



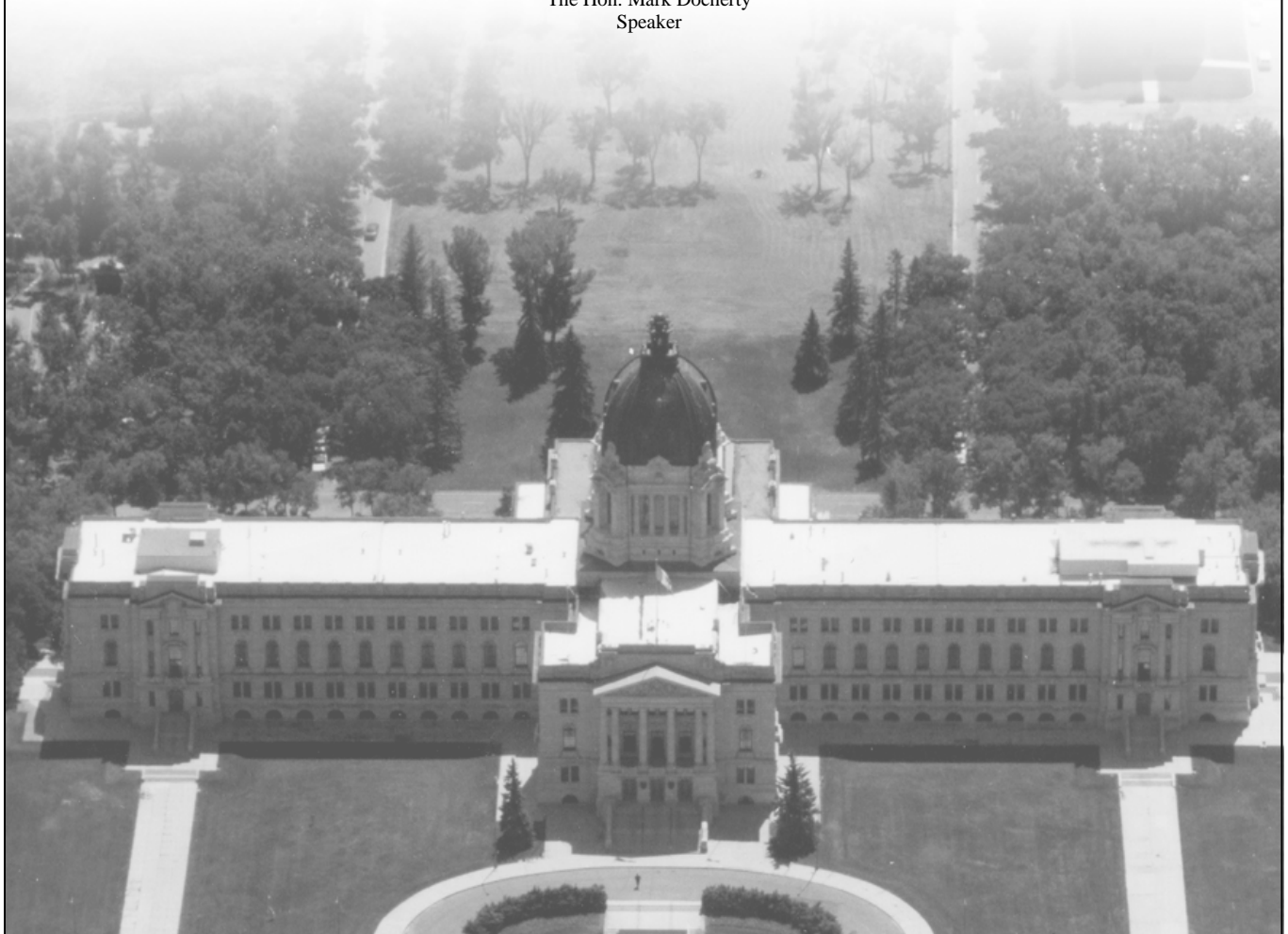
THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 28th Legislature

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Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning in the west gallery we have with us Zane Buchanan, and he is our 2019 Saskatchewanderer. The Saskatchewanderer program is an inter-ministerial partnership to promote our province. This is the 9th year of the program, and as such Zane has the opportunity to travel our great province and tell stories of our residents, showcase our businesses, and enjoy all the activities that we have to offer in our beautiful province with more than 90,000 followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

We know that many Saskatchewanians and those from outside of the province are interested in this program and following Zane's journey. This morning's proceedings may even make it within one of his stories. So I ask all members this morning to join me in welcoming Zane to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the minister in welcoming Zane to the legislature and wish him well over his time wandering around the province. Of course it's a beautiful place, and I know you'll have lots of fun. So from the loyal opposition, we wish you the very best, and welcome to your legislature. Thank you.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd just like to welcome Shawn Stevenson to his Legislative Assembly. Shawn is one of the members of the organizing committee for the Dewdney East Community Association Celebration of Cultures. So I appreciate the work that he has done, and I'll have a little more to say about that group of people later on. So I'd like to ask all members to join with me in welcoming Shawn to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join with the member opposite and welcome Shawn to his Legislative Assembly. Now Shawn and I have been friends for quite a few number of years, but it's his significant partner that is a very close friend of mine and also worked very closely with my husband at the University of Regina. Jackie Rorquist is a big supporter of all things within Regina, but she's absolutely fundamentally committed to Dress for Success. She's a board member there.

Now a really good example was, Dress for Success had a sold-out event just a couple of weeks ago. Now that happened to be on

Shawn's birthday so over 200 women came out to wish Shawn a happy birthday. But it was absolutely a fabulous event — women supporting women. And it's a real hand up, not a handout. Dress for Success and Shawn were there. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce 33 of the best and brightest minds in our province. They are grade 8 students from St. Frances EcoJustice. Give us a wave. They are accompanied by their teachers, Melchior Sysing, Todd Knihnitski, and Sara Davies. I look forward to answering all their questions and having a meet-and-greet this afternoon down in the gallery.

St. Frances, Mr. Speaker, is a very unique school in Saskatoon, and we were happy to continue the conversations on getting a new facility for them. The \$250,000 was announced in the budget last week. We're very happy to have them here today and I'd like all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the member in welcoming these folks to this legislature. I think I met some of them on 20th Street just a few weeks ago. Some of them were walking down there, part of their EcoJustice, walking through the community. And I want to say thanks for being here and coming to your legislature. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of northern Saskatchewan residents. Many of them need dialysis treatment, whether it's the east of our province up north, the west, or central. Residents are suffering with dialysis, the treatment, and I'd just like to read a petition on their behalf.

Many northerners are in need of dialysis treatment and are travelling many, many hours per week to have this treatment. Many elders, community members experience physical pain, fatigue, driving on bumpy northern roads. Travelling is very costly and complicated for many of them.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan build a dialysis centre in the North so that northerners can have treatment closer to home and not have to spend so much time and money on travelling.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again to present petitions on behalf of citizens and local businesses from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party government's imposition of the PST [provincial sales tax] onto goods like construction, Mr. Speaker.

Of course this has damaged our economy, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of hard-working Saskatchewan tradespeople have lost their jobs, Mr. Speaker, as permits have been down and projects have been shelved. Many Saskatchewan people have been forced outside of Saskatchewan and so many local businesses have endured incredible hardship as a result of this nonsensical and damaging decision, Mr. Speaker.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to stop saddling families and businesses with the costs of their mismanagement and immediately reinstate the PST exemption on construction and stop hurting Saskatchewan businesses and families.

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

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that the federal-imposed carbon tax will have an adverse effect on the Saskatchewan economy. We know that the federal-imposed carbon tax will have little to nothing to do with reducing the amount of greenhouse gases, and we know that the request to delay the federally imposed carbon tax until the court challenge is decided has been ignored. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition for citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan.

I'll 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 federally imposed carbon tax from . . . for the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on our province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Moose Jaw.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition on the Regina bypass project. The people who have signed this petition would like to bring to our attention the following: very few details about the Regina bypass project are publicly available, despite it being the costliest infrastructure project funded by taxpayers in the province's history.

Ministry officials identified and documented major deficiencies in the project that were in an email that has yet to be released in

full for public review. In the Assembly, the previous minister of Highways referenced the breach of an aquifer in Wascana Creek as an example of one of those major deficiencies. However our current Minister of Highways has repeatedly stated on the record that there are no major deficiencies on this bypass. Saskatchewan people will be paying for this piece of infrastructure for the next 30 years. And in the interests of government transparency, these contradictory statements require immediate clarification.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to immediately release a full, unredacted copy of records detailing all minor and major deficiencies identified in the Regina bypass project to date.

And the people that have signed the petition today, Mr. Speaker, are from the city of Moose Jaw. I so submit.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for real action to fight climate change. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners, who were all students here striking on March 15th on the steps of this building, want to bring to attention the following: that Saskatchewan produces the highest greenhouse gas emissions per capita in all of Canada; that the Saskatchewan Party government has failed to tackle climate change and failed to reduce emissions to the province's own targets and has failed to put a real plan in place to protect the natural environment.

They want to bring to our attention the fact that slashing programs and funding for the environment have set this province on a backwards course, and they want to bring to our attention that the Saskatchewan Party government's inaction on climate change is reflected by per-capita greenhouse gas emissions in our province that are more than three times the national average, and that there has been a steady increase in payments under the provincial disaster assistance program.

Mr. Speaker, in the prayer they:

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

I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Club Celebrates 50 Years of Service

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize the Melville Lions Club on their 50th

anniversary. The current president is Lion Doug Hanley and their secretary is Lion Jean Tank.

Mr. Speaker, since day one the club has had one goal in mind, and that's community service. Although fundraising efforts and events have changed over time, their commitment to community service, which is conducted by very hard-working club members, has never changed. From their very first beauty pageant and Oktoberfest, the community looks forward each year to the new ideas and fundraising goals that the Lions Club brings forward.

Today their major event is the Chase the Ace fundraiser which has brought in over \$50,000 in profits, breaking all records in the club history. Currently proceeds are going towards supporting the new swimming pool in the city of Melville. Along with fun events, the club has also sponsored some very important services. They've helped their community by sponsoring guide dogs, allowing sight-impaired people with a reliable companion to help them in their daily activities, as well as collected and refurbished eyeglasses and sent them to those in need in Third World countries.

Though the club has seen many accomplishments in the last 50, I look forward to seeing the greater impact that they will have in the next 50 years. I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Melville Lions on half a century of success and community service. The Lions motto is very appropriate: "Together we serve." Thank you.

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

Make Some Noise for Tintamarre

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. March 19th downtown Prince Albert was taken over by hundreds of French speakers for the second annual Tintamarre.

Mr. Speaker, Tintamarre is a tradition that began in the Maritimes some 80 years ago. It is an Acadian tradition where people go out into the streets and make a lot of noise. March is National Francophonie Month in Saskatchewan, and this is one of many celebrations held to celebrate French culture.

In Prince Albert the streets were filled with over 600 people, including many students from our French and French immersion schools. There were drums, whistles, and many other noisemakers, as well as loud and happy voices. The parade took over several of the downtown streets as they marched to Scarrow Plaza, where French flags permanently fly as a reminder of the contributions of French people to Prince Albert.

[10:15]

The parade was organized by the Société canadienne-française de Prince Albert under the direction of Michel Dubé. Mr. Speaker, Tintamarre and its tradition of noise is celebrated to remind everyone that French culture is alive and well in Prince Albert and in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating the SCFPA [Société canadienne-française de Prince Albert] for organizing Tintamarre 2019 and to commend

the participants for keeping French culture alive in Prince Albert. Merci. [Translation: Thank you.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Free Licences for Armed Forces Veterans

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise in the House today to inform members about a new initiative for veterans of the Canadian armed forces. In a few weeks Saskatchewan will begin providing free hunting and angling licences for all veterans of the Canadian armed forces. Our government appreciates the commitment and sacrifices of our nation's veterans, and we want to recognize their contributions through this initiative.

Mr. Speaker, the new licences will be available to Saskatchewan and Canadian resident veterans who were honourably discharged from the armed forces. The free licences will be subject to an initial verification process to confirm eligibility through the automated hunting, angling and trapping licence, or HAL system. The veteran licences will be available beginning Friday, April 12th, 2019. They do not apply to big game draw licences or outfitting licensing opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud of our veterans and their commitment and sacrifice to protecting our freedom and our way of life. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to those individuals. And on behalf of this government, I hope that this small gesture will provide some level of appreciation for their service to our country and the values that we hold dear. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Celebration of Cultures Involves Community

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 10th it was my privilege to attend the 8th annual Celebration of Cultures at the Glencairn Neighbourhood Recreation Centre along with the member from Gardiner Park. Mr. Speaker, this event was organized through Community Connections, a partnership of the Dewdney East Community Association, or DECA; the Regina Open Door Society; and the Regina Public Library.

DECA prides itself on being a hub of community involvement, and their most important work centres on bridging the differences between the variety of cultures that we have in our communities. The Celebration of Cultures event is a great example of how our diverse community can work together. It takes a village to make such an event a success. The delicious foods were prepared by volunteers from Holy Child's social justice committee. The Bhutanese community volunteers did the set-up and teardown. And organizers worked countless hours planning, coordinating, and bringing it all together.

On a modest budget of \$3,000, organizers offered a showcase of diversity, culture, and neighbourly fellowship that was truly priceless in its value to the community. There were sampling of foods from around the globe, lively and entertaining performances, and of course the warmth and hospitality of the organizing committee and hosts made it a wonderful afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in thanking the organizing committee — Joyce Shuba, Dennis Kaminsky, John Findura, Anthony Woodward, Agnes Parisloff, Colleen Fisher, Ghana Bhandari, Guyatri Nepal, Shawn Stevenson who's with us here today, Laura Strong, Mbayang Dabo, and Peter Dielschneider — for all their hard work and making this event a success.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Swift Current.

Choir Sings at Carnegie Hall

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this year our province was represented on a world-renowned music stage. The Swift Current Oratorio Choir participated in a special concert presentation in New York City to perform the music of Sir Karl Jenkins, a 75th birthday celebration. The choir sang to a sold-out crowd at the historic Carnegie Hall. The Oratorio Choir joined a group of almost 300 performers from around the world to form a massive international choir.

Mr. Speaker, this is the second time in the past five years that the Oratorio Choir has been invited to perform by concert organizer, Distinguished Concerts International New York. Now in its 47th season, the Oratorio Choir consists of members from across southwest Saskatchewan, including Swift Current, Shaunavon, and Eastend. The Oratorio Choir is under the leadership of director Greg McLean and his wife, choral director Marcia McLean, who have been fixtures in the local and provincial music scene for many decades.

