



STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

Mr. Darryl Hickie, Chair
Prince Albert Carlton

Mr. Ron Harper, Deputy Chair
Regina Northeast

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Weyburn-Big Muddy

Ms. Laura Ross
Regina Qu'Appelle Valley

Mr. Lyle Stewart
Thunder Creek

Mr. Len Taylor
The Battlefords

Ms. Nadine Wilson
Saskatchewan Rivers

[The committee met at 20:00.]

The Chair: — All right. Welcome everybody. Good evening, and I see that we're at 8 o'clock, the hour that we're supposed to start the committee work this evening. I'd like to call the committee to order, please. And a good evening to everybody in attendance tonight and those at home who are watching. I would like to welcome you all to the deliberations of the Standing Committee on the Economy. We have a busy agenda this evening considering the number of Bills before the committee.

Before we begin, I'd like to introduce the members. I see on the opposition side we have the standing members Mr. Harper, Mr. Taylor, and a guest tonight is Mr. Yates. On the government side we have Mr. Duncan, Mr. Stewart, Ms. Ross, and chitting in for Ms. Wilson is Mr. McMillan.

**Bill No. 125 — *The Crown Minerals
Amendment Act, 2009***

The Chair: — So committee members, earlier today the Assembly referred Bill No. 125, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009* to our committee. This is what we will be now considering tonight, and by practice the committee normally holds a general debate during consideration of clause 1. Before we begin, Mr. Minister, do you want to introduce your officials, please?

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, certainly. Seated beside me is Kent Campbell, the deputy minister of Energy and Resources. Over my shoulder to the left is Kylie Head, director, regulatory affairs and major projects, Energy and Resources. And over to the right is Mike Detharet, director, mines, Energy and Resources.

The Chair: — Great. If I can just thank you for that, Mr. Minister. If I could ask the officials, other than the minister, if you come to speak to the mike, please introduce yourself the first time for Hansard so they get the title right please.

Clause 1

The Chair: — Okay, now we're going to consider clause 1, short title, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*. Mr. Minister, if you have any more opening remarks that you want to provide, you can proceed now.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Very briefly, Mr. Chair, members, this is simply a piece of legislation to move to an electronic system of mineral disposition registry from a paper-based system. It is something that I believe the industry has been looking for for some time, and it's certainly something that we believe will help in terms of timing, moving forward projects on a more timely basis than what we've seen in the past. We believe that this is something that the industry is looking for, and we are supportive and we would hope that members would be as well.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. And I guess any comments or questions this evening? Mr. Yates.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister,

could you outline for us the consultation process you underwent prior to bringing the Bill forward and the response to those consultations?

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Yes. Consultations were initiated in August of 2009. On our website we posted a document called "Proposed Changes to *The Crown Minerals Act*" that summarized the proposed changes with respect to the mineral sector. We emailed to all 126 disposition holders who had email addresses. A physical mailout to all mineral disposition holders was also done. We received written comments from the Saskatchewan Mining Association, from Agrium, from Saturn Minerals, Potash One.

With respect to the oil and gas sector, we canvassed the four organizations and received positive responses from each of them: the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada, Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen, and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Land Administration.

We also sent a request for comments to subscribers on the land sales subscription list, approximately 650 subscribers to that. The Bill was introduced into the House on November 30th of 2009. On December 9th there was a link to the Bill that had been established from the government website. We forwarded it to Saskatchewan Mining Association for circulation amongst its members. The same link was posted to the ministry's website on January 13th, 2010, and a general mailout was also done at that time. No written comment was received following posting the link to Bill 125.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. That concludes our questions.

The Chair: — Mr. Yates, thank you very much. Any other members have any questions? No. Seeing none, I guess we'll move on please to clause 1, short title, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 28 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 125, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed. I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 125, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009* without amendment. I need a motion.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Duncan moves. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister and your officials, for tonight. Mr. Yates, you want to pass on congratulations as well or welcomes?

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd like to thank the minister and his officials for answering our questions tonight and bringing this before.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Chair and committee members. We appreciate the straightforward manner in which things were handled here this evening.

