



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES**

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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES

Hon. Dan D'Autremont, Chair  
Cannington

Ms. Cathy Sproule, Deputy Chair  
Saskatoon Nutana

Mr. David Forbes  
Saskatoon Centre

Hon. Jeremy Harrison  
Meadow Lake

Mr. Gene Makowsky  
Regina Dewdney

Mr. Greg Ottenbreit  
Yorkton

Mr. Doyle Vermette  
Cumberland

Hon. Gordon Wyant  
Saskatoon Northwest

[The committee met at 15:01.]

**The Chair:** — Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Standing Committee on House Services. With us today we have, on the government side, Mr. Makowsky, Mr. Wyant, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Ottenbreit. On the opposition side, we have Mr. Vermette, Ms. Sproule, and substituting for Mr. Forbes, we have Mr. John Nilson.

The first issue today is the election of the Deputy Chair of the committee. Do we have a nomination? I recognize Mr. Vermette.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Yes:

That Cathy Sproule be elected to preside as Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on House Services.

**The Chair:** — Do we have a seconder? Mr. Harrison.

It has been moved by Mr. Vermette:

That Cathy Sproule be elected to preside as Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on House Services.

All in favour?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. Okay, we will now proceed on to the rest of the agenda, but before we do, we will take a one-minute recess while we change chairs.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Good afternoon everyone. The first thing I'm going to do is introduce the agenda for today, and that would be the consideration of estimates for Legislative Assembly and officers of the Legislative Assembly. So the estimates we will be looking at today pursuant to rule 138(5), these are the estimates that the legislative branch of government has deemed referred to our committee on March 28, 2013: vote 76, Advocate for Children and Youth; vote 34, Chief Electoral Officer; vote 57, Conflict of Interest Commissioner; vote 55, Information and Privacy Commissioner; vote 21, Legislative Assembly; vote 56, Ombudsman; and vote 28, Provincial Auditor.

And following that, we have the following supplementary estimates for March for the legislative branch of government, and these were deemed referred to this committee on March 20, 2013, and that is the supplemental estimate of vote 76, Advocate for Children and Youth.

We have Mr. Speaker here on behalf of the government and his various officials. So, Mr. Speaker, at this point I would turn it over to you for introduction of your guests and any comments you might have.

**The Speaker:** — Thank you, Madam Chair. Here on behalf of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Assembly services, and with us this afternoon, we have various officers of the legislature. One presently at the table here is Mr. Bob Pringle who is the Advocate for Children and Youth. And I would ask

Bob to introduce his staff.

**General Revenue Fund  
Advocate for Children and Youth  
Vote 76**

**Subvote (CA01)**

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and Madam Chair. To my right here is Laura Beard, our director of public education and communication. And our director of administration is . . . since there was some family illnesses, was not able to make it. So we'll do our best to answer any financial questions.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Pringle. And Ms. Chartier, are you prepared for the questions?

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. Looking at the budget allocation this year, it goes up by quite a . . . There's quite a chunk going up here. But I'm wondering, does this increase reflect . . . Just this past year you've taken on the responsibility for children in health facilities. Does this allocation reflect that at all? Do you have the resources you need to be able to do that?

**Mr. Pringle:** — Actually, Madam Chair, I'll remember. The significant increase this year is primarily due to a substantial rent increase in the current space that we're in. And also we're moving to a new space, new larger space with the Ombudsman in probably mid-November or early December. And that space is larger and the rent there is even significantly more.

In addition to that we're required, just the way it works, we're required to pay duplicate rent while that space is getting ready for us. And so that represents most of our increase, apart from the . . . It's basically a status quo budget beyond that. And we did get some additional resources last year. And there's no question that, with the additional responsibility for health care and its funded entities, that we will need to be in a position to kind of document the increased demands for the next budget year because we can tell at this point that the . . . Those cases we've been involved with are fairly complex, involve a number of partners and agencies, and they're fairly time consuming. But we did not ask for additional money this year to address the health issues.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Have you seen a big increase to your office with respect to children who have concerns in health facilities?