Mr. Speaker, not many can say that they've performed at Carnegie Hall, right in the heart of New York City, and the Swift Current Oratorio Choir was the only Canadian choir invited. And by the way, you don't have to travel all the way to New York City to see the Oratorio Choir perform. They've actually got a performance coming up on April 14th at the Bridgeway Community Church in Swift Current.

I'd ask all members to congratulate the Swift Current Oratorio Choir for the great work they do entertaining crowds across North America and for being fine ambassadors of our province and of our country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Agri-Visions Celebrates and Innovates

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 2019 Agri-Visions was held this past February in Lloydminster. It featured a two-day interactive event that featured trade shows; seminars; keynote speakers, including our former Premier Brad Wall; as well as special events for the agriculture industry. It served as a great opportunity for both the grain and cattle industry to celebrate their successes as well as educate on new innovations right under the same roof.

Mr. Speaker, one of the highlights of the event was the Do More Agriculture Foundation panel which was called Breaking Down Barriers: A Panel Discussion about Mental Health in Ag. This important and candid discussion focused on how mental health does affect many professionals in the ag industry, and that we each play a significant role in ending the stigma and breaking the

silence and better supporting each other. This panel was similar to one that I had attended here in Regina at Agribition this past fall. Other speakers included many professionals who are leaders in their craft, from grain market strategy to veterinary agriculture health services.

Mr. Speaker, the agriculture industry is so important to my constituents. Hosting this Agri-Visions was a great opportunity to see how strong this industry is and how far it has come along. I now ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Agri-Visions on another successful exhibition. Thank you.

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

New Joint-Use School for Moose Jaw

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to highlight this: our government's commitment to education in our province. Mr. Speaker, in last week's budget announcement, the Ministry of Education announced that they will be allocating funding toward the planning and design of a new joint-use school in Moose Jaw.

This build will be replacing and consolidating Empire, Westmount, St. Mary, and Sacred Heart schools. These schools were all in very close proximity to one another, which further encouraged the partnership between the public and separate school divisions to support the urban areas.

Mr. Speaker, this joint-use facility will help to meet the needs of a growing Moose Jaw population, as well as supplement the diverse and active community of the area. I am pleased to say that the discussions are under way between the government and both Prairie South and Holy Trinity Catholic school divisions about the opportunities for our new facility which, in addition to supporting our children's education, could also encompass early learning, childcare spaces, as well as flexible, improved community spaces.

This new joint-use space will support out children and community for years to come, and I, as well as the faculties and students alike, are all looking forward to the next step. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I actually quite enjoyed the member's statement about Tintamarre and the celebration of noise. Apparently we celebrate that here all the time. So with that, question period.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provincial Budget

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we'll be voting on the budget, a budget that is not balanced, not balanced in any real sense. Not balanced. Not balanced in any real sense. Sure, they'll say there's no deficit on the balance sheet. That's because the deficit is in our classrooms. The deficit is in our daycares, in our universities, in our colleges. The deficit is in our emergency rooms and in our long specialist waiting lists. The deficit is in our

overburdened and understaffed care homes.

The deficit is in our unemployment lines, an unemployment rate that's stayed at over 6 per cent for over three years now, Mr. Speaker. The deficit is in empty cupboards and empty fridges across the provinces. It's in the homes that are one day away, one bad expense, one illness away from destitution. How can the Premier be so proud to say we're in the black in this building, when his budget is breaking the bank of the household budgets across this province? Why is he so proud to penny-pinch it here when he's putting the pinch on people across the province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, just in hindsight, and I think we'll very soon see the auditor confirm this, that maybe we shouldn't have titled this budget *The Right Balance*. Maybe we should have titled it the right surplus, Mr. Speaker, for the \$34 million surplus of which the Provincial Auditor, I am certain and confident, will very, very soon confirm, Mr. Speaker.

But it is the right balance of investment, Mr. Speaker, and fiscal probity, Mr. Speaker. This is an effort that we embarked on three budget cycles ago, Mr. Speaker. We had been very open and transparent with the people of the province that we did not want to spend our children's future away, Mr. Speaker, but we wanted to continue with the investment in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker. And this year's budget strikes that right balance with the largest investment in education that the province of Saskatchewan has ever seen, Mr. Speaker.

We wanted to continue with the right balance of investment in our health care, Mr. Speaker, and this budget sees the largest investment in the provincial health care line item of the budget, Mr. Speaker, that this province has ever seen. And most importantly, Mr. Speaker, just as importantly it sees the largest investment and a significant increase of investment in mental health care treatment across the province, Mr. Speaker.

This budget is balanced, Mr. Speaker. It's the right balance for the people of this province. We're very proud to vote on it here today.

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

Yellow Vest Movement

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the other day when it was pointed out that Premier Wall had tweeted, distancing himself from the yellow vests by taking down a tweet in which he'd suggested people should go to a yellow vest event . . . When he realized that was the case, he took it down. When I pointed this out to the Premier the other day, he did a strange thing. He tried to say that, oh no, it was just because it was the wrong link. But no, it was very clear why it was done and it was very clear that Wall has in no way been promoting the yellow vest movement, unlike the Premier, who's tweeted about those events, unlike members who have attended those protests.

So my question for the Premier today is, why was he not willing to follow the leadership of his predecessor and distance himself from the discredited yellow vest movement?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, is when it comes to immigration and supporting people moving to this province, no one in the history of this province has made a larger effort than, over the course of the last number of years, the effort made by this government, Mr. Speaker.

And it's paying off, Mr. Speaker. It's paying off in the statistics that we see, not only in people moving here from other areas of the world, Mr. Speaker, and the success rates that they're having in education and employment, Mr. Speaker, but it's paying off for the broader public, Mr. Speaker, with now 165,000 more people living in this province than did a decade ago, Mr. Speaker. That's the largest sustained population growth that this province has seen in over 70 years, Mr. Speaker.

We have 50 consecutive quarters of increased population in this province, Mr. Speaker. And that's because we have a vibrant and growing economy and there's jobs for people to come to in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's because we have a large health care investment, we have a large education investment, and we support all of the people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in particular our newcomers.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course the question was, again, why this Premier refuses to distance himself from the yellow vest movement, a movement that . . . *The Pipeline News* said the other day, "The yellow vest moniker is so tainted now, no one wants anything to do with it." Except, it seems, this Premier, Mr. Speaker.

So my question for the Premier is, what's so hard about this? We've got a movement in which the concentration of association with hateful speech is growing all the time. Who is he afraid to offend? What is he afraid of? Why will he not make it clear that that's the wrong direction?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I've had one resident in this province ask about any affiliation with the yellow vest movement, Mr. Speaker, of myself, and that's the Leader of the Opposition. I've had no one else that has talked about me being affiliated with any movement, Mr. Speaker, outside of defending the economy, the industries, the jobs that we have here in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that is something that I have always done. That is something that we are going to see me do again in the very near future, Mr. Speaker.

We have strong economies, export-based economies here, Mr. Speaker, that are being challenged, Mr. Speaker. They're being challenged, yes, by natural resource prices around the world, but they're also being challenged, Mr. Speaker, by policies that are being put in place by another level of government in this nation, Mr. Speaker. And it's this government that has taken a stand, has led a stand, Mr. Speaker, over the last number of years and will continue to lead our people, Mr. Speaker, and defend the economy that we have in Saskatchewan.

[10:30]

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members here who were at the CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] dinner the other evening would have heard one of the guests, a Muslim member of our community, speaking out about how the yellow vests are a concern. And it's not the only person in the community who I've heard say that the normalization of hate speech against immigrants and against Muslims is a real concern in our province.

It sends a terrible message to the people of this province when the Premier is not willing to make it clear which side he's on. Does he agree with the yellow vests or is he going to distance himself from the yellow vests? Does he agree with the UN [United Nations] compact on migration or is he going to stick with Bernier and Scheer and say that that's a danger to our sovereignty? Make it clear, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, these are yes-or-no questions. We deserve a yes-or-no answer from this Premier.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, in February of this year we saw 9,000 more jobs year over year in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. This individual and 108,000 other individuals, Mr. Speaker, have had the opportunity to move to Saskatchewan because they have the opportunity to find a job in a community across the province of Saskatchewan. Over 190 communities across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

This is an excellent stat. This is a stat that the people in this province can be proud of, Mr. Speaker, and this is a stat that I think goes far beyond just statistics, Mr. Speaker. And I look across the constituency that I represent, Mr. Speaker, and I see people from the Philippines. I see people from China. I see people from India that are living in communities, rural communities, Mr. Speaker, in the constituency that I represent. These are people that are participating in their community. These are people that are participating in the economy of not just the community, but the broader economy of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And what is most exciting about this, Mr. Speaker, is these 108,000 people are the ones, the individuals that have come here, Mr. Speaker. We have more work to do. We're not finished, Mr. Speaker. We're not finished expanding our economy in the province. We're not finished providing opportunities to attract more people here, Mr. Speaker, from all around the world and to support them in their communities, just like we have.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, we're so proud of the newcomers who have joined us in this community, in this province. We're so proud that they're here, and they deserve better than this. They deserve a Premier who's willing to stand up and make it clear which side he's on.

Mr. Speaker, this is not that hard. This is not hard. Let me try it for you. You know what? The yellow vest movement has attracted too much of the wrong element. They've attracted too

much hate speech. And the UN compact has good principles for how we should treat migrants. It's that simple of a statement. Why can't we hear a statement like that? Why can't the newcomers in this province hear a statement like that from their Premier?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, absolutely . . . Myself and everyone on this side absolutely condemns any racist thoughts, any racist actions, Mr. Speaker, and any racist words that are spoken in this province or around the world. I've said that on the floor of this Assembly. I've said this in the rotunda, Mr. Speaker, and I've said it to anyone that asks, Mr. Speaker. The only place that it is being asked is on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, by the Leader of the Opposition.

And I say again, Mr. Speaker, the record of this government speaks for itself. I said 108,000 people that have moved to communities across this province. I provided an example of a few of those communities, Mr. Speaker. When you compare this, when you compare this, Mr. Speaker . . . And here is the choice that the people of the province will have, Mr. Speaker, and have had over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker. And the member from Regina . . . one of the constituencies here, Mr. Speaker, had said, pick a lane, Mr. Speaker. Well here's a lane for the people of the province to pick: 108,000 people that have had the opportunity to better their life and become a resident of this province under this government, Mr. Speaker. Under the members opposite, 18,000.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, those are fine sentiments, and we continue to be so proud of the way we have attracted newcomers to this province. But they deserve an answer. Where is the answer? Where is the answer? It's a very clear . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the people of this province, especially those who have come to this province from other countries, deserve a clear answer from this government, from this Premier. Which is it? Yellow vests or no? UN compact or no? Make it clear. It's a yes or no. It's not that hard.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — This is clear, Mr. Speaker. We condemn all racist thoughts, actions, deeds, Mr. Speaker. This is also clear, Mr. Speaker. And I speak to not only the 108,000 newcomers to this province, Mr. Speaker, that are living across this province, but we also support the industries that we have in this province, Mr. Speaker — agriculture, mining, our manufacturing industry, and our energy industry, Mr. Speaker.

I think back a couple of years ago, Mr. Speaker, to October of 2016 when there was a lane to be picked by the members opposite and the government of the time, Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister of this nation unilaterally imposed a carbon tax, Mr.

Speaker, on all of the people of the nation, Mr. Speaker.

I was at that meeting, Mr. Speaker. I made a choice that day. The previous premier, Brad Wall, made a choice to lead a charge against an ineffective carbon tax that would be imposed on the people of the province, Mr. Speaker. And here's what the current Leader of the Opposition had to say in October of 2016: "... we applaud the federal government's recent announcement of a minimum price on carbon," Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's fair to say, it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that on that particular day both myself and the Leader of the Opposition did stand up, Mr. Speaker. I stood up and walked out of a meeting. He stood up and applauded Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

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

Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the minister got his bow tie in a bit of a knot yesterday as he mixed up his numbers, you know, and I'll give the minister the benefit of the doubt. I think he had the StatsCan chart upside down, Mr. Speaker. But you know, I suspect he's had the benefit of the ... to review those numbers — I'll table this here today and send it across to him — and realize the fact, the fact that Saskatchewan is in fact dead last when it comes to earnings, growth, all across Canada.

This government's agenda has put the brakes on our economy at the worst time, and it's hitting households and jobs and local businesses hard. Now we know the minister is out of touch with Saskatchewan families, but now that he's, you know, flipped that chart upside right and looked at the facts, Mr. Speaker, we hope that minister and that government will commit to reversing the damage and firing up this stagnant economy.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and exports.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well in fact, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is completely wrong. And I'm happy to table that same report, because what that report shows is average weekly earnings increased by 1.4 per cent, \$14.09 compared to the previous month — the largest percentage increase among provinces. That's what the report says, Mr. Speaker. I'm also happy to table that report.

Another thing they got wrong, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition, in the preamble to his first question, said unemployment was over 6 per cent. Completely wrong again, Mr. Speaker. In fact, unemployment is at 5.5 per cent, Mr. Speaker, one of the lowest rates in Canada. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we've seen seven consecutive months of job growth.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you how that trend could be reversed and maybe unemployment rate would be over 6 per cent, and that's if we followed his prescription, Mr. Speaker, which is a weak one — his prescription to stand with Justin Trudeau on the carbon tax.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this is our Economy

minister and he's talking about month over month, which doesn't really make much of a difference. We're talking year over year. It's like shooting rabbits when you're hunting big game, Mr. Speaker.

You know, the Sask Party wants to talk about so-called balance, but the facts of their own budget document speak for themselves, and their choices are damaging our economy. Families are paying nearly \$800 more per year through the PST, and this government is set to triple the debt. They've tripled the debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product] and they've nearly tripled the debt per capita. It's a mess and there's no end in sight.

And as a result, the biggest increase to any line item in the budget by way of per cent is debt charges. Almost \$700 million, up \$60 million over last year, then add the \$500 million from the ballooning Crown corporation debt charges, and that comes to \$1.2 billion, not counting the P3 [public-private partnership] high-interest debt that's hidden by this government in the budget. How on earth can this government call this budget balanced?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, not only do we call the budget balanced, the Provincial Auditor will call the budget balanced. Economists who have looked at it are calling the budget balanced. The credit rating agencies are calling the budget balanced, Mr. Speaker. The only ones that are unbalanced and cannot handle this whatsoever are the NDP [New Democratic Party] Party. They are the only ones.

Now we are very mindful of debt, Mr. Speaker. We've spoken at length in this House and elsewhere on the operating debt. So we are very happy that, this budget, we do not have to increase the operating debt. It still is at a level below what it was when the NDP had the privilege of governing this province, Mr. Speaker. We're mindful of the debt-to-GDP ratio and we are the third lowest in the entire country, second lowest. And we have the second-highest credit rating in this country, Mr. Speaker. That speaks for itself whether or not this debt is manageable.