The Chair: — To the members, we'll take a brief recess now for two minutes. We'll come back at 8:10. Thank you.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

Bill No. 107 — *The Weed Control Act*

Clause 1

The Chair: — Committee members, earlier today the Assembly referred Bill No. 107, *The Weed Control Act* to our committee, and this is what we will now be considering tonight. By practice the committee normally holds a general debate during consideration of clause 1. Before we begin, though, Mr. Minister, would you please introduce your officials to the committee.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Alanna Koch, deputy minister, to my left. On my right is Clark Brenzil, who by the way, has done a lot of the work or most of the work on this Bill we're presenting tonight. Behind me is Doug Billet, crops branch; Laurier Donais, corporate services; Tim Highmoor, chief of staff; and Rick Burton right directly behind me. And that's the officials that are here tonight, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. For the purpose of Hansard, if any other officials beside yourself, sir, speak at the mike for the first time, please introduce yourself with your title and your name. All right, so now we will consider clause 1, short title, *The Weed Control Act*. Mr. Minister, if you have any opening remarks to give tonight to the committee, please proceed.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Just short remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Bill 107 is an Act respecting the prohibited, noxious, and nuisance weeds. Municipalities, SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] especially have requested that we address the limitations of our current legislation *The Noxious Weeds Act, 1984* since it's not meeting their needs.

This Bill respects *The Noxious Weed Act, 1984* and replaces it with a new piece of legislation named *The Weed Control Act*. This Bill also makes it a consequential amendment to *The Municipal Board Act*. This legislation provides municipalities with the authority to enforce control of regulation weeds. This is consistent with the existing legislation in Saskatchewan and most other jurisdictions in North America.

The Weed Control Act proposes to adopt three classes of regulated weeds with varying enforcement levels. The proposed criteria for these three classes are as follows. Number one,

prohibited weeds, and they are currently absent or very rare in Saskatchewan, but they are known to be problematic in other jurisdictions. It is the goal of *The Weed Control Act* to prevent these weeds from becoming established in Saskatchewan by eradicating them early in the early stages of their invasion.

The noxious weeds, these weeds are already well established in the province locally and regionally in Saskatchewan, but they are not present in all areas of the province. The goal of *The Weed Control Act* is to contain these weeds to the areas where they are established and implement integrated control measures to reduce their negative impact while eradicating small, isolated populations.

Number three is the nuisance weeds. These weeds are well established over the majority of the province, but they move easily from property to property and largely by the wind. If their spread is not prevented, they can place an unfair economic burden on landowners who are making significant investments in managing these weeds on their own property.

The Weed Control Act proposes that when a complaint is received by the municipality, an integrated weed management plan will be developed and implemented on the property concerned to prevent the spread of that weed. Municipalities have told us that the current maximum fines are not a deterrent and are not practical to pursue. *The Weed Control Act* proposes to increase the maximum for fines to \$5,000.

Municipalities have also told us that the present limit on the amount that they can recover from the landowner for weed control measures taken is not sufficient in many cases. *The Weed Control Act* proposes to increase the allowable costs that municipalities may recover for weed control measures taken as a consequence of enforcement of *The Weed Control Act*. *The Weed Control Act* also proposes to place these amounts into regulations so they may be updated periodically and as necessary.

The Weed Control Act also introduces an appeal process for routine enforcement. This will ensure that municipalities and weed inspectors will not exceed their powers granted by *The Weed Control Act*. *The Weed Control Act* also corrects and clarifies other administrative processes such as the jurisdiction of weed inspectors and how long a municipality is bound by a petition to appoint a weed inspector.

Weeds are one of the largest contributors to crop yield loss in Saskatchewan, and the costs are estimated to be around \$1.36 billion annually in control costs, which is in addition to the yield losses experienced by producers even when control measures are taken. This amount does not include the cost of damage to hay land, pasture, wildlife habitat, and infrastructure done by invasive weeds.

Invasive species are another issue that this legislation is intended to address. *The Weed Control Act* integrates accepted invasive weed management principles of early detection and eradication of new infestations, as well as containment and control of existing infestations into legislation.

