tax hikes. They're trying to use the cities and they're trying to use the villages and towns as a scapegoat, and this is where SUMA is standing up and telling them, no way. This is a Sask Party tax hike. The people in our cities and our towns are going to be paying more for their property tax.

And let us be very crystal clear. This government has been in

charge for 10 years. All the tax hikes are theirs. All the reductions in services are their responsibility. And they try and deflect, they try and deny, and they try and add doubt through the process but, Mr. Speaker, the buck stops here. The Saskatchewan Party are responsible for these cuts. They're responsible for every price increase and every tax that we pay. And, Mr. Speaker, they're also hitting you in the pocketbook when it comes to property tax that the cities are now forced to hike.

So let us, from the opposition perspective, say this very clearly, Mr. Speaker. Year after year, year after year we've had deficit after deficit after deficit from the Saskatchewan Party government. Now this year we see a billion-dollar increase, \$1 billion increase in a tax grab by that minister and by that party.

And, Mr. Speaker, don't forget where this particular party started off with. They started off with money in the bank, a record amount of revenue over the last 10 years. They had a growing population and they had a booming economy. And now, 10 years later, our debt is at that level. So I say this to the fiscal conservatives out there, that the Saskatchewan Party has failed miserably on that front. They have not been very fiscally sound in some of their strategies and approaches. They have destroyed and they have quite frankly ham-handed or they have quite frankly compromised our future and this is exactly what my message is today, as a result of Bill 70.

Now I would also point out to the people of Saskatchewan this very compelling argument. If we all understand, we all understand that everybody has to do their part to build a strong province. We appreciate that. We appreciate the work ethic of the farm community. We appreciate the contributions of the corporate world. We appreciate the businesses, the small and large, that do a lot to employ people and stimulate the economy. We all see those folks doing a tremendous job, really strengthening and building our economy.

And, Mr. Speaker, we also see the families that are struggling. They are struggling to make ends meet. If it's not one thing, it's another thing at the end of the month. And now they have this whole notion of more taxes being placed on them by the Saskatchewan Party. So every tax hike from March 31st this year is a direct result of the Sask Party tax hike. Remember that, folks. Remember that as they come knocking on your door pretending to be, that this is somebody else's fault. It is their own scandal, their own mismanagement and waste that created this problem. And that's where, Mr. Speaker, that all the blame should lie.

Now the very . . . I was mentioning that very critical argument and the point that I'd like to raise. It's that as everybody does their part, Mr. Speaker, and including the middle class, people that are struggling each month to try and maintain their standard of living, that want to continue paying their mortgage . . . and certainly people that, also struggling in some of the lower income bracket. Mr. Speaker, we're all doing our part.

We, as we go to restaurant meals, we pay more now. As we insure our homes, we pay more. As we live in our communities, we pay more. And as we buy things like children's clothing, we pay more. All those payments, all that extra payment, Mr. Speaker, first of all it's compliments of the Saskatchewan Party.

That's the first point I want to make.

The second point is, Mr. Speaker, it would not be so bad, it would not be so bad I think if people out there understood that there was an end to all the taxes that they're putting in place and that this end would come sooner. But the problem is, Mr. Speaker, is that all that money taken out to taxation from the middle class and those of lower income earning brackets is actually going to the wealthy and well connected. It's not going to the deficit. It's not going to the debt, Mr. Speaker. This is the problem that we have.

And I for one am absolutely shocked that people in Saskatchewan still don't realize that the Saskatchewan Party's tax hikes is not going, is not going to reduce the debt overall, Mr. Speaker. It's not going to reduce the deficit. It's going to the wealthy and well connected. And we'll continue suffering through debt and we will continue suffering through deficit unless and until we get rid of the Sask Party because, as I mentioned before, they couldn't manage their way out of a wet paper bag.

And Bill 70 is another example of how the Saskatchewan Party hasn't been able to find a tax that they won't hike. And it's a shame. It's a shame because they had record revenue and they inherited a booming economy.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, there's going to be a lot more people that have a lot more comment on this particular bill from our side of the Assembly and to point out that this bill also, Mr. Speaker, is giving \$60 million in corporate tax giveaways, Mr. Speaker.

So once again, as you pay more in restaurant meals, as you pay more in insurance premiums, as you pay more for taxes, remember that is compliments of the Sask Party government.

And it wouldn't be so bad, Mr. Speaker, that you had a finite time and a finite amount that we can all do our part to contribute. But it's not going to that cause. It's going to continue to finance the wealthy and well-connected patrons of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker. And that's why the NDP tell the people of Saskatchewan, it is time to get rid of the Saskatchewan Party.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 70, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2017*.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 70. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committees this afternoon and this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?



**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:56.]

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