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

SaskPower Infrastructure

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in question period the Minister for SaskPower stood and flippantly dismissed legitimate concerns about the integrity of our power infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, this is no small thing. Tens of thousands of Saskatchewan people were without power in the middle of the winter, and yesterday's event further highlights the importance of this issue.

And these are concerns for Saskatchewan people. They're concerns for the workers struggling to keep up with the outages and the repairs, and they're concerns for the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker. Instead of grandstanding for social media clips, will the minister let us know today when can we expect the auditor's recommendations to be fully implemented?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

Speaker, I just want to make sure that the member opposite is aware that the December 4th incident that she talks about, and that we all remember, was with respect to a transmission line. The auditor's report dealt with the distribution system, which are two different systems.

But I can inform the member that auditor recommendation no. 1 will be in place by March 31st, 2019, as will no. 2, as will no. 3. Mr. Speaker, work is being done on no. 4. No. 5, the strategy will be in place and approved by the executive by June 30th of 2019, Mr. Speaker. Work is also being done on no. 6 as well as no. 7. We agree with all of those recommendations, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower is working to implement all of the recommendations on the distribution system, as that is what the report was actually on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and that is why we are investing nearly a billion dollars each and every year in infrastructure, when the members opposite — and they know this — were only investing 250 million, 350 million; I think 450 million was the highest amount in the last 10 years under the NDP, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, nearly a billion dollars each and every year under this government.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, that's a very interesting history lesson from a minister who said in this House just yesterday, “. . . live in the now. That's my only advice, Mr. Speaker.” Well you know what is now, Mr. Speaker? A power outage that affected thousands of people 24 hours ago.

One of the main concerns in the auditor's report was that SaskPower admitted it didn't even have enough money to complete high-priority maintenance tasks, and nor were they setting aside enough money to finish the job the next year — even though it could “pose increased safety risks” and “contribute to a higher number of unplanned power outages.”

Now these power outages do not happen in isolation, Mr. Speaker. They happen on the distribution side as well as the transmission side, and the minister knows that well. So will he shelve the political grandstanding and let us know today, will SaskPower set aside the proper money necessary for these high-risk maintenance tasks?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I have said it once in question period, I have said it a thousand times in question period. The members opposite just don't know what they're talking about, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to yesterday, I would refer the member opposite to Manitoba Hydro's website that talks about spring pole fires: “Humidity may combine with dirt on the insulators to create a pathway for electricity to travel . . . to the pole,” Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

Mr. Speaker, I know she was flippant yesterday in terms of how she described yesterday's incident, Mr. Speaker, but this is

something that all electricity companies have to deal with, Mr. Speaker. That is why, in terms of our infrastructure, that is why — and there is no debate about this and I think that the members opposite should realize this — we are spending \$996 million on capital in the last year. We're going to do it again this year. We're going to do it each and every year to make sure that we have a reliable system, unlike what the members opposite did when they were the government.

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

Funding for Alternative School

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we were encouraged to hear the minister change his tune and agree to honour the funding to Cornwall Alternative School. Mr. Speaker, I thank him for acknowledging his mistake and correcting it, at least in the short term.

Yesterday when asked about where the money to fund Cornwall would come from, the minister told reporters the funding would be allocated back to Cornwall. Budget operating figures show that Regina Catholic and Regina Public received less than 2 per cent of an increase, and these divisions are both under tremendous pressure.

So here is my question: will the money to honour the Cornwall agreement be clawed out of these school divisions' budgets, or will it be found elsewhere?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is no, Mr. Speaker. The allocation in the budget, Mr. Speaker, which was otherwise going to be provided to Cornwall, Mr. Speaker, was to be provided to the school boards, Mr. Speaker, to allow for transition of those kids, Mr. Speaker. Those funds are still in the budget and they'll be allocated to Cornwall as they would have been done in previous budgets.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I hope that what the minister just said is that there will be no funding reduction for either the Regina Catholic or Regina Public School Divisions, because we know that these divisions are under a great deal of pressure. There are 14 per cent more English as an additional language students in Regina Public and 27 per cent more in Regina Catholic over the last four years.

Better student supports are desperately needed. There are literally hundreds of places where funds are needed. Can the minister commit today that the full 900,000 that was allocated in this budget will still be going to Regina Public and Regina Catholic?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my last answer, Mr. Speaker, there would be no clawing back of funds from either of the two school divisions in Regina to fund Cornwall Alternative School.

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

Support for Advanced Education

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's good to hear. And it's not just our K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system that is under pressure, but it's our post-secondary institutions as well. And that pressure has made its way down to students.

Saskatchewan students are mortgaging their future, with tens of thousands of dollars in student loans to carry a larger and larger share of the cost of maintaining our post-secondary institutions. Because of the 2017 budget, students can no longer deduct tuition and education expenses from income tax. And this year's budget cuts the amount available for scholarships to help students struggling to pay the highest tuition in Western Canada. When you add rising tuition, skyrocketing student loans, and fewer scholarship supports, you have overburdened, indebted, stressed students.

To the minister: what does she have to say to these students that are bearing the burden of her government's decisions?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. We have made a number of changes to the student supports piece, and one of the changes that we made last time around was that we changed to a system of upfront loans, which was something that students asked for, Mr. Speaker. They now have the ability to plan throughout their education.

And I would also say this, that one of the things that I'm most proud of that we have done as a government with respect to young people, and particularly students in this province, is that the thing that I hear most of all from students that they want is they want a job at the end of their degree, Mr. Speaker. And I'm really pleased and I know that the member from Meadow Lake will be really pleased to go through those statistics again, but I can share with the members opposite that two-thirds of the graduates of our post-secondary institutions in this province stay in the province and work in an area related to their program of study. Nine in ten of them are still living in Saskatchewan, and that's in part to the 70,000 that have taken advantage of the graduate retention program, a very big difference in what was happening under the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — The Minister for Advanced Education likes to say that post-secondary institutions are autonomous. They make their own decisions about how they use their money. And she's right, at least partially. But since 2016 this government has cut nearly \$7 million from the University of Regina and flatlined funding for the last two years. If she believes that this hasn't impacted the universities, she is simply mistaken. Because of the measures taken by this government, the university is struggling to pay faculty and has suspended operations at the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative.

These cuts have come at a time of significant enrolment increases, Mr. Speaker. Since 2009, enrolment has increased 25 per cent at the University of Regina. How does the minister

expect schools like the University of Regina to accommodate this kind of growth without necessary funding?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And once again I want to thank the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, last time this issue was raised, I also said that the amount of increase that we provided to our post-secondary institutions over the last decade, Mr. Speaker, 53 per cent increase from the members on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. Over that same period of time, enrolment numbers have grown by 22 per cent, the consumer price index by 25 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

We have funded our institutions incredibly well. We are very, very strong partners with our institutions. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the U of R [University of Regina], as was pointed out by the member opposite, they are the fourth-highest funded, provincially taxpayer-funded institution in the country, Mr. Speaker. The provincial government is certainly doing its part. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just saying it's another Thursday when I have to roll from question period right into speaking immediately after, which is always a bit difficult in terms of moving from one mood to another, to say the least, Mr. Speaker. I know I had the opportunity to speak a little bit on the budget yesterday. I do want to keep my remarks today fairly short, but there were a few things I wanted to put on the record.

This is a government that, we saw it again this morning, loves to congratulate themselves for all the work they feel that they have done. We saw, you know, applause that went on for way too long, Mr. Speaker, and we've seen it throughout the whole budget debate.

I know my colleagues have had the opportunity to speak very eloquently about how this budget and the past few years of Sask Party rule have impacted those that they know, those that have reached out to them, their constituents, and those in their critic areas, Mr. Speaker, so I'm not going to belabour the point. I'm not going to belabour the thoughtlessness that some of these budget decisions really have. And one has already made itself quite clear, and that's the Cornwall School closure that this

government attempted to do, Mr. Speaker, and the lack of foresight that went into that. I know my colleagues opposite have done a very good job of speaking eloquently about that.

I do want to speak about one particular area in my critic area. And often with these budgets it usually takes a couple of days before people realize the impact that these budgets have had. The one I want to point to in particular is around supports for domestic violence shelters in the province, and sexual assault support services, Mr. Speaker, which is something that we know and we've spoken about many times in the House. The supports are needed and frankly overwhelming the front-line workers that exist today, Mr. Speaker.

And what I've been hearing across the board is that the government flatlining funding for the past six years or so has had a real impact on the ability for these shelters to be able to retain workers and to be able to grow their staff, and in fact has resulted in the cutting of programs.

So I'm looking at specifically a CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] article that came out on March 26th, Mr. Speaker, that's titled "Small increase for Sask. domestic violence shelters 'a nice token': advocate." And that's talking about the small increase that happened in this budget but the fact that the years of flatlining funding in this sector, Mr. Speaker, has had such a devastating impact that what is a small increase, and what we're seeing some applause from the other side go into, doesn't do enough considering the amount of impact the past six years has had, Mr. Speaker.

And I don't need to say it. Jo-Anne Dusel, the head of PATHS [Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan], who I know is well known on both sides of the House, said it in this article. She said, "There was a very small increase for the women's shelters that PATHS represents." We're happy to see that there was an increase. We're happy to see there wasn't a cut, Mr. Speaker. But like she says, "One per cent is a nice token." But "over the past decade the women's shelters have not received more than 1.5 increase per year." And because of that the shelters have been falling behind, Mr. Speaker. She says that "It essentially amounts to very small but actual real cuts in their funding," and then says further:

A lot of our member agencies are having to cut back on services and programs that they've been able to offer over the years because the small increase of one per cent doesn't actually meet the need.

So I wanted to conclude my budget remarks with Jo-Anne's comments. Like I said, it's been spoken about quite eloquently in other ministries, but I wanted to speak about the one that I've seen so far, in Justice in particular, Mr. Speaker.

And although the Sask Party has been spending a lot of time congratulating themselves — and again we saw it in a 30-second-long applause, I think, twice today; I think I saw two long applauds yesterday — I just wanted to leave Jo-Anne's remarks to give, hopefully, members opposite some pause when they decide . . . Because as always is custom after the budget gets voted on, guess what? The budget gets passed. They've got more votes than us. There's usually a very long applause after and a smacking of each others' backs and handshakes. I wanted to

leave Jo-Anne's remarks here to hopefully give some members some pause and some members some food for thought.

So with that, I am prepared to move on. I know we've got some other speakers today. But just for the record, I will be voting on the amendment, yes, and I will not be supporting the budget.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville-Warman.

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank my colleagues for the opportunity to speak. We kind of ran out of time yesterday, so I thank them. I will try not to take up a whole bunch of time, although I know that people have been anxiously awaiting me getting to my feet, particularly the member for Regina Elphinstone who's giving me a big thumbs-up. And I want to give a shout-out to him. He is such a good sport. He said something nice about, dare I say, Grant Devine, last session. And I put it on a T-shirt for him and he actually wore it and let me take a picture and put it on social media. So I do want to thank him. He was a very good sport.

And I think it's, you know, we like . . . I think too oftentimes people think that we just disagree all the time in this House. And that's not the case; there's a lot of fun had back and forth across the floor. Not all the time, but it does happen, and I wanted to recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone.

I'm going to run through a few quick thank yous. Thank you to Whitney, my constituency assistant. I think he's on year 25. And he's a great asset to our team, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank him. To my constituents who have sent me here yet again, it's such an honour to represent them and the amazing support that I have received from them over the years.

And to my girls who . . . You know, it's evidence of how long we've been here. I remember Sharmaine sitting on my lap during the nomination meeting. She was 9 years old and she turned 22 in January. So when I announced that I wasn't running again, it's things like that run through my head. And you realize how long you've actually been here when you look at your kids and see how much older they are. Jasmine just turned 25 a couple weeks ago, and she said, it's the last birthday she's celebrating. She's hit a quarter century. It's the last milestone; she's done. And I said, well come back when she's 30 and 40 and 50 and celebrate those, but we can ignore the ones in between, which will save me a lot of money if we're not celebrating birthdays . . . [inaudible].

[11:00]

And another thank you obviously, Mr. Speaker, to my husband. I call him Yanni, but I think everybody else knows him as John. And it's been a pretty awesome four years with him. And people ask me how I'm adjusting to married life. Hard to say because I was never home when we were dating and I'm never home now, so I guess we'll find out when I'm done this job and I'm home. We might end up realizing we don't like each other because I'm home all the time, but for now it's going great.

And with him, Mr. Speaker, I've acquired children over the years. I started off this job being single and unencumbered and acquired some girls, and now I have two stepsons as well, Dustin and Nolan. And they're great kids, and it's been exciting to see

our family get bigger . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And I'm supposed to thank the member for Moosomin who's bugging me from behind here. So thank you to the member for Moosomin for all of your great support for me. It's fantastic.

And I do want to thank the Finance minister. She's not just my colleague, she's my friend. We have a really good time together, which is good considering how much time we spend sitting on treasury board. But I do want to thank her. I'm very proud of her and the work that she's done in presenting this budget.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to talk about a couple of things that aren't in the budget, and then I'm going to go talk about a few things that are in the budget. And you know, Mr. Speaker, what's not in this budget is money for pipelines. And you know why? Because governments don't build pipelines. Government's job is to have the regulatory environment where businesses want to invest. And we've seen the federal government completely abdicate their responsibility on that front and actually make it harder.

But I found it very interesting. Yet again yesterday the member for Athabasca condemns us, saying, well the Sask Party hasn't built one inch of pipeline to tidewater. Well first of all, I didn't realize we had tidewater in Saskatchewan, because that's a jurisdiction in which we're working. And second of all, if he expects us to get it to BC [British Columbia] . . . Well, second of all, governments don't build pipelines. Third point, if he wants us to get it to BC, are we supposed to invade Alberta and BC with pipes and shovels in our hands and just go put this thing in the ground?

He's so concerned about getting a pipeline to tidewater. Why doesn't he go talk to his old buddies over in BC? He can talk to John Horgan. They must talk because Horgan sends them the money, so they must have a conversation. If he's so concerned about getting it to tidewater, why doesn't he go talk to his brothers and sisters in the BC government and see if they can get some help on that front, Mr. Speaker?

But we know that's not going to happen because in their very heart, Mr. Speaker, they don't like pipelines. I think they are trying to walk this line where they're trying to appear to the people of this province that they do, but to their hard-core supporters, they really don't.