We have held extensive consultations on this legislation including all 296 RMs [rural municipality], all Saskatchewan

cities and all towns with populations above 500 or more, and 29 producer organizations. And, as I said before, SARM and also SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], ten industry associations and eight non-government agencies involved in wildlife habitat protection and environmental issues, other ministries and Crown corporations, and various federal agencies.

[20:15]

In closing, this legislation is important to improving municipalities' ability to control weeds and enforce prevention measures. I urge the committee to allow the government to proceed with this legislation. And with that, Mr. Chair, I would be certainly willing to try and answer questions on this Bill.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I guess any comments or questions? Mr. Yates?

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My first question, Mr. Minister, has to do with the consultations. During the consultation process, were there any concerns raised in regards to the current legislation being put forward, and what were those concerns if there were any raised?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — I honestly don't know of any hesitation with the Bill here. I think the biggest concern or the concern that we got was on the other side of the spectrum, mostly from SARM through their convention by resolution, that they felt that the present legislation needed to be updated, such as the fines I talked of before and the penalties that could be put in place where they were so low that it really didn't even — in the case of recouping and recovering the costs that they've had out there — they couldn't even recover their costs. So I think it was just more of an updating of that and categorizing the weeds that we've put into the different categories.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you. So there are no concerns raised by producers or organizations at all in regards to the significant increase in fine levels?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — No, not that I know of. I think all the organizations whether . . . Even the small urbans that I've talked to felt that this was something that was good to have out there, but especially the rural communities that deal with this on an ongoing basis whether it's a noxious weed or a prohibited weed, whatever the case may be. And I think the weed inspectors that I've talk to right across the province, a number of them, felt that this legislation was long overdue to be changed.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. So the weed inspectors, the current weed inspectors were also consulted prior to implementation of new legislation. Did they raise any concerns?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Not that I know of, no. I think in fact from the ones that I personally have talked to felt that, as I said, this was a long time coming because as we know they're the ones that deal with the producers directly on the behalf of the RMs out there, and I think they're in, for all intents and purposes, the front line. And when it comes to recovering costs and that through the RMs who pay the weed inspectors, I think it's part and parcel of the big picture. But when you can't

recoup your losses, it affects everybody within the system.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. My next question has to do with the destruction of crops. Can you give us a brief history of . . . Is that a very rare occurrence in Saskatchewan or is that a fairly common occurrence?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — I didn't get quite . . .

Mr. Yates: — Well under the orders, if there's an infestation of a prohibited weed, a crop can be destroyed. Is that a common occurrence in Saskatchewan. Rare? Or never?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well I think, maybe Clark, do you want to comment on this? But I think I'll let Clark comment on this because we have the different categories of weeds. And some are very hard to kill out there; I think some of your members have had experience with them. And then there's others that aren't a common occurrence out there, and then there are others that we have pretty well right across the province. Clark, do you want to respond to that, if you would, please?

Mr. Brenzil: — Under the current legislation there was very little activity taken to destroy crop, and largely because it was restricted to a specific set of weeds. And the same would be under this piece of legislation.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. That concludes my questions.

The Chair: — Okay. I think I have . . . Mr. Harper, you want to ask the next one?

Mr. Harper: — Just a couple of questions, Mr. Chair, if you don't mind. Is it anticipated that this new Act will increase the workload for the weed inspectors in the RMs or will the workload be about the same?

Mr. Brenzil: — The expectation is that this will change the workload rather than increase it or decrease it. What they're presently doing is a lot of very common weed issues, and so what this will do is transfer it to those ones that are more rare and things that we can actually have an impact on.

Mr. Harper: — So will changing the role of the weed inspector increase the cost of the weed inspector to the RMs?

Mr. Brenzil: — Unlikely.

Mr. Harper: — Unlikely. So there's no plan then by your department to subsidize the cost of the weed inspector to the RMs?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — It wasn't one of the things that the RMs have asked for, so I don't think . . . That's not really on the radar at this point.

Mr. Harper: — Okay. Just one final question. In the case of an abandoned road allowance that has not been leased to either landowner on either side, who becomes responsible for the weeds on that abandoned road allowance?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — It would be the local municipality. That would be under their own jurisdiction.