**Mr. Pringle:** — Not yet because the new Act was proclaimed, as you will know, on the 1st of September, 2012. And we've been working with the Ministry of Health and the health regions to get the word out that we actually have an expanded jurisdiction. So the first part of that was a letter to all the health boards and the invitation to invite us to come and speak to them about our mandate. And we're looking at additional ways in which we can make that known within the health sector.

So we have not noticed a significant increase at this point, but we anticipate that as we reach out and provide greater public education opportunities and get more referrals that that will be a

probably a significant increase when you take . . . consider the whole province. And with the children's hospital coming as well, we're kind of trying to plan for that. So we anticipate there will be some increased demand. We just have to document it so that we can defend that that's the increase in workload.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you. Those are my questions. I think my colleague has some as well.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you. Thank you very much. I just want to point out that I'm suffering from a flu that I got as a special gift from the member from Cumberland.

But I just want to just reiterate what's being said in the introductory comments and of course in the description of the Advocate for Children and Youth department and the role it plays. It talks about engaging in public education. It talks about working to resolve disputes. It speaks about conducting independent investigation. And one of the most important things is recommend improvements to programs for children and youth.

Now one of the things I think I'd like to focus on this afternoon, if I can, is the relationship with the Indian Child and Family Services agreements that you have obviously looked at, and also the relationship with the federal government as it pertains to First Nations, and most recently the case federally that speaks of Métis becoming . . . well not necessarily becoming part of the First Nations community, but certainly on par to be viewed by governments in the same fashion. And the worry I have there is that if Ottawa, if the federal court ruling stands, then people assume that the Métis of Saskatchewan would become the federal government's responsibility. So have you done any of that work yet?

**Mr. Pringle:** — I just didn't hear your last comment, sorry.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Yes. As it relates in terms of the Indian Child and Family Services, what is the relationship now? How many bands have struck a relationship to look after their own First Nations' children? And in the event that the court case stands up, the Supreme Court case, court of Canada case stands, and the census board says that Ottawa is now responsible for the Métis, how does that impact services that we currently have here in the province?

**Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you. I just need a consult here. Madam Chair, hon. member, currently there are 17 First Nations child and family service agencies in the province and we work very, very closely with a number of those agencies. And as a matter of fact, we get referrals from the provincial government agencies, say from Social Services, and also from those agencies as well — from youth, parents, foster families, chiefs — and then we provide the same service on-reserve as off-reserve. And we also work very closely with the First Nations Family and Community Institute, and had a number of meetings. We work with their board, which as you well know, that agency has a mandate of working with all the First Nations agencies to enhance the service to children and youth and their families. So we work closely with them.

And last fall we actually signed a letter of understanding with the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] on

looking for ways that we can work together on behalf of First Nations children, youth, and their families. So we actually have a written letter of understanding, and then I meet with Vice-chief Lerat on a regular basis. And I've got a meeting coming up with Vice-chief Bird, and so on.

And we're going through the same process with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. Of course we're aware of the agreements that both of the nations have with the provincial government supportive to that. And just to step back a little bit, you will know that as Chair of the child welfare panel, we did recommend that off-reserve child welfare services be transferred to First Nations and also that responsibility and control for Métis services be transferred to the Métis Nation. And those negotiations are ongoing between the Métis Nation, the First Nations, and the provincial government with some involvement by the federal government. We're not party to those conversations but I've written significantly on two or three occasions to the federal government about what we perceive to be their responsibilities with regard to First Nations and perhaps Métis children now, and youth, because there is no national commissioner or no national children's advocate. But decisions made or support that's enhanced or withdrawn from First Nations children and youth impacts Saskatchewan and Manitoba very significantly. So that's a big concern of ours and we keep the eye on that.

And I also keep in touch with the provincial ministers around what we're doing in that regard. And so we're not quite as far down the track with the Métis Nation, primarily because there's been some changes with the election and some changes in some of the key deputies. But that is our plan, to continue having a similar letter of understanding and then we'll negotiate around what that joint work would look like between our office and the Métis Nation.