And I know that the Leader of the Opposition gets quite offended when we bring up this picture of him speaking behind a sign — a very anti-pipeline sign — and says, well I don't really support that. Well here's a pro tip, Mr. Speaker, from somebody who's been around politics as a staffer. It's called doing advance work. You have staff go out for you. You check out the venue. And you make sure that wherever you are reflects the message that you're trying to deliver. And in this case, if he's all pro-pipeline, then why are you standing behind an anti-pipeline sign?

It's like making an announcement about new car sales in front of an auto wrecker or having a pro-democracy discussion in front of a poster of Castro. It's just doesn't make any sense, Mr. Speaker. So he says, well I didn't decorate the stage. Well maybe not, Mr. Speaker, but he certainly didn't have to stand behind it.

Mr. Speaker, you know what else isn't in this budget? There is no provincial carbon tax in this budget. And, Mr. Speaker, again

to the Leader of the Opposition, our party put out some ads, and he said categorically not one thing in those ads is true. It's all wrong. Nothing in this ad is true. Because we pointed out his support for the carbon tax.

Well, Mr. Speaker, being a researcher — once a researcher, always a researcher — I went and started looking for quotes with the Opposition Leader supporting pipelines. I actually had to stop because I was so bored because there were so many of them. So I will read a few of them. He said, this is a CBC article which I'm quoting, the Leader of the Opposition:

. . . supports the federal government's plan to put a price on carbon. The provincial NDP has said it disagrees with the provincial government's position and its climate policy but has yet to put forward its own position.

In the *Leader-Post*, the NDP leader “. . . took shots at the Sask Party's anti-carbon tax campaign.” That was at their recent NDP convention.

He said on CKOM, and this is quoting him directly: “There is a model that works if you look at the economics of it. There is an argument to be made for putting a price on carbon.”

But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to inject by saying that socialists don't understand economics. If they did, they wouldn't be socialists. So I don't think I'll take any economic teachings from them.

Meili is an unabashed supporter for “some form of carbon pricing.” “I think carbon pricing is a model that works.” That's from the *Leader-Post*.

He said this in *The Sheaf*. This is the quote in the article:

He [the leader] says that carbon pricing has been shown to be a decent economic [again, them and their economics] and environmental policy and that it has the ability to actually reduce emissions with fewer economic impacts compared to heaving regulations.

So again, NDP economics. So that's fantastic.

I do have a couple more, and then I'm sure the rest of us are getting bored at me quoting the NDP leader and his support of carbon tax. Although again, when the ads came out nothing in those ads is true. So let's keep that in mind.

CBC Radio interview, he said, “Putting a price on carbon is something that there has been a lot of scaremongering about, but it's really just a practical way of decreasing emissions.” And I have to use this one, Mr. Speaker. In another CBC article, he said, “We applaud the federal government's recent announcement of a minimum price on carbon.”

So as far as the ads go, I guess that part is true, and he can maybe tell us why he keeps saying that it's not. But one more quote and I'm going to quote Gerald Butts from his recent committee appearance in Ottawa, where he said, “Facts are very stubborn things.” So there's that.

I think I should probably just end it right there because that was fun. But I do want to go through some of the things that are . . .

No, I have one more thing to say before I get to some areas of agreement between the NDP and us. This goes back to their position on economics.

Just last November, which wasn't that long ago, the NDP, the leader implored us to be more like Alberta. Well that's interesting because apparently the NDP government in Alberta is just going gangbusters and doing such a great job over there. He said:

Albertans aren't any more hard-working than Saskatchewan people are. [I have to agree with him there.] I can assure you that. But what they do have is a government that isn't making a slow economy worse . . .

Well, Mr. Speaker, let's just do a recap on the outstanding fiscal approach of the NDP in Alberta. A recent fiscal report states, and I quote, "Alberta's fiscal policies are unsustainable." The credit rating agency DBRS [Dominion Bond Rating Service Ltd.] stated that Alberta's debt issues are due to ". . . the NDP-led government and its inability to demonstrate meaningful action to address its fiscal imbalances."

Mr. Speaker, Alberta has massive debt with no plan to get out of it. They have a higher unemployment rate than here, and a lower credit rating. And only the NDP and their approach on economics would be asking for that, Mr. Speaker. And that is not the approach that we're going to take.

We've seen in this budget, named *The Right Balance* for Saskatchewan, I believe it is because it is a balanced budget. I realize that the Leader of the Opposition says, well but it's not balanced but not really on an actual . . . You know, if you take accounting practices into account, it might be, but otherwise it's not. So I'll let that statement stand on its own.

Mr. Speaker, we do have some areas of agreement and it will be interesting to see, in just a few minutes, the NDP and voting . . . I'm sure they've all said it. They're going to vote against this budget even though it contains so many very specific things that they had asked for. Mr. Speaker, the NDP called for St. Pius School to be repaired or rebuilt. They said in a press release, and I quote, "Parents with concerns about the condition of École St. Pius joined with the NDP at the legislature to call on the Sask Party government to finally commit to repairing or building this school." Mr. Speaker, this budget does just that and they'll be voting against it.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP called for an increased return from potash. Again, an NDP press release said, and I quote, "It's important that we find the right balance to facilitate investment in Saskatchewan potash while making sure that the owners of the resource, Saskatchewan people, receive their fair share." What was the NDP's response to that, Mr. Speaker? Now apparently they're complaining about it; somehow we shouldn't have done it and they'll be voting against that later today.

The NDP called for intersection improvements. The NDP leader said, and I quote, "We need to work to prevent future tragedies at rural intersections around the province." Well he actually asked for roundabouts at every rural intersection and I did . . . Having been Highways minister before, I have a pretty good understanding of what things cost and so I did some quick and dirty accounting or factoring on this, and his plan would cost

about \$4 billion, so I don't think that's real feasible.

But we do have in this budget, Mr. Speaker, the first year of a multi-year \$65 million infrastructure safety program for rural intersections. And, Mr. Speaker, they'll be voting against that today as well.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP called for increases in funding to education. There's too many quotes. To the critic's credit, she asks every day in question period. And, Mr. Speaker, this budget puts \$26 million over and above last year's budget. It is the largest allocation to education that our province has ever seen, and they'll be voting against that later today.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP called for very specific things, the mental health and addictions file . . . and including they called for 7 per cent of the health budget to be allocated for mental health. From a press release that the NDP put out:

An increase in the health budget for mental health from the current five per cent to at least the national average of seven per cent, as promised by the premier during his run for leadership . . .

This budget is actually seven and a half per cent, Mr. Speaker, of Health's total spending. And what was the NDP's response? It's not enough. It's more than what they asked for; it's not enough. But either way, they'll be voting against that later today as well, Mr. Speaker.

And I find it interesting that when we deliver exactly what they've asked for, they said it's not good enough; they're going to vote against it. I think the Leader of the Opposition actually accused us of stealing a bunch of their ideas. Well if they're his ideas and they're so good, and so good that we had to steal them, why is he voting against them? But they can explain that to their constituents and their stakeholders, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm going to wrap up. I had a bunch more but I'm going to wrap up with this. And I can't believe I'm doing this but I'm going to quote some Murray Mandryk because I know that the NDP love to do that all the time so I thought I would join with them — you know, the spirit of co-operation — and quote from this. And as I said, the NDP are having such a hard time with this budget, because it's what they asked for and now they're going to stand up and vote against it.

So maybe I'll . . . There's so much highlighted . . . [inaudible] . . . just read the whole thing. But he says in an article from March 22nd, and I quote, quoting Murray Mandryk:

New Democrat Opposition leader Ryan Meili needs to pick a lane — preferably, one not on the left-hand side of the road where he risks slamming into on-coming traffic. In Saskatchewan, we don't normally drive on the left side. Meili, who has a natural tendency to drift left, needs to . . . [represent] a better argument why we should. Wednesday's budget won't help him make that case.

The article goes on to say, and I quote:

But budgets for both governments and oppositions quickly become all about making your case as to whether the

financial plan does or does not work. For the Opposition, that means focusing on a consistent theme and sticking to it.

. . . Meili is not leading the budget criticism because he's swerving all over the place. Pick a lane, sir.

He goes on to say, in the article, Murray Mandryk quotes the Leader of the Opposition saying:

"This was a budget with a huge deficit . . . (although) maybe not by an accounting deficit." Huh?

And here I was going to interject that socialists don't understand economics; otherwise they wouldn't be socialists. But I guess I don't have to repeat myself on that one. And then Murray goes on to outline the stakeholders who are supporting us, and then says:

These stakeholders aren't Saskatchewan Party government cheerleaders. Many of them have come to the legislature — often, accompanied by the NDP — with specific spending requests. Many such requests were met Wednesday.

Then he goes on to mention the fact that the Opposition Leader is accusing us of stealing his ideas, ideas that he's now going to be voting against, so good on him for that. He goes on to say, and I quote:

New Democrat finance critic Trent Wotherspoon in his budget reply Thursday morning described this [this is in reference to the changes to potash, something that they asked for] as a shoddy way to treat world-class companies. Again; huh?

And I don't know. To finish off this article, he says:

Finally, you need a ballpark explanation of what you would do differently if you are going to clamour for balanced budgets and lower debt. Meili's response Wednesday was it's too early to have that conversation. A third time: Huh?

[11:15]

So you know, Mr. Speaker, his job as Leader of the Opposition is to oppose, obviously, but then try to convince the people of this province why the New Democratic Party should be government again. But apparently it's too early. Being a year and a half away from an election is too early to have a conversation about how you balance increased spending, don't increase debt, lower taxes, don't borrow. And I realize they have a hard time with economics and math, so maybe it will take them the next year and a half to figure that out, and good on them for that.

Mr. Speaker, but we know how the NDP would approach this, and it would be increasing taxes. We've seen it before. That's what happens is they go after every single person in this province for money if they are trying to balance the books. Mr. Speaker, our approach has been different. We have increased the low-income tax credit for people. We've taken 112,000 people off the tax rolls altogether, Mr. Speaker, because those, the lowest wage earners, should be able to keep more money in their pockets, Mr. Speaker.

And I came across a letter that was written to . . . Now they're going to complain about stay in the moment, but it all comes back to the moment. But for a moment we're going to talk about the NDP. I'll live in the now very soon. This letter was written to Premier Romanow:

Dear Mr. Romanow, I'm writing in regard to the Saskatchewan surtax attached to income tax returns.

And, Mr. Speaker, let's flash back a little bit. When the NDP were trying to balance the books, they did it by putting on a debt reduction surtax onto every single wage earner in this entire province regardless of income. Let's keep that in mind. Back to this letter:

I am unable to understand the logic behind placing such a financial burden on lower wage earners such as myself. I've been paying the correct amount of income tax every month, all year, and yet at income tax return time, I somehow owe over \$300.

Let's keep in mind this is 1997 this letter was written in — \$300.

This may not seem like a substantial amount of money to you. It is to me. The tax I am to pay is due entirely to the Saskatchewan surtax [which is Saskatchewan NDP surtax]. I grossed less than \$16,000 last year and now am expected to pay more. I am not some kid living at her parents', rent-free, spending my paycheques on hairspray and movie passes. I am a 25-year-old educated manager of a small retail business. I have a mortgage and student loans. I struggle every month. This surtax is unfair.

And then it goes on to, you know, outline the argument a little bit more. And it's signed by me.

So I was outraged. I was 26 years old and I was outraged at the NDP surtax. I made \$16,000 that year. You know what happens . . . We'll go back to the moment. You know what happens to wage-earners in this province who earn \$16,000 a year in Saskatchewan today? They pay zero provincial income tax, Mr. Speaker. That is the difference between the NDP and the Saskatchewan Party.

Mr. Speaker, you know, good on them today. They can go back to their constituents, those very same constituents and stakeholders who have asked them for things like increased money for mental health and addictions, for schools, for hospitals, for better roads, for all of the other things that their constituents are asking them for. They can go back and explain to them today exactly why they're voting against all of those things, Mr. Speaker.

And in the process of . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, she has no problem doing that. Well then, you can go back to the folks at St. Pius and tell them why you voted against their school, so good luck with that messaging.

Mr. Speaker, I understand why it's going to take them so long to come up with some kind of explanation about their spending money, not spending money, increasing taxes, not increasing taxes — whatever their master plan is. Good luck in the next year and a half, Mr. Speaker, because people of this province know

overwhelmingly what the Leader of the Opposition admitted just a few weeks ago, that is Saskatchewan ready for an NDP government? You know what his answer was? No. Couldn't agree more.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the NDP amendment. I will be supporting my government's budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be in this House today and be able to present my response to this year's budget. Before getting right down to the budget itself, as is customary I'll make a few remarks in regards to some thanks.

And the first place I would point those thanks is towards the people of Meewasin who were kind enough to elect me in 2017 in a by-election. And it's a beautiful area along the river, north of downtown: City Park, Richmond Heights, North Park, River Heights.

And I'm always . . . Every time I think about Meewasin, I think about that Meewasin Valley and that beautiful part of the province, but also what that word means. *miywâsin* is a Cree word which means beautiful. It also means good. And it's such a reminder for me to always remember that I've been elected to work for the good, and in the case of Meewasin it's right there in the name. So I'm thankful to the people of Meewasin.

I'm also very thankful to my constituency assistant, who works in our little red house on 3rd Avenue in Saskatoon, Jasmine Liska, who does an incredible job serving the constituents of Meewasin. I hear over and over again from constituents what a great experience it is when they go to ask for help and how she'll go the extra mile to make sure that they get the support that they need. And she is very patient with the amount of time that I have to be away as provincial leader, and does an incredible job keeping things up there at 814 3rd Avenue North.

I also want to thank the staff that we work with here in the building, our caucus staff who do so much work to make us such an effective opposition and allow us to look like we know what we're doing once in a while.

And of course the staff and the members and the volunteers that make up the New Democratic Party. There's a huge movement across this province of New Democrats that are committed to a province that works for everyone, and they work in every community in this province to advance that cause.

[Applause]

Mr. Meili: — I'm thankful to them and I'm thankful to the folks slapping their desks around me as well. This group of caucus colleagues, the 13 of us, the baker's dozen now with the addition of the member from Regina Northeast, is a pretty incredible group to work with. And I'm very fortunate to get to spend the time that I do with them, to learn from them, to work alongside each other, to laugh at people across the way, at each other, at ourselves, and have a good time as we also try to do some good work, and work for the people of the province. And work is exactly what they do. They work so hard, and they come every

day committed to doing the very best, the very most right thing we're able to do.

I also want to acknowledge you, Mr. Speaker. You've taken on a role that is difficult. Trying to keep this crowd in a semblance of order is no easy task, and we try to make it just a little bit more difficult for you every day. So thanks for your efforts there.