Mr. Harper: — They'd be responsible for controlling the weeds on that road allowance then?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — That would be under . . . Probably their weed inspector would be in charge of that. And of course that cost would be borne by the RM that was, you know, that had that road allowance.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's all my questions.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Harper. I believe Mr. Taylor's got a couple of questions.

Mr. Taylor: — Yes, one question, but it might lead to one other one. The consultation — you indicated quite a large number of organizations consulted. Can you give us an overview of how that consultation was undertaken? For example, was the legislation sent out, a draft sent out and response? Or was there some other process? Could you give us an outline of how that large group that you described were consulted? How was that consultation undertaken?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — I'll ask maybe Clark to answer this too because he was directly involved with the drafting of this legislation.

Mr. Brenzil: — What we did is we created a document that summarized the changes, the rough changes that were being made, a lot of the major changes that were being implemented in the Act, including the fines, the structure change, the increase in costs allowed for recovery by municipalities. And we sent that out to all the consultation stakeholders.

Mr. Taylor: — Okay. So my second question out of that is, so you relied on responses to that mailout to tell you yes or no or indifferent? Were there any meetings other than what the minister might've described as discussion in general at the SARM convention? Were there any actual meetings with any of those listed as consulted?

Mr. Brenzil: — What we did as part of that consultation was to provide an opportunity for any of the stakeholders to have a face-to-face meeting with myself and with other members of our branch, as part of that consultation. And so several organizations took advantage of that and we had several face-to-face meetings.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you.

The Chair: — Well thank you, Mr. Taylor. I see no more questions or comments from the committee members. I will now move on to clause 1, short title, *The Weed Control Act*. Is that agreed to?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 48 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 107, *The Weed Control Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Agreed. I would ask a member to move that we report Bill 107, *The Weed Control Act* without amendment.

Mr. Stewart moves that. Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Thank you, Mr. Minister and the officials. This was a very speedy process. And I think Mr. Yates would like to have some comments in closing as well, and we'll go from there.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to thank the minister and his officials for coming and answering our questions tonight and for undertaking this in a very professional way. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Chair, I just want to take a minute and thank the members for their consideration. But I especially want to thank all the officials here tonight. I know some of them may have preferred to be home watching the hockey game. So I thank them for taking time out of their own schedules, and I appreciate the work that Clark has put into this Bill. So thank you, everybody.

The Chair: — Thank you. And for the committee members, we'll take a break and recess until 8:30.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

[20:30]

Bill No. 106 — *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*

The Chair: — Okay, thank you committee members. We are now going to be here to consider Bill No. 106, *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*. And by practice the Committee normally holds a general debate during the consideration of clause 1. Oh, and I see Ms. Wilson has joined us now, and Mr. McMillan has gone to his committee. Thank you very much. Before we begin though, I guess, Mr. Minister, do you want to introduce your officials please, or your official?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Good evening to committee members. Joining me today is Ms. Denise Haas. She's the chief financial officer of Enterprise Saskatchewan.

Clause 1

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I guess if Ms. Haas ever has a chance to or needs to present, we'd ask that she just for the first time address to Hansard her full name and title, if that would be possible please. Okay. Now we are going to consider clause 1, short title, *The Labour Market Commission*

Repeal Act. Mr. Minister, do you have any opening remarks? You may proceed with those now.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Just very quickly, a very straightforward Bill. As it's titled, it's *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*; it will repeal the Labour Market Commission. The Bill contains transitional provisions dealing with the transfer of the Sask Labour Market Commission's assets and liabilities and provides for an orderly windup of its operations.

The Chair: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Seeing that we have a comment and questioner, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: — Yes, thank you very much. A couple of questions. Obviously the commission is being repealed by this Act, being replaced by, I'm assuming, the teams within Enterprise Saskatchewan. Can you please describe how the functions of the Labour Market Commission are being managed and handled by government under different circumstances?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Right, be happy to explain. The repeal took place as part of a budget item in the 2009-2010 budget. The Labour Market Commission was costing about \$900,000 in its former operations. They had a chief executive officer, a chief operating officer, analysts, support staff, and offices both in Saskatoon and Regina.