[15:15]

**Mr. Belanger:** — Well I'm certainly pleased to see that there is that type of effort in the sense that we can anticipate that a more in-depth look at how the relationship is being built now, because some within the First Nations community are basically saying that on the ICFS [Indian Child and Family Services] agreement, there's a lot less money coming from the province had they not transferred some of the responsibility over from the province through the ICFS organizations. And yet many also within the Métis community wonder what will happen when the feds are forced to deal with the Métis people as well through the court case. Will Saskatchewan as a province turn around and say, well because the Métis, or the First Nations and now the Métis, are no longer our responsibility, we're not going to be investing any money into this process? And then yet Ottawa can say, well we don't have enough resources to fund the proper transition to make sure that the program runs seamless and is effective.

So is your office doing any type of that analysis? Because what we don't want to hear, and we often see this, is a federal government celebrating, or provincial government celebrating a court case ruling indicating the Métis are now a responsibility of the federal government. Well to me that just looks like they're celebrating saving money. It's not celebrating for the Métis; it's celebrating saving money for them. So in

anticipation of that particular day, has your office done any kind of work to analyze that situation and prepare this government for that situation if it does occur?

**Mr. Pringle:** — Lots of really good questions there. But certainly if you look at some of the First Nations agencies, for example Touchwood, there is still significant provincial money going there for certain services. Whether it's enough or not, I can't speak to that. But there's certainly negotiated agreements around provision of certain services paid by the province in addition to the feds.

And I happen to believe that . . . I was down to a human rights tribunal last week, week before last. I happen to believe that the federal government is not funding prevention services to the level that the province is. And we've been urging them to do that, again in the absence of a national commissioner, but I believe that that's a responsibility of my office so we've been doing that.

I just have to say, and I'm not sure what else to say, that we kind of take our lead to some degree and our partnership arrangement with the . . . you know, in a way that the First Nations and the Métis Nations want to involve our office. We are, the 1st of May, as part of the resources we've got in our budget and some restructuring that I've done, we've done, we are hiring a systemic advocate, a social policy systemic advocate on the 1st of May who will I think take up a lot of those responsibilities related to the broader issues, one of which you raised, hon. member, and other issues as well that concern us of a systemic nature.

But in terms of analysis we've done with regard to the court decision, we have not really made any progress there. But we do have upcoming meetings with the Métis Nation. And by the way, we, in your particular area we, I have myself and seven deputy ministers going to La Loche actually, working with the community and the First Nations there to try and find a way to . . . What commitments does the community of La Loche and the First Nation there need from the provincial government, and perhaps the federal government, to strengthen that community? A lot of strengths there, but to build greater capacity there, and seven deputies are coming with me so that they can hear from the communities and then assess what resources from their ministries have to make long-term commitments so we can hang in there and work closely with the laws to try and have better outcomes for lots of the children, youth, and the families in that area. So that will be our first project in terms of community capacity building, and we're looking forward to that. I think that meeting's on May the 23rd.

**Mr. Belanger:** — And my colleague will have a few questions for you, but I'll certainly come back after he's done his questioning. But I'm pleased to see that the systemic issue is going to be addressed by a separate officer within your office because there's so many complex questions that we have. Like for example, ICFS agreements. We know that the First Nations over the last number of years have been putting a very brave face on the work that needs to be done with the First Nations people, with their own people. But they face capacity issues, they face legal issues, and they face resource issues. Now if you compound that with the Métis issue, with the Métis people all of a sudden are entering into the fray of how we do this

transition, like there are tons of questions as what we need to ask. What do we expect? What do we anticipate?

So when I ask the questions about First Nations, I'm trying to, in my mind, get as much information from you based on your experience with the First Nations now, so the Métis themselves could say, well this is what was done in the past with the First Nations because they obviously led this file before the Métis. So on that front, while there is the bearing on First Nations, I would encourage you to think about the Métis issue as well when I ask the question.

So based on your experience with the ICFS agreements, is there any evidence that would suggest that these ICFS agreements are less costly than the province delivering the programs on their own? And what are some of the challenges attached to some of the ICFS agreements out there? Like there's La Ronge, there's Touchwood, File Hills you mentioned, and then there's a few others. Could you give us a bit of a snapshot of those agreements?