And to the members opposite . . . You know, I'm actually a little bit disappointed that the member for Martensville-Warman left. You know, we disagree on so many things and have so many little scraps across the way, but I know that members here are in service of their communities as well. And often alongside the scraps, there is some moments of good humour here in the Chamber, as well as out in the community where we see each other. And I wish people could see more of the way in which we do, whenever possible, try to find the common ground.

Of course, I want to say thank you to my family. And we've been joined by a surprise guest: Mr. Wally Meili of Moose Jaw just joined us in the Speaker's gallery. That's my dad. He stopped in to say hello. And pardon me for not including it in introductions; I just noticed him up there. So I appreciate your patience there. Very happy to see Wally here, and of course he and my mom, Lea, are such great supports for me and for our family throughout the year, and throughout the years in the past are the sources of much of whatever strength it is I'm able to bring to this role.

And while talking about family, we are about to celebrate my brother's 50th birthday. My brother Miles will be 50 this April 6th. And he lives in Toronto; he's a worker in film. We'd like him to be here working in film. I think he'd like to be as well, but I'm going to leave that aside. A happy birthday to Miles coming up. And of course, there's my brother Jim who is on the farm near Moose Jaw.

And my family at home in Saskatoon. And my wife, Mahli, who is a pediatrician as you know, has taken on a new role. She's, as well as being the pediatrician at the refugee clinic and doing the northern clinics and her regular work at the hospital and her downtown clinic, she's now the on-site pediatrician for Sanctum Care Group. This is a group that many will know, who does work in the community for new moms who either have HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] or at risk of HIV, and they get a time to be in a special home with extra supports to make sure that, in those early weeks with their new babies, that they thrive and the babies thrive. And she loves that role as a pediatrician in that place, right in the heart of the west side of Saskatoon.

And she'll be taking part in the Sanctum Survivor challenge coming up. I know the member for Saskatoon Riversdale did the same challenge a few years ago, working to raise funds for that very, very valuable project.

And at home with Mahli we have two sons: Abraham and Augustin, Abe and Gus, who are ages 7 and 18 months respectively. Abe is deep in books these days, obsessed with fairy tales and Greek mythology. He's a fascinating kid to hang out with. And Gus is fascinated with buses and dogs. And we can see a 50th bus for a day or the 50th dog for a day, he's still as excited as he was for the first one. And he's a great time to be around as well.

And, you know, we often talk. We often talk in this place about how we do the work we do for our kids and for our families. And there's truth in that and, you know, I definitely recognize the way in which all of my family has to make sacrifices. And the boys, in particular, don't get to see me as much as they'd like to. I certainly don't get to spend as much time with them as I would like to. They make sacrifices, and it's not easy. It's not easy having me away all the time.

But I know that they'll be fine. They'll be fine. They have people who love them, their parents, their grandparents, their aunts, and uncles, all the friends in the neighbourhood. They have a safe place to live. They'll go to good schools. They have a community around them who cares about them. They'll be okay.

It's not really for them that we need to do this work, as much as I want them to live in a great and fair province. It's for other kids that we need to do this work: the kids who are my patients and thousands like them across the province, the kids who aren't able to have everything they need to thrive.

I know so many families, so many families who are trying so hard every day, trying so hard every day to succeed but they're pulled back. They're pulled back by poverty and all its traps, by addictions, by family violence, by unstable housing. I think of the hundreds of kids who go to school hungry every day in this province and go home to an overcrowded apartment or house and don't have a safe place of their own.

It's the quarter of Saskatchewan kids who are living in poverty today, the nation-leading number of kids using the food bank . . . I see the member shaking his head. He uses the numbers from Statistics Canada which would suggest it's 10 per cent, but when you include indigenous kids, you actually get up to, kids living on-reserve, you get up to 25 per cent, a quarter of the kids in this province living in poverty, Mr. Speaker. It's for those kids, it's for the kids who fill up our pediatric wards, our foster care homes, our youth correctional centres — that's the kids we need to be working hardest for in this place.

And it's for parents and grandparents who struggle and worry, who don't go back to work, don't go back to school because they can't find child care, who know that their son or daughter isn't keeping up at school but that the teachers are too overwhelmed to be able to give the help they need. It's for the parents who are waiting month after month to see a specialist for a physical or mental health concern and wonder how much worse things are getting while they wait.

Saskatchewan can and should be the best place in Canada to be a kid or to raise a family. And the best measure of a budget is how it sets the stage, not for success in this fiscal year, not for success in the next election, but for success for the next generation. So that's the question before us. How does this budget measure up?

Well and this might come as a surprise to the members opposite who probably expect me to be lighting my hair on fire and saying it's the worst budget of all time, but the truth is it's not the worst budget that I've seen. In fact there are some commendable elements, most notably an investment in mental health.

[11:30]

With all the caveats that it could be better and that there's always more we can do, increasing investment in mental health is something we've been asking for for a long time. Our mental health and addictions critic, all of the members here have been working on that and more and more so in recent months as we hear what's happening across the province. There are still today so many people struggling with depression, with anxiety, with other mental illnesses, so many young people taking their lives. This is something that needs to be dealt with and we hear about the way in which the economic struggles of this province over the last few years have made that harder, has made it even harder for people to have hope that there is a possibility that things will get better. So we're happy to see some investment in that area, happy to see some hope.

We'll also add the tax credit for volunteer first responders as a positive thing. Across the province there's a network of caring people who, when you're in trouble, they step up to help out, and it's a positive thing for them to see some financial recognition alongside the community recognition that they so sincerely deserve, Mr. Speaker. So yes, it's not the worst budget I've ever seen, Mr. Speaker.

The worst budget was in 2017. The worst budget was in 2017, and that's the budget that's still impacting the lives of Saskatchewan people every day, and that's the budget that this budget has not undone the damage, Mr. Speaker.

After a decade of record revenues, Mr. Speaker . . . And I heard a member opposite suggesting that we shouldn't say they had record revenues because the province grows, so every government has a higher amount of revenue. How disingenuous is that, Mr. Speaker? Record high prices in oil, over \$100 a barrel; high prices in uranium, in potash. This is a government . . . No government has seen this kind of a windfall, and no government has gone on the same kind of spending spree, Mr. Speaker. And despite warnings and calls for restraint and foresight, they spent and planned like it would always be this way and it was never going to go away, Mr. Speaker.

And along comes 2017. And along comes 2017. What do they give us? A billion-dollar deficit. A doubling of the PST, from 1 billion to \$2 billion a year. A transfer of the taxes from those who can pay it the most to those who pay the least. It was so clear. The chart is still burned in my mind as you see the way in which the top earners saw their increase in taxes as a per cent of their income not go up at all that year, but the bottom 10 per cent of earners, they saw it go up by 2 per cent. The more you make, the less you pay with this government, Mr. Speaker. And at the same time they added PST to construction, to restaurant meals, to so many industries that slowed down the economy at a time when we were already struggling.

They killed off STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]. They cut libraries. They cut funerals for those who die in poverty. They cut hearing aid programs for children. They cut education from preschool all the way to post-secondary. And that damage, that damage didn't go away. That damage is cumulative. So many of the cuts they made in 2017 are baked into this budget and each subsequent budget.

Mr. Speaker, it's the classic austerity approach: a government that in a time of crisis says hey, we'll cut taxes for those who

make the most; we'll sell off public goods, and we'll reduce services. We'll cut services for those who need them the most, as if that would somehow make our economy better. It's been tried all over the world. It's been tried here in this province and it doesn't work. It hurts people in the short term and it slows down our long-term economic recovery.

We see the comparison with Alberta. We're still struggling in this province, and they rebounded so much more quickly because they didn't go down that road of austerity. They didn't go down that road of cutting the services we need the most.

The 2017 budget took a mess and made it worse, and the ramifications are still felt today. And none are resolved in this budget. And that's why it's so hard, Mr. Speaker, to take the self-congratulations, the mission-accomplished back-patting that we see on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, as though they expect us to throw a parade because they've partially cleaned up a mess they created themselves.

It's hard to take and it's hard to take seriously, Mr. Speaker, because this is right out of the right wing election cycle handbook. The first budget, they hit 'em hard, shock and awe, make the big changes, cut back on the things we need the most.

Second budget, okay, well not quite as bad, still a little more pain. You know, it was the rental housing supplement and the PST on used cars this time around. But you know, people won't be quite as upset.

And then the third budget, well they don't fix any of what they cut. You don't want to waste what you gained in that crisis, what you were able to pull back during that crisis. But no new pain. They don't want people too upset.

And then in the last budget, well then come the big project announcements. Then come the goodies. Then come the efforts to buy the next election, Mr. Speaker. It's a classic dodge and you've just got to, you've got to ask the question: do they really think the people of Saskatchewan are stupid? Do they think our memories are that short that we don't understand exactly what it is they're doing, that they'll just forget the last three budgets?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think so. I think the people of Saskatchewan are intelligent. I think they can see through exactly what that is and what that represents, the games that are being played, Mr. Speaker. Because we've heard the sell job, the sell job that this is a balanced budget. But this budget is not balanced, not in any real terms, Mr. Speaker, not in any real sense of the word "balance."

There might not be a deficit on the balance sheet, but that's because that deficit is in our classrooms. It's in our daycares. It's in our universities and it's in our colleges. Mr. Speaker, the deficit is in our emergency rooms. It's in our long wait times to see specialists. The deficit is in our overburdened and understaffed seniors' homes. It's in our unemployment lines, unemployment that has grown so much in the last few years, Mr. Speaker. The deficit is in empty cupboards and empty fridges across this province. The deficit is in the number of families who are one injury, one sick day, one unexpected expense away from destitution. There's no balance if the budget in this building is in the black, but it's breaking the bank in kitchen tables across this

province, Mr. Speaker.

And as for the debt, we all know that this debt has continued to grow under the Sask Party government, another \$1.8 billion this year. We're set, we've already over doubled the debt since this Sask Party took government. It's set to triple by 2022 — \$22,000 per woman, man, and child across this province. It's an exceptional debt load. And they like to say, oh well, per capita is not so bad; percentage of GDP, not so bad.

Well those are climbing as well, Mr. Speaker. We're getting into dangerous territory when it comes to the growth of debt, and debt that has been fuelled by bad decisions. They try to say, oh, this is good debt. Well it's bad debt when it comes from a bypass that went from \$400 million to \$2 billion, far more than should ever have been spent on that project. When we look at how much was sunk into carbon capture and sequestration and the huge overruns and the failures on that project, and the GTH [Global Transportation Hub], Mr. Speaker, the GTH, a project that continues to grow in debt and managed . . . Its only major contribution was to the coffers of donors of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker.

And debt that's fuelled by a broken procurement model, a procurement model that sees most of this funding handed out to big out-of-province companies, missing the opportunity to employ more Saskatchewan people, to see their taxes paid to our public coffers, and to see local investment coming from growing Saskatchewan companies, Mr. Speaker. And all of this debt means . . . What this debt means is that we're unable to invest the way we'd like to in key areas of our budget.

But I will congratulate one minister, Mr. Speaker, on growth in his or her industry. I say his or her because I don't know which is the ministry of debt servicing, but that's the ministry that's seen the most growth, Mr. Speaker, up from 634 million to almost 700 million. Government debt charges went up the most of any spending area, up by \$60 million this year, Mr. Speaker. When you add to that the Crown debt of half a billion dollars and the P3 debt they won't disclose, that makes debt repayment, debt-servicing charges the third-largest ministry in this entire government. That's how much we're paying every year and not having around to invest where we'd like to because of the way they've allowed debt to skyrocket so quickly.

So my question, Mr. Speaker, is what does that minister, the minister of debt-servicing charges, know that the Deputy Premier doesn't? Why was he or she so much more successful? Because the Deputy Premier went out and talked a good game about education to teachers, but he wasn't able to come through at the cabinet table. And that's a shame. It's a real shame. And it's been acknowledged by the Finance minister and others that they have not done what they'd like to have done in education, that they've fallen short on that important file, Mr. Speaker.

Because every dollar you don't spend in education, you wind up spending far more times in justice, in health, and in social services. Poverty, illness, and crime — these are the results of failing to invest upstream, to invest in children. And that's what's on the rise in Saskatchewan. We have the worst health outcomes in the country. Yes — worst mortality, highest rates of illness, worst health outcomes all over the country. No mention of that in the budget boasting, Mr. Speaker.

And only Saskatchewan and Quebec grew in poverty last year. Only Saskatchewan and Quebec actually saw their poverty numbers increase. And I mentioned that the other day to the minister, and he thought that the best response to that was to say, oh well, it was worse under the NDP. And he didn't care for my response which was, who cares? Because who does care? Why would this minister not want to do his job? Why would he not want to take responsibility for what's happening now?

When poverty's growing under him, it's his problem and not just . . . We had the minister across the way decide he was going to go for a rip on my colleague here and tell him to stop referencing things in the past, told him to live in the now, Mr. Speaker. Now that's pretty rich. That is pretty rich. I've only been here a couple of years, but I still haven't sat through a question period where I haven't heard the folks on that side try to blame the current problems of what's going on on the NDP. Live in the now, Mr. Speaker — if there's an award for lack of self-awareness out there, if there's an award for lack of self-awareness, it's going right up next to the 1,000-question-period trophy he gave himself today.

Mr. Speaker, poverty has grown. Health outcomes are worse and safety is a bigger and bigger concern. This week there's an emergency safety meeting in my neighbourhood because of a spike in crime in that area, a spike in gang activity. People aren't feeling safe in the community, and that's happening all across the province. And even though enforcement experts point to the fact that it's that growing poverty that's the problem, it's addictions that's the problem, this government thinks they can police their way out of the issue.

Poverty, illness, and crime, and it shows up loud and clear in this budget that those are on the rise. Since 2016 we've seen increases of 4 per cent in health, 9 per cent in corrections, and 18 per cent in social services — the third year in a row that this government has boasted about the highest expenditures in social services as though it was something to be proud of, that more and more people need social assistance. And here we are with one in four kids living in poverty in this province because they've failed to make the upstream investments to keep them out of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, what about education? We saw 4 per cent for health, 9 per cent for corrections, 18 per cent for social services. What about education since 2016? Zero growth. Nothing at all. Nothing at all. In advanced education we've actually seen a cut of 4 per cent — zeros the last two years. And the ministers know, the ministers know that a zero in education is actually a cut because you have to pay for inflation, you have to pay for wages, higher enrolment, maintenance of older buildings. Zeros are a cut because we've had growth in our education system, growth in student numbers, growth in diversity as we've got more kids coming with English or French as an additional language, and growth in complexity — more kids with mental health struggles, more kids with special needs. But we have not seen the growth to go alongside that in terms of the supports for teachers to actually be able to get the job done for kids.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party is failing our most important test. And this budget gives no indication that they're studying any harder. I will give credit to the minister for acknowledging that failure to do his homework when it comes to Cornwall Alternative School. Full credit there. We're happy to see funding

restored there. But of course that funding needs to go beyond 2020, and it needs to not come at the expense of investing properly in the public and separate school systems, Mr. Speaker.