When Enterprise Saskatchewan came into being, strategic issues councils were brought into operation and have been found to operate very well. Examples include one on regulatory modernization, one on youth, and one on entrepreneurship. And we propose that the strategic issues council dealing with the Labour Market Commission be established, and that will be coming into being very shortly.

We feel that the same objectives of the Labour Market Commission could be achieved in a more fiscally responsible way. And we would take some of the previous members off of the Labour Market Commission and bring them into the strategic issue council. Certainly we believe that the same objectives can be achieved.

And we thank the Labour Market Commission for their report. That report is being used at the Ministry of Advanced Education. Minister Norris indicated to me that it's a valuable document, and it's being used to guide labour principles in Saskatchewan at this time.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much. When was the last meeting of the commission then? When was it wound up?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — It was wound up, what, March? Yes, it was announced in March of 2009 and officially wound up in June of 2009. And at that time the report was received by myself.

Mr. Taylor: — Okay, so we're almost a year past that date. Another six weeks and we're at the year anniversary. What can you say has taken place then in the last ten and a half months? I say this for a couple of reasons; maybe I should make a comment first.

The Labour Market Commission did do work that had tremendous benefit in the province. Labour shortages; identifying educational programs for vocational and technical schools, SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], the regional college systems; working with industry at the local level — utilized the commission to a considerable extent. So for all intents and purposes, we've been without that ongoing interaction over the last ten and a half months. So the replacements within these strategic issues councils, what can you tell us has been the . . . or what is the status of their reporting of the benefit of the strategic issue council over the efforts that were made by the commission?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Well the commission, the report, as I indicated earlier, was given to the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration. And certainly he has been using that report in his ministry. Enterprise Saskatchewan has undertaken to formulate a strategic issues council. That will be announced very shortly, and we will expect the same type of advice and direction that the previous commission had given and benefitted the government by.

Mr. Taylor: — Okay. And I realize you are not the Minister of Advanced Education and that Mr. Norris has been working with the commission's report, but one of the significant benefits was the quick response between colleges, SIAST and the regional colleges and industry at the local and provincial level, the ability to respond quickly to industry needs. Have we seen any of that ability to react quickly over the last ten and half months, and do we see that advancing through the next year, two and three years?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Well you're right. Those questions would be better posed to the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration but I can certainly tell you, as a member of cabinet and a colleague of the minister, that is taking place right now. And having a minister that has those both responsibilities for Advanced Education and Labour together, that the direct coordination is taking place within his ministry.

Mr. Taylor: — Okay. And Minister, you were here earlier, and you heard a question about consultation that was asked on the previous two Bills. I'd like to ask a similar question of you, just with regards to the decision to terminate the commission, develop the repeal Act, and establish a new process. What broad-based consultation took place prior to that decision having been made?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — As I indicated earlier, the operation was wound down as part of a budget item, so consultations as far as a budgetary item are not as extensive as would otherwise take place. But it was felt very strongly by consultations that were taken place within Enterprise Saskatchewan that the new strategic issues council could do the same degree of work and the same quality of work at a much lesser cost. So it was a budgetary item that was the impetus here.

Mr. Taylor: — And I guess one last question because to a certain extent you are separating the issues, and to another extent you're bringing them back together again. The strategic issues councils are not meant to replace the commission, or were they meant to replace the commission? Because the

councils aren't providing that advice to the Minister of Advanced Education or the colleges, the vocational and technical programs in our province.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — The strategic issue council will certainly work with all the sector teams and will be comprised of those that are involved in training in the province and will consult with the sector teams and have that ability to interact that way.

Mr. Taylor: — One last question then, given that you had said the decision was originally a budget item. A number of people are saying that the broad development of Enterprise Saskatchewan — the board, the sector teams, the strategic issues councils — this broadening bureaucracy that Enterprise Saskatchewan has become, how do you compare the dollars that were spent on the Labour Market Commission with the dollars that are now . . . You've got to integrate the strategic issues councils, the work with the sector teams, the monies that's spent there, and the work that's got to be done now through liaison with Advanced Education and Employment. How do you jive the budget issue — which is essentially what you're saying is a savings issue — with the new expenses that Enterprise Saskatchewan and Employment, Labour and Education have incurred?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much for the question. Yes indeed, and that's why I went into some detail of the original budget — the \$900,000 and the officials and the set-up that it paid for and the support staff and the offices in Saskatoon and Regina. Nine hundred thousand dollars was a large amount of money to pay, we felt, in this particular instance, especially when strategic issues councils can operate in the neighbourhood of 10 to \$20,000. So there's a wide variance there.