**Mr. Pringle:** — Well as a matter of record, I signed most of them some 20, 18, 20 years ago and so I am certainly familiar with the intent at the time. And I must say I'm proud to come back to this role 18 years later and see the progress of many of those organizations. And I've always believed that child welfare services should be provided by those within the culture of the children, which is one of the main reasons I was interested in signing those agreements for on-reserve services. And I've had that view since 1974 when I was in the Yukon, that it's a challenge for the non-Aboriginal system, a big system like the Ministry of Social Services, to provide services for First Nations children and Métis children.

And there are some good successes as well, but the outcomes have not been satisfactory, which was why I believe when I was approached to chair the child welfare review, which is why this whole area needed to be assessed because the outcomes were not satisfactory for First Nations and Métis children.

Certainly we have a chance in Saskatchewan with the province and the federal government working together not to make the same mistakes that were made in Manitoba. And I think what happened in Manitoba . . . I spent a number of days studying their system. And what happened in Manitoba was worthy and in good faith, but there wasn't appropriate planning between the province and the First Nations and the Métis Nations, in my view, to properly plan and resource and ensure that the devolution would be successful. And I'm not saying it isn't, but there are some of the outcomes that I hope that we don't see in this province when there's full devolution for First Nations and Métis agencies to provide off-reserve services. So we can learn from that.

I keep talking to the provincial ministry. I don't have access to federal ministers, but I've sent a letter to the Prime Minister. I've sent a letter to federal ministers stating the Saskatchewan situation, as we see it, as it relates to, initially, First Nations children and youth.

But certainly we will continue. I think when we finalize the agreement with the Métis Nation, we will then negotiate, hon. member, with what we might do jointly. I have a meeting this

week with Vice-chief Lerat from the First Nations to talk about what we might do specifically next in terms of more closely working on the next issues as they prioritize them.

So we're trying to be respectful and offer our support. I mean there are also . . . I'm dealing too with calls for, you know, a First Nations advocate, right? I'm just trying to say, well you know what? That would be great. But for the moment, I'm the advocate, and I'm just going to work with you and we'll just do the best we can.

But certainly some of those agencies, not unlike the ministry in some ways in the more rural areas, have challenges getting resources of, say, foster homes, group homes, addictions and mental health services. I think those are some of the challenges that I face. And certainly as I alluded to earlier, the strong resources for preventive service is money. Now that's, obviously that's before the Human Rights Tribunal to be determined whether or not the money is less, and is that discriminatory. That tribunal will make their own decision on that.

But what we're trying to do is to, as I said, work with the institute which works with the agencies to try and enhance the services to First Nation children and youth. And you will know that in La Ronge not only has the province agreed that offers of services would be provided to First Nations families and children, but also non-Aboriginal services are provided by the La Ronge First Nations agency now. So they're providing all of the child welfare services in that area. So that may be one of the first models. There may be other models that could happen, where that could happen as well. And my sense is that the La Ronge approach could well be a model for the rest of the province for off-reserve services.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Okay. Is there any further questions, Mr. Belanger? You're finished, okay. Mr. Vermette.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you very much. And I know my colleague mentioned about the Métis and the court case going ahead. Well I know the appeals with the Federal Court is going through and we'll see where that ends up, and then it may go to the Supreme Court. We'll see what happens. But at the end of the day, we know it's been appealed by the federal government.

Now having said that, you mentioned 17 First Nations that are looking after agreements with the province that you oversee and kind of approved, my understanding, approved of those with the Ministry of Social Services has turned over. Now you mentioned La Ronge, and I'm curious because you said not only has it been turned over for ICFS to look after First Nations on-reserve, but off-reserve. But also you said responsibility for Métis and also non-Aboriginal in the agreement in that area that they would oversee, they would handle it. There's not going to be a provincial social services when it comes to child care. ICFS looks after that with the La Ronge Band. Is that correct?

**Mr. Pringle:** — That is correct. I believe it was December the 1st of last year. Now I stand to be corrected on the date, but I believe it was December the 1st. So the La Ronge agency handles all child welfare services, even for non-Aboriginal families.