And we need to see that same willingness to think again, to reflect on where the homework wasn't done and invest wisely applied to the entire education system, pre-K [pre-kindergarten], K to 12, and post-secondary as well. Because the deficit that they say is nowhere is in our schools, Mr. Speaker.

It's in our schools and the deficit is in our homes. We see the way that people are struggling to pay their bills. Mortgages in arrears. People aren't able to pay their mortgages — more than three times the national average and haven't been this bad since 1992. Foreclosures of homes have jumped by 200 per cent since this Sask Party formed government. Utility bills. The number of people who aren't able to pay their SaskEnergy and SaskTel bills are up by 86 per cent.

And because this government has downloaded so many costs to municipalities, cut funding for municipalities, those municipalities have had to raise their taxes, have not been able to balance their budgets, which means that they're now seeing the highest number in long, long memory of people who aren't able to pay their property taxes, an increase of 85 per cent in the last five years in Saskatoon, 112 per cent in Moose Jaw, and 147 per cent — 147 per cent increase — in Regina.

[11:45]

And then there's the increase from the PST, which is costing the average family \$800 more each year because the Sask Party decided they needed twice as much money out of the PST. That's some pretty substantial growth. That's a pretty substantial tax hit and a tax hit on those who can afford to pay it the least, Mr. Speaker.

Meanwhile average weekly earnings are flat, retail sales are flat, and we're set to have the lowest minimum wage in the country again in just a few days. Mr. Speaker, add to that that on April 1st we're about to see things get more costly in this province because of the imposition of a federally designed carbon tax. This party has made a lot of noise. They made a lot of noise against that carbon tax, but they've come up with no alternative. They walked away from the table. And they did not do their work to come up and negotiate a different approach, an approach that would keep that tax off of fuel, keep it off of regular purchases. Because right now the tax that's designed isn't fair to Saskatchewan people, especially not rural people, especially not people in northern Saskatchewan.

It's going to cost us so much more, and it's going to cost us more because it was designed in Ottawa without an eye to what Saskatchewan really needs. And this government had an opportunity to fight for a better way, to actually be at the table and say, we can do this better. Did they do that? No. They just went straight from slamming their hands on the table to going to court and did no work in between, Mr. Speaker. The minister tried to say there was no room to negotiate, but he never even tried.

This government just likes to pick fights. They like to point fingers elsewhere. And they like to pick fights with Ottawa. We

haven't seen them win any of those fights yet, but that's what they like to do. They like to distract and divide from their own record by pointing the finger elsewhere, Mr. Speaker. The federal carbon tax is coming this April 1st and we have no one to thank for that except the Premier of this province, Mr. Speaker.

However through this, the Sask Party did find a way to love the Crowns, something they've had a hard time doing through their history — never been great fans of our Crown corporations. But they did find a way to take advantage of them now by politicizing the bills, directing SaskPower and SaskEnergy to put a federal carbon tax line in bright red ink on their bills to distract from the damage they've done and the way that their choices have caused those rates to rise, Mr. Speaker. We heard the Minister of Environment say, that's not politics; that's transparency. That's not politics, he said. That's transparency, he said.

Well I'm all for transparency, Mr. Speaker, so let's keep that line on the bills. Let's keep that federal carbon tax line on our power bills, but let's add a couple more. Let's add a whole section in fact — the Bill Boyd section, the Bill Boyd tax on our bills. The one that explains how power rates have been climbing for the last years, rate increase after rate increase steadily for years because of the \$2 billion dumped into the ground in CCS [carbon capture and storage], because of the smart meter fiasco, because of the \$25 million in useless land that he forced SaskPower to buy at the GTH. That would be some transparency, Mr. Speaker, but we won't see that. I don't think there's any hope that we'll see that kind of transparency.

We won't see any accounting for the way that this government has made life more expensive, has made it so much harder for families in this province to balance their budgets. And we won't see any relief for those families in this budget.

You can't call a budget balanced, Mr. Speaker, that grows the debt, that fails to invest in education, and leaves Saskatchewan people struggling to make ends meet. You can't do it with a straight face, Mr. Speaker.

So what would we do differently? What's our vision? How would we achieve balance? Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, I notice that the members opposite have been really interested in the fact that I sometimes ride a skateboard, a longboard to be precise — I can't ollie to save my life — but they're really, really interested in it. I've seen it on television. I've seen it on T-shirts. They really seem to be excited about this and, you know, if anybody on the other side ever wants to come for a rip, go for a skate with me, happy to do that. You know, we could . . . Oh, I see the member for Walsh Acres is in; that's great. You know, we could all use a little more fun in this place and certainly some more exercise. We spend a little too much time in our seats. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the folks across the way could lighten up.

But there's a principle of physics that applies to skateboards as well. Maybe if they don't like the four-wheeled variety, maybe they ride bicycles and they could relate to that. There's a principle of physics when it comes to bicycles and I believe it applies to budgets as well, and that's that there's no way to balance if you've got no forward movement. If you're not actually progressing in a direction, if you don't have a vision of where you're trying to go when you're trying to be on that bicycle, well you're going to fall over in no time flat, Mr.

Speaker. If there's no sense of direction, you can't have balance, Mr. Speaker.

And that's where this government has really lost its way and has really got off balance, Mr. Speaker. They're tired. They're out of ideas. They don't know where they're trying to take us. They're just trying to clean up the mess they made. This is a party that came into power saying that hope beats fear, Mr. Speaker, hope beats fear. But more and more they're defining themselves by what they're against, by who they're against.

To get back to balance we need to have a sense of where we're going, a sense of vision. We need to be moving forward. Real balance would mean a plan to invest in people, to grow the economy as we improve our lives, to grow the economy by improving our lives. Real balance would mean that no one works full time and still lives in poverty, where we're no longer at the bottom of the pack in wages. Real balance would see a focus on growing Saskatchewan companies and employing Saskatchewan workers through public projects and creating the environment for success for private companies. Real balance would mean real action on reconciliation, closing the gap in education, in health, in justice, and employment.

Real balance would see us taking our rightful place as leaders in the transition to renewable energy; taking full advantage of the opportunities in sun, in wind, in geothermal, and biomass; employing thousands in new jobs at the same time as we lower people's bills through Renew Saskatchewan.

Real balance would see Saskatchewan as the best place to raise a kid, to raise a family, to be a kid, a place where kids get top-quality early-childhood education, so we make the most of those first thousand days where their schools are safe havens, wellsprings of support and opportunity, and where coming from a lower-income background is no barrier to a higher education because real balance would have us focused on the next generation, not just the next election, Mr. Speaker.

I said it before and I'll say it again: this isn't the worst budget I've seen. It's not the worst I've delivered, but it doesn't fix the damage of so many budgets that have come before, and it falls far short of real balance. That's why I'll be proudly supporting the amendment put forward by my colleague. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to begin with a couple of personal acknowledgements like everyone in this House does. But I just want to begin by thanking all the members in this House that serve in this House, have the opportunity to serve and represent the constituents in their community in their region of the province, Mr. Speaker, for taking the time this past week to speak, and speak passionately, with respect to the finances of the province, with respect to the services here in the province.

And I think it's incumbent on all of us, despite differences that we maybe may have, to acknowledge that those differences are quite small when you compare them to differences in opinion around the world, Mr. Speaker. And I myself would like to acknowledge and thank each and every member on both sides of

this House for the service that they perform each and every day in coming to this House and going to their constituency and in representing those constituents here in this House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to each of you.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the Minister of Finance for the effort that she has led in putting together this budget. As we have said this budget is not really the work of just a couple of months or even the work of this past year. This is a budget that has come together through a commitment that was made in this House, Mr. Speaker, and in this province by the previous fellow that had the opportunity to sit in my chair, and all of us, Mr. Speaker, of returning our province to a balanced budget this year. And I want to thank the Minister of Finance, I want to thank all of those in her office here in this building, and I want to thank all of those in the Ministry of Finance for their leadership on bringing this all together so that we can continue to say that we are a government that will always do what we say we are going to do, Mr. Speaker.

Members of treasury board that don't get to go on holidays in January, Mr. Speaker, thank you — or ever, essentially, or weekends or summer or any other day — in the assembling of this budget, and also for their work throughout the year in ensuring that we stay on track, Mr. Speaker, on track with the targets that we put forward, the budgets that we put forward each and every year.

This is ultimately the last budget in our planned growth plan, Mr. Speaker, our vision of 2020 and beyond, which was a plan that many here were around at its inception, where we consulted with the people across the province on what would our communities, what would our province look like out to the year 2020, Mr. Speaker. And we brought that information together and we created a vision on behalf of the people of the province, in conjunction and partnership with the people of the province, Mr. Speaker.

And I've always said that the consecutive budgets since 2012 when that plan was introduced have really been rungs in the ladder for us to achieve as many of the points and as many of the commitments and as many of the targets that the people of this province had set out for us to achieve as their elected members and as their government, Mr. Speaker.

And this budget I think is a good way for us to come to the conclusion of that plan in the months and the weeks ahead, Mr. Speaker, as it ultimately completes our three-year plan to balance on behalf of those people. But it also is the right balance for the people of the province, Mr. Speaker, understanding it's balanced, first and foremost, but it's also balanced in its investment, in the services and the infrastructure, and really what the people of this province expect their provincial government to be providing on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of people that I also want to thank that are no longer in this Assembly but were very much a part of this three-year plan and very much a part of, in fairness, the success of this government and, in many cases, the success of decisions that we have made as a government I think that has extended to the broader economy and communities across the province. And that is first, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kevin Doherty, who carried some very, very heavy pails of water in the early days of embarking on some very difficult decisions, Mr. Speaker, that I

was very proud, if you will, to be a part of just a week ago in this Assembly when we actually achieved that balanced budget, Mr. Speaker. And we owe Kevin Doherty a great debt of thanks.

And, Mr. Speaker, of course the former premier, Brad Wall, for his leadership, his leadership and vision, really for us to be able to stand here today as a government, for myself to stand here as the current Premier of the province and say to the people of the province that we have balanced the budget, Mr. Speaker, and we continue to invest and we will continue to invest in our economy. We'll continue to invest in the services that matter to you and your family and your community, and we'll continue to invest in the infrastructure that is important to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. So thank you, Brad.

Mr. Speaker, all of us have, I know, taken the opportunity to thank the people that ensure the wheels are rolling and the doors are open in our constituency offices. And I have Sally Fitch manning the door in my office, Mr. Speaker. Sally's had a difficult year. She lost her husband this year suddenly: Bookie as we all know him, or Allan Fitch. And she has done a tremendous job for me since I've been elected. And as I always say, Mr. Speaker, thankfully she is not only the ears and the eyes of the constituency office, but she's the face of the constituency office, and not myself so much. So thank you, Sally, for everything that you do each and every day in representing the people in the constituency that we represent together.

And last but not least, I have a wife that doesn't get to see her husband a whole big bunch, and I think some days she might like it that way, Mr. Speaker. But we don't serve in this Assembly alone. We only serve with the support of our families, our children, our parents, and our spouses, Mr. Speaker. And I thank my wife and I thank everyone's spouse and partner in this journey of representing the people in our constituencies and collectively representing the people of the province, Mr. Speaker, and altogether really ensuring that this province is the great place that we know and love.

This is an important day, Mr. Speaker. This is an important day, as I said, as we embark on a three-year effort, Mr. Speaker, but it's an important day for a number of other reasons. We have, you know, a member of this Assembly that answered his 1,000th question today, Mr. Speaker, for the very 1,000th time, Mr. Speaker. I would put forward that each and every one of those answers was better as we went along. It's an important day, as we have a budget decision to make in this House, Mr. Speaker, what I think is a solid budget, the right balance for the people of the province that will be put forward.

[12:00]

But it's also an important day in the community of Shellbrook, Mr. Speaker, and throughout, I would say, the northern forest fringe of Saskatchewan as we get close to the end of our hockey leagues in North America, most notably the NHL [National Hockey League]. And this is a tough time of the year for us Edmonton Oiler fans, Mr. Speaker. In a few more decades I may feel like a Toronto Maple Leaf fan, Mr. Speaker.

But it is the end of the season also for a very noted high-calibre hockey league in northern Saskatchewan that is known as the SPHL [Shellbrook Pickup Hockey League], Mr. Speaker. And

their windup is this evening and if everything goes well, I'm actually hoping to get back, Mr. Speaker. That's the SPHL, which I know we would all be fully aware of, is the Shellbrook Pickup Hockey League, Mr. Speaker, a very high-calibre league, Mr. Speaker, on Thursday evenings. You're all invited to show up one evening. There's no reservation required.

Mr. Speaker, on to the matter at hand with respect to the budget that we have been discussing here in this Assembly over the course of the last week. There's some context for this debate, Mr. Speaker. And it's important to acknowledge the ongoing strength of our province, the strength of Saskatchewan, if you will, the progress that we continue to see in this province despite some serious challenges that often get discussed on the floor of this Assembly or outside, Mr. Speaker.

But I would say this: despite those discussions, Mr. Speaker, the recipe for success in this province continues to work as it has for the last decade, and we're going to continue to follow the ingredients on that recipe. And it's working. And it's most notable with last week with Statistics Canada just reported that our population again grew, Mr. Speaker, by some 11,459 people in 2018, Mr. Speaker. We have had 50 straight quarters of population growth in this province, the largest sustained population growth since they've kept records, Mr. Speaker. This is a point that we can all in this Assembly I think, in fairness, be very proud of, a point that has resulted, Mr. Speaker, in over 160,000 people living in our province, calling a community in Saskatchewan home.

And as I said earlier today, I see this in my community with people that are staying there, children that are staying there to find their careers, but also people that are moving to our communities, rural and urban, across the province from countries all over the world. Mr. Speaker, this is only possible with a vibrant and growing economy. And last year, last month actually, our economy created another 9,000 jobs, the most jobs ever created in the month of February on record. Mr. Speaker, this is the second consecutive month that our jobs have grown by number here in the province, Mr. Speaker. And we continue to see strong manufacturing and wholesale trade numbers here in the province.

These are good statistics. They are statistics, Mr. Speaker, but they are good statistics. Our exports continue to grow, which is the ultimate, the ultimate source of the wealth in our communities, Mr. Speaker. And the food and the fuel and the fertilizer that we are so proud to produce in this province, it's in demand around the world, despite the conversations we have around market access and ensuring they're produced in the most sustainable way possible, which ours are, Mr. Speaker.