And you know, you're right in the fact that Enterprise Saskatchewan, it is a body that consults from a wide and varied degree. We have many sector teams. We have some strategic issues councils. I think it's fair to say that we were very aggressive in naming those sector teams, and we're going to be looking at some streamlining in the future as well.

But overall we find that we are getting very good information from the sector teams, from the strategic issues council. They're able to feed that information to the Enterprise Saskatchewan board. You know, I chair that board and I also chair the economic committee of cabinet, and we find that there's a good flow right up from those teams through the Chair and up to the cabinet level. So we feel that it's money well spent. And again we think that the Labour Market Commission did good work. And our objective is to ensure that the strategic issue council does equally good work at a lesser cost.

Mr. Taylor: — That's all the questions that I have. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Well I guess seeing no more questions or comments from members of the committee, we'll go to clause 1, short title, *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 4 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 106, *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I would ask the member now to move that we report Bill No. 106, *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act* without amendment.

Ms. Ross: — I so move.

The Chair: — Ms. Ross moves. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and your official for your time this evening. I believe Mr. Taylor would like to have a couple of comments before we take a recess.

Mr. Taylor: — Yes, and just to echo your words, Mr. Chairman, to the minister and the official, thank you very much for your appearance here tonight and your answers to our questions.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — If I may, Mr. Chair. Thank you to all members for the questions and the professional way that they were put forth. And as always, I'm open to answering your questions throughout the year on this Bill or any other matter in regards to Enterprise Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister and your official. I guess what we'll do is we'll take a recess now. We'll make it maybe at 10 to 9. I believe we're still waiting for some officials from Environment to show up.

[20:45]

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

Bill No. 117 — *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*

The Chair: — Committee members, we are now considering Bill No. 117, *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*. By practice the committee normally holds a general debate during consideration of clause 1. Before I begin however, Ms. Minister, would you like to introduce your officials, please, to the committee.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Joining me tonight on my right is Liz Quarshie, deputy minister with the Ministry of Environment. To my left, Kevin Callele, executive director, compliance branch. Also joining us is Lin Gallagher, assistant deputy minister, resource management and compliance division; and Marvin Hlady, wildlife management unit, fish and wildlife branch.

Clause 1

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Ms. Minister. We're now going to consider clause 1, short title, Bill 117, *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*. Ms. Minister, do you have any opening comments? You may proceed.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — I do. Thank you. Hunting, fishing, and trapping are part of Saskatchewan's heritage, and for generations the province's residents have pursued these activities for sustenance, recreational, commercial, and cultural purposes.

As most members here will know, conservation groups representing hunting, fishing, and trapping interests have for many years requested the province consider passing such legislation as a clear signal that Saskatchewan supports these traditional activities. As an example, I know the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, in making presentation to us, has said they'd been asking for this legislation for over a decade.

The proposed hunting, fishing, and trapping heritage Act will recognize hunting, fishing, and trapping as protected activities in accordance with the law in Saskatchewan. And it is very important to point out that the proposed legislation does not deter or halter in any way an Aboriginal person's constitutional right to hunt, fish, or trap, which is referenced in clause 3 of the Bill.

The Chair: — All right. Well thank you, Ms. Minister. I guess we'll move on to any questions or comments, members. Mr. Harper.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you. And welcome, Minister and your officials. Just a few brief questions. Could you describe for us the process used to consult before your department brought this Bill forward? What consulting process was used, and who was consulted?

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — The consultation process that the ministry pursued was through the ministry's wildlife advisory committee. The representation on that committee include hunters, trappers, outfitters, First Nations representatives. We had I think almost all of those groups represented in the House the day that the Bill was introduced for the first time. So it went through the advisory committee.