But we might observe this: that our world, not just our province but our world, is a better place because of what we do here in the province of Saskatchewan — what we do in agriculture, what we do in energy, and what we do in mining, for instance, or what we do in the research community. Mr. Speaker. There's more than a billion people around the world that have been lifted out of extreme poverty over the course of the last 25 years. That's a statistic from the World Bank, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's important for us to understand and realize and be proud of the impact that we are having on that statistic.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has played such an important role in what I believe is an incredible story. And the most exciting statement about all of that is we're just getting started, just getting started in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Our provincial economy is growing, even with the headwinds that we face and we discussed. And that economic strength is supported by sound government finances, Mr. Speaker, most notable in the budget vote that is going to take place here shortly. Mr. Speaker, last week our Minister of Finance delivered a budget that we had said collectively is the right balance, delivered on behalf of the people of this province, a budget that balances our fiscal responsibility with the need to have the ability to invest out into the future, the need to invest not just in this generation or even this year, Mr. Speaker, but that ability to invest into our children's generation.

We were determined to do everything we could to balance this budget, Mr. Speaker, this year with no new taxes and no tax increases, and we've achieved that. We achieved a balanced budget, the right balance that continues with the largest investment in our children, in our next generation, Mr. Speaker, the largest investment in education in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

In health care, also the largest investment in the history of the province, and most notably the largest investment in mental health care treatment here in the province of Saskatchewan.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we continue to invest in critical infrastructure across this province in a multitude of ministries as well as our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. Most certainly and most importantly this balanced budget fulfills a solemn promise, as I said, that we made three budget cycles ago, two years ago, Mr. Speaker, to the people of this province.

We put in place that three-year plan to balance and we followed it to a T, Mr. Speaker. We've been on track to balance that budget, and this year, on behalf of the people, we are very, very proud to do that. And I think it's also important for us to remember the circumstances that we faced that particular year. Mr. Speaker, I remember the conversation with respect to a \$1.3 billion shortfall in our resource revenues here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, a significant challenge for sure.

And I heard the Leader of the Opposition say this wasn't the worst budget that he's heard. It was two years ago was the worst budget that he has observed, Mr. Speaker.

Well we were very committed to not — not — closing our educational institutes, not closing our schools across the province, Mr. Speaker. We were very committed to not closing hospitals across the province, Mr. Speaker, which is something very different from budgets that we saw a few decades ago when faced with a similar challenge, Mr. Speaker. In that time and in that place, Mr. Speaker, there was a different choice that was made.

There was a choice to close 50-plus hospitals across this province, Mr. Speaker. We're continuing to build hospitals in our communities. Mr. Speaker, there was a choice made a couple decades ago to close 176 schools across this province, Mr. Speaker. We're continuing to build schools in our communities

across this province, Mr. Speaker. And the reason is we have a strong and vibrant and growing economy, and people are moving here, Mr. Speaker, and they need schools to attend. Their children need schools to attend and they need health care facilities to attend to the services that they have, Mr. Speaker.

I think it's also important to note that today . . . Three budget cycles ago we faced a \$1.3 billion deficit, Mr. Speaker. Today we're still . . . If we had gone status quo, not increased spending to any degree at all for inflation or for expansion of serving those extra people, those additional people that have moved to our communities, we would still be faced with today a \$788 billion deficit, Mr. Speaker, due strictly to a shortfall in our resource revenues.

Mr. Speaker, if it wasn't for the courageous decisions that were taken in the day by members on this side and then Finance minister Kevin Doherty and the leader of our province at that point in time, Premier Brad Wall, we would be \$788 million in deficit today if we didn't spend another nickel. Those courageous decisions, Mr. Speaker — Buckley's mixture, as I've heard them discuss, Mr. Speaker — were most certainly necessary. They were most certainly necessary for us to move, Mr. Speaker, to not be as reliant on our resource revenues here in the province.

And here are some other statistics. We went from a high, a high of 35 per cent of our provincial revenues coming from resource revenues, Mr. Speaker. Our average high was about 25 per cent. This budget, this budget puts forward about 11 per cent of our revenues are coming from natural resource revenues, Mr. Speaker.

This is by far the most solid budget in recent history, Mr. Speaker. And it's been put together over the course of three years, ensuring that we are able to not close schools, build schools, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that we're able to not close hospitals and cut services, Mr. Speaker, but expand services in mental health care and continue to build infrastructure across the province, Mr. Speaker. This is most certainly a budget that is balanced, but it is the right balance on behalf of the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, we've talked . . . I also heard the Leader of the Opposition discuss that, how can a budget be balanced if you're loaning money? Well NDP in British Columbia did it, Mr. Speaker. They loaned \$5 billion for their infrastructure plan this particular year.

Our infrastructure plan in this province, Mr. Speaker, all told, when you bring in the replacement of our SaskPower and our Crown corporations' infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, when you bring in our commitment to new schools and new hospitals across the province, when you bring into play our commitment, Mr. Speaker, with respect to our highway traffic safety initiative, Mr. Speaker, its \$65 million, five-year initiative to ensure that the intersections in our province are safer for our families, Mr. Speaker, as they travel up and down our highways, Mr. Speaker — we are investing \$2.7 billion in infrastructure over the course of this next year.

We are loaning \$1.8 billion for that infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. But most certainly, most certainly . . . And we will see the auditor, I am confident, speak to this in the months ahead, Mr.

Speaker. This is a balanced budget. It's a balanced budget that strikes the right balance of investment in our infrastructure across the province, investment, Mr. Speaker, that is so very important for our communities and for the people, the people that we serve and live in those communities.

For example, Mr. Speaker, in education, \$3.3 billion invested just this year — 2.48 in K to 12 education, Mr. Speaker. And we've heard our Minister of Education, our Deputy Premier, speak this week with respect to that investment. But it's also important for us to always note where we've been. When we started, Mr. Speaker, in '07, we were with an education budget line item of less than \$1 billion in our K to 12 education. Mr. Speaker, today that line item is almost \$2.5 billion, the largest it has ever been in the history of the province, Mr. Speaker. Investing in schools but also investing in the supports for learning in the classrooms, Mr. Speaker, investing in over 900 more teachers, Mr. Speaker. Most certainly the largest investment ever in the history of the province in our next generation, in our children, and an investment that all of us in this House and across the province can be so very, very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, it's an investment in schools in Rosthern and Weyburn that are being built as we speak. Mr. Speaker, it's an investment in schools, in planning for schools in the community of Moose Jaw. And I would note that the Empire School in Moose Jaw opened in 1909; it's an old school, Mr. Speaker. We only have one member in this Assembly that may have been around at that point in time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it provides planning dollars, and we will be constructing a new school here in the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker, a joint-use facility here, and planning dollars for the St. Frances School in the community of Saskatoon, most certainly investment that the people of this province expect their provincial government to continue to invest in that next generation. Forty-six new schools now under planning are being constructed in this province, Mr. Speaker, expanding as I said, the supports in the classroom, but also expanding the services that are being offered in the way of child care, the services that are being offered into those facilities by funding our community-based organizations and our early childhood intervention programs, Mr. Speaker, most certainly services important to our young families that call our communities home.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to health care, something near and dear to my heart, again the largest investment in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, an investment we can be so proud of. Mr. Speaker, in this budget there is more than \$400 million in funding for targeted mental health care and addictions initiatives. Also, Mr. Speaker, the largest mental health care investment in this province, up \$30 million from last year, Mr. Speaker. This is an investment that we can be so proud of in our communities.

And I hearken back, Mr. Speaker — and I will get here towards the end — of the opening of our Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford and the investment that has been made there, Mr. Speaker. And we can talk about the dollars. And I want to talk a little bit about the facility, but at the end, Mr. Speaker, I want to come back to what really matters, and that is the people, Mr. Speaker, that have the opportunity to heal in a facility like that.

But as I said, this is the largest single investment in mental health

services in the province's history and the community of North Battleford, replacing that over 100-year-old facility. Beautiful facility. Expansion of capacity with 284 beds. Three and a half football fields long, Mr. Speaker, if you can imagine that. And it's hard to imagine until you actually drive up to the facility. Natural light, Mr. Speaker. And I would encourage all members to tour this facility, because it is beautiful — absolutely a beautiful facility. And I could not believe the natural light, Mr. Speaker, that is coming into virtually each and every room in that facility, and the spectacular view that they have of the river, Mr. Speaker, of the community. Truly there is more room for activities in that . . . I've never seen so many basketball hoops, to be honest with you, and a gym for patients, Mr. Speaker. We toured the woodworking shop, Mr. Speaker, the family visitation rooms as well as the spiritual centre.

[12:15]

This is an investment that is so much more than the replacement of a facility, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the expansion of capacity, but also the expansion of services that are being offered in that facility. This is most notably, Mr. Speaker, what the people of this province have asked for and can expect. And it's what they received, Mr. Speaker.

Also with respect to health care and again on our record, Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last decade, this budget strikes the right balance with respect to investment in health care professionals, \$23 million to hire doctors that will work directly — doctors, nurses, and other staff, actually — that will work directly in what we will open later this year, Mr. Speaker, in the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in the community of Saskatoon. Again, Mr. Speaker, an expansion of capacity and a great expansion of services, services that we simply had to leave the province for over the course of our history. Now those will be offered in our largest centre of Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, there's a number of investments as well in this budget that aren't large financial investments, Mr. Speaker, but by listening to people across the province, they're just the right thing to do. They just truly are, and often they take a lot more effort on mapping the path on how we can actually successfully get to these points of success, if you will. And it's a journey, not an event, to quote the Minister of Finance on so many times.

But I think of the conversation we had on the morning of the budget, Mr. Speaker, the ministers of Health, both of them and myself, with Chris and Errin Willenborg, Mr. Speaker. Quite a story. Quite a story with respect to their story on organ donation, Mr. Speaker, and their story of love, quite frankly, with a proposal but only a wedding after the fiancé donated a kidney to his future wife.

Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan there's always the three degrees of separation. And Errin's father, late father, Mr. Speaker, who was also going to be a donor until they had discovered cancer in his kidney, Mr. Speaker — and he succumbed to that disease — he was a professor of mine about a thousand years ago when I attended the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Terry Tollefson.

And to have a conversation with Chris and Errin Willenborg that very morning, and to move forward with what is a small amount

of funding but a great initiative in the creation of a provincial organ donor registry, Mr. Speaker, is what really matters in what we do in this building. Mr. Speaker, it's not always statistics. It's not always about the money, Mr. Speaker. It's about the effect that that investment has, and that is one example of a small investment in this budget that has a very large effect on people's lives and families across the province.

I can think of another investment, a relatively small investment, Mr. Speaker, with respect to training physiotherapists across this province, a \$100,000 investment, but training physiotherapists for complete decongestive therapy for patients who suffer from lymphedema, Mr. Speaker. I have a close friend of mine that just suffered through lymphedema throughout his life, quite frankly has been told a few decades ago that he would not be here today, Mr. Speaker. And I know others as well struggling with this disease, not a high number of people, but most certainly an appreciated investment, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that we are providing the services that our families have asked us to provide across the province, Mr. Speaker.

There's the investment in our autism individualized funding benefit, again an investment in the services that our families and in many cases, again, our children, our next generation really are expecting us to have discussions in this place, Mr. Speaker, have discussions about how we can move forward with those initiatives that are so very, very important.

But as I said, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the statistics in this budget, Mr. Speaker, they are well and good, and they are important. They are so very important actually with respect to the hospitals that we are building, opening the children's hospital, funding in this budget, Mr. Speaker, to advance the Weyburn hospital, the Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert, the schools that I had mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that have been built or planning on being built, Mr. Speaker, the investments in our classrooms and the supports, so very important for all of us across the province.

But what it really comes down to at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, is the people, people like Cassidy Evans. Again the Minister of Health and myself have had the opportunity to converse with Cassidy so very many times. I keep her lemon on my desk, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, she's in the business of selling lemonade, Mr. Speaker, and I'm hoping to see her down here this spring in this session so that I can purchase and encourage everyone in this House and in this city to buy a cup of lemonade from Cassidy Evans, because it's going to such a good cause, Mr. Speaker. It's going to raise money for cystic fibrosis research, Mr. Speaker, to find a cure for another disease that we just need to keep working for, Mr. Speaker, a disease that Cassidy is working through, Mr. Speaker. She sent me another letter that I keep on my desk as well.

I think of Megan Allard, Mr. Speaker, a constituent of mine in the community of Spiritwood, a constituent that is part of the AIM program, the Ability in Me program, Mr. Speaker. She sent me four pair of socks the other day. My wife took a pair, my daughter took a pair, and then they took the other two pair and gave them to someone else. I didn't get a pair to wear on the day I was supposed to wear them, and I apologize to Megan for that. So I wore my shark socks, Mr. Speaker, my mismatching shark socks, which frightened me all day long.

Mr. Speaker, but Megan continually goes above and beyond what anybody could ever expect of her in her volunteering in her community. And it started years ago in her school, Mr. Speaker, and it has only increased as she's now a full member of the Spiritwood Lions, Mr. Speaker, and working so hard to better her community each and every day, and a true example for all of us to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I think of a few weeks ago when we had the opportunity to open the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford. With so many colleagues here, it brings back memories of the announcement years ago where the member from Indian Head-Milestone was part of that, the previous leader. So many in this room were part of that announcement, part of that whole process Mr. Speaker, of building that very large facility, Mr. Speaker. As I said, three and a half football fields long, and when you drive up to it, it is daunting let me tell you, Mr. Speaker.

And I think of Keri who spoke at that opening. Keri's a resident, a patient at the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford. She presented the government, Mr. Speaker, and I accepted on behalf of the government, a key to the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford that was built in the workshop, Mr. Speaker, where all the tools were actually donated by an individual. And we thank all of the donors in that facility. But she gave us a key to return at any time for a visit, Mr. Speaker.

That key hangs in the Premier's office in this building, Mr. Speaker, as a reminder of that investment but as a reminder of why that investment is important. And here's why. I want to quote Keri, Mr. Speaker: "We love having our . . . rooms for privacy, convenience and being able to make it our own space." Mr. Speaker, she had talked prior to that comment about not wanting to move into this new, large, very daunting facility until she came in and actually had a look around. Then she had this to say, Mr. Speaker. She said, and I quote, "We also love having our own bathrooms. I only have to share a bathroom with one other person as opposed to 20. I love having all the windows and having [all of] the sunshine to warm . . . our hearts." Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford is not a daunting place for Keri; it's her home. And it's a home to so many more there today and will be for so many more into the future, Mr. Speaker.

That's why this budget and that investment and striking the right balance is so very, very important. It's because of Cassidy, it's because of Megan, it's because of Keri, and it's because of all of the other people across this province that we represent, Mr. Speaker.