Mr. Harper: — And what form did that consultation take place? Was there a questionnaire sent out? Or was there some way of gathering information, being able to track it?

Mr. Callele: — Kevin Callele, executive director of compliance and field services. No, the wildlife advisory is just an open, it's a round table meeting with a number of agenda items. So it was just discussed in general at the meeting.

Mr. Harper: — Okay. Outside of the group gathered, there was no other groups in Saskatchewan that were consulted in any way in regards to the establishment of this Bill?

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — As I said, there were groups that have actually lobbied the government for this. This has been put forward at their request. It was not, the Bill itself, was not

initiated by the ministry or by my office. It was actually requested by stakeholder groups. So the consultation process obviously wasn't as wide as an initiative that would've been brought forward from the ministry.

Mr. Harper: — Well since there seems to be a fair amount of desire by interest groups across this province for this particular day. And now this date being November the 15th, is there any thought by your department to make it a stat holiday?

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — What an excellent question. And I know that one of the MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] had proposed that in speeches in the House today. I think it was today. And it is actually not something that we have considered to make it a statutory holiday, although I'm not terribly against the idea.

Mr. Harper: — Well then that leads me to the question, Madam Minister, would you or your department consider looking into the possibility of establishing into a stat holiday? I believe that the opposition would probably support you on that.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — I'm going to withhold comment because I'm sure there's probably other people in the government who would have some say on that. But no date.

Mr. Harper: — That concludes my questions, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Harper. Mr. Taylor, do you have some questions?

Mr. Taylor: — Yes. Thanks very much. I've spent, in my career, a fair bit of time in the North working with people who are involved in traditional activities. In describing the Bill, Minister, you used the word heritage, cultural, traditional activities. And it is interesting that when you talk to northerners they talk about four traditional activities. There's three male ones — hunting, fishing, and trapping. And there's a female one — gathering. And I'm just wondering why gathering, which is a traditional activity, is not included in this list of heritage, cultural, and traditional activities?

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — As I said, the impetus for this legislation was the request from stakeholder groups and those stakeholder groups are representative by folks involved in hunting, fishing, and trapping. It's at their request and the other traditional activities weren't considered.

Mr. Taylor: — I just wonder if the minister would take it under advisement to review the possibility of including gathering at a future date, given that the organizations that were consulted primarily had male participants and women in the North who are primarily gatherers and have been for years would not been active in the organizations consulted. Would the Minister take it under advisement to review the addition of gatherers at some point in the future?

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — To go back to the reasons why the particular stakeholder groups had asked for this, and I think it'll probably go to your question as well, there is a concern amongst those who are involved in hunting, fishing, and trapping when we look at other jurisdictions and the rallies and protests that have taken place by groups like PETA [People for

the Ethical Treatment of Animals] to shut down various activities such as hunting and trapping. The concern was, and the reason that they had asked for this Bill, is that we would have as a province something on the books to show the government supports those activities in face of potential protests or rallies against those activities. And berry picking and traditional activities such as that are not something that would have been threatened through behaviour or action taken by groups like PETA.

Mr. Taylor: — But I only add — in terms of five years from now, ten years from now, people looking back — until sort of this discussion takes place, there hasn't been a lot of discussion of that as rationale for the Act. The rationale has been to support the traditional activities and recognize the value of traditional activities — hunting, fishing, trapping. And my argument simply is with that rationale, gathering should be included.

The Chair: — Is there any questions? Okay, well seeing no more questions, I guess we will now move on now to the clause 1, short title, *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and the consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 117, *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I would ask a member now to move that we report that Bill No. 117, *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act* without amendment.

Ms. Wilson: — I so move.

The Chair: — Ms. Wilson, thank you, moves that. And is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I'd like to thank Ms. Minister and your officials for taking your time out of your evening schedule tonight to join us. And thank you to all committee members as well. And I believe that Mr. Harper has got some closing comments before we recess.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too want to add my words of thank you to the Minister and her officials for being here and being very professional in your answers. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you Mr. Harper. I guess now if I could ask for a motion to adjourn today's committee meeting. Minister Duncan. And that's agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you all committee members and to those who watched tonight and officials.

[The committee adjourned at 20:55.]