So we're proud, we're very proud of this budget that was introduced last week by our Minister of Finance, the member for Humboldt. She delivered this budget with the right balance. She delivered it on behalf of the people of the province, and it's a budget that ensures not only our fiscal sustainability of our province while we are able to retain that investment capacity into the future. It's a balanced budget that provides no tax increases, Mr. Speaker, no new taxes. It's a balanced budget with the largest investment in education in the history of the province of Saskatchewan. It's a balanced budget that strikes the right balance with the largest investment in health care in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And it's a balanced budget that provides more support, more support to those most

vulnerable in our communities that need a hand up.

Mr. Speaker, this is a balanced budget that continues the investment in crucial infrastructure that we spoke to that will ensure that our Saskatchewan economy remains competitive, again not just today but years into the future. And it's a balanced budget that will support the growth and progress of our communities across Saskatchewan. And it's a balanced budget that keeps the faith with the families that we serve in this Assembly across our province.

Mr. Speaker, it's for these reasons and so many more that I will not be supporting the amendment that was put forward by the member for Regina Rosemont, and I will be supporting the budget that was introduced last week by the member from Humboldt, our Finance minister, and seconded by the member from Indian Head-Milestone. Thank you.

The Speaker: — It is my duty pursuant to rule 31(7) to inform the Assembly that the Minister is about to exercise her right to close the debate, and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. Therefore, if any member wishes to speak, let him or her do so now.

I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I want to begin, because I didn't have an opportunity on budget day, to thank all of the constituents of the Humboldt-Watrous constituency. They have supported me now for a number of years, and it's greatly appreciated. And it's my honour to be able to represent such a great region within our province.

I want to join the Premier and many other members, thanking my family who were here budget day but also others because, although I had the honour of being able to introduce the budget, it comes with the help of so very many. I too talked to our previous premier as well as the previous Finance minister and thanked them for the hard work they did before they left this place. And I thank my office staff, my ministerial staff, my treasury board member colleagues, and all of my colleagues because it's been a joint effort.

I've listened intently through the last few days to a number of speeches and through the doomsday lamenting of the NDP. And if I wasn't depressed before I heard one of their speeches, I certainly was afterwards. And I just pray that no one from outside of our province listened to any of it because they would think our province was a Third World country. And that's not how the members on this side feel about this fabulous province, Mr. Speaker. We know with each and every budget and each and every year, there's more work to do. We know that, Mr. Speaker, but we are not a Third World country and everything is not sour grapes and falling apart.

But I will give the NDP credit where credit is due and, you know, they do deserve credit for this — they've become experts at criticism. If we don't do what they ask, they criticize. If we do what they ask, they criticize because it's not enough, and they just continue to criticize. But the role of a good opposition, Mr. Speaker — and I sat in opposition for a number of years — is to do more than just oppose. The role of a good, effective opposition

quite frankly, is to suggest alternatives. It's to share those alternatives with the public. So what's the NDP plan? You know, we don't know and nor does the public because they're so busy criticizing.

From time to time, we get tidbits of what we need to do. And one of those . . . well one of those is to remove the PST from all of the areas where we expanded the PST base. So what does that cost? Well that equates to 640 million less in revenue. I also heard at the SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention that they're going to remove the PST entirely on municipal infrastructure projects. So I just did an estimate: if there's \$200 million worth of activity in any given year, that's an additional \$12 million of lost revenue. So the lost revenue that they asked for just in those two things alone equates to \$652 million, Mr. Speaker.

[12:30]

On the expense side, well let's just pick the last little while because it would go on and on. It's more funding for education, K to 12, post-secondary; health care in almost every area. They want additional funding for vulnerable families, and the list goes on and on and on. And keeping in mind nothing can be closed, nothing can be wound down, nothing can be ended, and everything has to be delivered by the private sector. So how much . . . or the public . . . No, nothing can be delivered by the private sector. My colleagues aren't listening.

How much for the additional expenses? Well on June 1st, 2016 the member from Nutana said this, and I quote, "A minimum of 6 per cent annual increase is needed just to maintain the status quo programs like health care and education." Interesting. The Leader of the Opposition, in his leadership race, well he had quite a list of promises and they added up to 2.5 billion. That's even more interesting. And since then, whenever we ask, you know, what's the number, we get answers like "more," "enough." Well, "more" and "enough" are not numbers, Mr. Speaker.

So for the sake of this debate, let's assume that the NDP do get caught up in their own rhetoric from time to time. And if they ever had the opportunity, they would tone it down at least a little bit. And let's just do the numbers for an additional 3 per cent increase to the human services. Well that equates to \$315 million, Mr. Speaker. So let's take the 652 million in lost revenue that they've already promised, add the 350 million of additional expenses and all of the sudden, we've got a \$967 million gap.

So what's the NDP plan to fill that gap? Now the Leader of the Opposition said, well it's kind of too early to have that conversation. And yet they have no problem having the conversation criticizing us and demanding more.

The NDP Finance critic has said their party believes in balancing the budget. That absolutely must be done. So fair enough. We agree. On that we agree. We commend him for those comments. He along with the leader of the NDP though are highly critical of borrowing. And again when the media pressed the NDP leader on budget day, what he would do, he had no answer. So if the NDP aren't willing to connect the dots and to explain how irrational that they've actually become, I'd like to help them out a little bit.

The leader of the NDP, from time to time he offers little hints about what they would do. Two for sure that I've heard him say on more than one occasion is he would increase corporate income tax, and the second is he would tax the rich. Well we've played that socialist song before and it didn't end well. But let's just do the math and help the people of the province understand what will happen if the NDP should ever have the ability to make those decisions.

So we've got this little gap of 652 million because we backtracked the PST that our party had to implement in order to restructure the revenues of the province. Right now the corporate income tax is 12 per cent. One per cent of corporate income tax is about \$61 million, Mr. Speaker. So that means that in order to backfill the lost revenue, they would have to raise it to 22.5 per cent.

How's that going to work for competitiveness? How's that going to work for getting investment into our province? How's that going to work for the ability of the businesses within our province to be able to create jobs? It's not going to work well.

But hey, that is what they put out there, so let's just take them at their word that that's what they're going to do.

Mr. Speaker, how about the 315 million needed for additional spending? Well let's go to taxing the rich to pay for that. We've got 1.16 million people in our province, Mr. Speaker, and only 495,000 people pay income tax; 17 per cent of those pay 50 per cent of all of the tax that's collected. And I'm going to repeat that: 17 per cent of the taxpayers pay 50 per cent of all of the tax that we collect.

So I'm not sure how you define rich in an NDP mind, but let's just use this for math purposes. Of that 17 per cent, only 12,600 people in our province earn more than \$200,000. On average they pay 34,500 per year for personal income tax. But they've got to backfill \$315 million worth of extra spending, so they're going to have to each, on average, pay an additional \$25,000 a year. So their total personal income tax bill is 59,500 per year. That is a 72.5 per cent increase.

So when they leave, and they will — many will be business owners so they will shut down their business because that also has been gouged by the NDP tax scheme — jobs are lost. So we lose that income tax. We lose that corporate income tax. We lose all the jobs that are paying taxes. Does all this sound familiar? Do you guys remember those days? Because I do. I definitely do. So that's the math of the NDP plan.

Let's talk about debt for a minute. They're very, very critical of that. They brought it up a number of times and they like to cherry-pick numbers to fit their narrative. Not surprising, but they never put it into context, Mr. Speaker, of how substantively greater our GDP is in our province. They never put it into context of how we've had economic growth in our province and we've had population growth in our province. And so they like to compare Sask Party government numbers to Sask Party government numbers.

Well we know that when resource revenues were high, we did pay down the operating debt — the operating debt, by the way, that we inherited from the NDP, just saying. However as they're

well aware, resource revenues have plummeted and they've stayed low. So we put together a three-year plan and we borrowed to operate through those three years, Mr. Speaker, because we didn't want to do damage to health care, education, and services that our citizens expect. In this budget, we do not have to do that because this budget's balanced, Mr. Speaker. But our operating debt is still lower than it was under the NDP.

And what's interesting though, what I find really interesting, is how critical they are of how we're borrowing for our capital plan infrastructure. They criticize borrowing within executive government. They criticize borrowing within the Crown corporations.

The member from Weyburn yesterday did a very good job explaining the choices that Crown corporations have in order to expand infrastructure and to replace aging infrastructure. And he laid out those choices quite well. And not all of his choices apply to all of the Crowns; he was speaking to SaskPower.

But the NDP anti-borrowing philosophy means that there's only two choices. One of those is to, you can move here. You'll need a hookup but you won't get it. You won't get power. You won't get energy. You won't get phone. You won't get water. And it's a great roughing-it experience, but I'm not too sure how many people are going to be attracted by that, Mr. Speaker.

The second choice of those three choices is to make the existing customers pay rates that's going to pay for the expansions, Mr. Speaker. What happens to the rates? We've heard them complain day after day and day on how people can't make their utility bills. What happens to them? Because those rates are going to be way higher. So that's their plan, Mr. Speaker.

Borrowing under executive government. So fair enough, Mr. Speaker. We have lived with some years of NDP government that neglected the infrastructure within this province. So with a no-borrowing philosophy there'd be no Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford that the Premier spoke so eloquently about previously, no Moose Jaw Hospital, no children's hospital, no new hospital in Humboldt, no new long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker.

And let's just go through the list of schools. And actually I have a number of pages. I would take up all my time if I went through the list of schools, many of them within the constituencies that those very members represent.

So the NDP are dead set against borrowing. Fair enough. And they want to compare the Sask Party government's borrowing when we were able to pay down some of the debt. And we've got that debt load down a lot, to what we are doing now.

But the ballot question — and you know that election's coming sooner than we think — the ballot question is not going to be Sask Party government versus Sask Party government. The ballot question's going to be Sask Party government versus NDP. So the question becomes, are we managing debt more responsibly in context of today's GDP and today's economy or not? Well the credit rating agencies think so. We have a AAA credit rating, which never happened under the NDP. With all of the credit rating agencies combined, Mr. Speaker, we have the second-highest credit rating in the country.

Mr. Speaker, we have the third-lowest debt-to-GDP. We're almost tied with British Columbia — NDP British Columbia — who are borrowing \$5 billion in order to build stuff in BC. So they should talk to them about their not-balanced budget. And our capital borrowing plan is supported and managed responsibly. And they need to read page 16 in the budget document, which says, and I quote:

A key principle of Government's capital financing plan is the repayment of capital debt upon maturity.

At least two per cent of the value of these borrowings is set aside and invested each year to ensure sufficient cash is available to repay capital debt as it comes due, so that it isn't passed on to future generations. Government has \$2.4 billion in sinking funds available to address debt as it matures.

So although the debt number is larger — and that's the number they like to use — what is it in context with today's GDP and today's economic growth? Are we better off today than we were under the NDP? And that will be the ballot question. So, Mr. Speaker, let's do some statistics. Net debt as a percentage of the GDP under the NDP: 21.4. Mr. Speaker, in this budget it's 14.8. I look to my colleagues. I think that's less.

The Leader of the Opposition talked about our interest payments. Let's talk about our interest payments. So the interest payment under the NDP was \$783 million. In this budget, Mr. Speaker, it is 694.4. I think that's less. I think it's less. Let's talk about the interest payments as a percentage of total spending, Mr. Speaker: under the NDP, 8.4 per cent; in our budget, 5 per cent. That's less.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the interest as a percentage of GDP: under the NDP, 1.7 per cent; in our budget, 1 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Let's talk about the interest payments per capita, Mr. Speaker: under the NDP, \$789; Mr. Speaker, in our budget, 593. Mr. Speaker, that is less. We are managing the debt responsibly, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, it was an honour to introduce the 2019-20 budget. It was my honour because it was the effort of so very many that went into that budget, and I thank them all.

Mr. Speaker, it was a balanced budget and it was the right balance for the communities across our province. It's the right balance for the people of our province. Mr. Speaker, it was the right balance for Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — The minister has closed debate. Pursuant to rule 31(8), it is my duty at this time to put the question on the amendment. The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment to the budget motion moved by the member from Regina Rosemont, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Nutana:

That all the words after "That the Assembly" be omitted and the following added:

has lost confidence in the government and disagrees with the government for tabling a budget that piles on debt, fails to invest in classrooms, and does nothing to reverse

the damage to people and our economy caused by the increase and expansion of the PST.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I think the nos have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:45 until 12:46.]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment to the budget motion moved by the member from Regina Rosemont, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Nutana:

That all the words after “That the Assembly” be omitted and the following added:

has lost confidence in the government and disagrees with the government for tabling a budget that piles on debt, fails to invest in classrooms, and does nothing to reverse the damage to people and our economy caused by the increase and expansion of the PST.

All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 13]

Meili	Chartier	Vermette
Wotherspoon	Beck	Sproule
Forbes	Belanger	Mowat
Sarauer	McCall	Pedersen
Rancourt		

The Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 44]

Moe	Beaudry-Mellor	Merriman
Ottenbreit	Reiter	Wyant
Morgan	Harpauer	Duncan
Marit	Hargrave	D’Autremont
Cox	Heppner	Kaeding
Makowsky	Tell	Brkich
Harrison	Carr	Cheveldayoff
Hart	Bradshaw	Olauson
Weekes	Lambert	Lawrence
Ross	Wilson	McMorris
Michelson	Bonk	Doke
Steinley	Hindley	Buckingham
Young	Dennis	Nerlien
Steele	Tochor	Goudy
Fiaz	Francis	

Procedural Clerk (Mr. Park): — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 13; those opposed to the amendment, 44.

The Speaker: — I declare the amendment lost. The question before the Assembly is the budget motion moved by the Minister of Finance, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Milestone:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I believe the ayes have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:49 until 12:50.]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 44]

Moe	Beaudry-Mellor	Merriman
Ottenbreit	Reiter	Wyant
Morgan	Harpauer	Duncan
Marit	Hargrave	D’Autremont
Cox	Heppner	Kaeding
Makowsky	Tell	Brkich
Harrison	Carr	Cheveldayoff
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Ross	Wilson	McMorris
Michelson	Bonk	Doke
Steinley	Hindley	Buckingham
Young	Dennis	Nerlien
Steele	Tochor	Goudy
Fiaz	Francis	

The Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 13]

Meili	Chartier	Vermette
Wotherspoon	Beck	Sproule
Forbes	Belanger	Mowat
Sarauer	McCall	Pedersen
Rancourt		

Procedural Clerk (Mr. Park): — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 44; those opposed to the motion, 13.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:54.]

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Premier

President of the Executive Council

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor

Minister of Advanced Education
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr

Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Central Services
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Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

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Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

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Priority Saskatchewan