[15:30]

**Mr. Vermette:** — Just for clarification on that one. So the resources — and you talk about I guess resources and provincial resources — I would imagine the resources that were put into that in some way, in the agreement, they've accepted to take on the challenge. And I understand that, and it could be very positive for everyone at the end of the day.

But having said that, what responsibility . . . And maybe I need to ask the minister this, with the agreement. But maybe you know this, and just for information: does the Ministry of Social Services . . . And the minister that traditionally would sign on being responsible for any kids that are in care, she is, in the end, the minister would be responsible for the care. In this case would it be the same thing? It's just that ICFS is looking after it and managing everything, the cases, but the minister, at the end of the day, is still responsible for those children that are in care with that agreement. Is that correct? Just so I understand that.

**Mr. Pringle:** — That is correct, hon. member, Madam Chair, that the Minister of Social Services under section 63 of her legislation is ultimately responsible for all children and youth in Saskatchewan and their safety, protection, and well-being. It's a delegated responsibility, but at the end of the day, the minister is still the person delegating it.

Now again I have to say this because when those agreements were first signed . . . And I believe today there is a perception with the First Nations that they gave the province the authority to delegate. This is a very important principle for them: they gave the province the authority to delegate the service. And I don't want to get too hung up on the legalities of all of that, but they believe they gave the authority to delegate the service, to allow the province to delegate the service to them. So that's a principle that's important to First Nations. But my legal opinion is that, at the end of the day, the Minister of Social Services is ultimately responsible. She cannot delegate the ultimate responsibility at the end of the day.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Okay. Thank you for that. It clears it up. And I guess that's kind of where I was wondering what would happen. And I mean they might be, you know, clearly . . . And we'll see where it does. It's a new agreement, and we wish it well. And I see you said it might be a model that would be used not only in the rest of the province but in Canada.

Having said that, it's good to know. And I guess if a family member or a I guess a child out there wants to raise a concern, they would go through, with your office, they could go through the same channels, meaning they could still use — even though it's ICFS looking after it, and they have a complaint; it's not the ministry — they could still go through using your office to advocate for a child that's in care or if there's problems. Would that be correct?

**Mr. Pringle:** — That's a very good question. Yes, we get calls on a frequent basis from youth or parents or foster families or agency personnel from First Nations agencies. And so we believe we have a mandate. If we get a referral, we're going to go no matter where it is in the province to make sure the child's safe. And so that includes . . . And we've had no difficulty with that for the most part. There's a recognition that we all want to

focus on the safety of the child, so it's the same process.

The other thing I might just say is that the First Nation agencies use the same database as the Ministry of Social Services. It's a Linkin model. It's a model that keeps track of all the children in care, whether they're with the First Nation agencies or the Ministry of Social Services.

And in addition to that, the province is using a new risk assessment tool, and that pilot project is being tested in Touchwood and Yorkton Tribal Council. That is the same risk assessment tool that's been developed to assess the degree to which a child might be at risk before a decision is made to apprehend the child or leave the child there. So it's a tool that appears to have the support of the First Nations and the ministry.

Again I appreciate your hon. member's question with regard to the Métis situation, and I don't know if they've been party to these conversations with regard to those tools. I do not know that.

**Mr. Vermette:** — No. And I appreciate your comments. And being a Métis person myself, I do appreciate your comments where you're not sure where that I guess responsibility yet has been worked out or has been consulted. And I know the ministry's working with, it sounds like, maybe Métis Nation to come up with some type of an agreement or whatever.

But I guess I have no further question. I just want to say thank you because I think it was important to understand the good work that's going on in La Ronge ICFS and the partnership, and that's good. And when we see children getting the best care, we know that's a good thing, but also it's knowing that if the situation doesn't go in a positive for individuals or for a child, that they have your office to use, saying we need you to advocate for us. And again thank you for answering the questions and information I needed. Thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Vermette. Mr. Belanger, do you have one more question?

**Mr. Belanger:** — Yes, I just want to make a couple of closing comments and thank you for your time because you obviously have been through the process before. The biggest thing that I would point out is that I know the institute exists in terms of trying to find the best practice and the balance and the seamless transition of taking care of the First Nations children from the provincial government to local Indian bands or territorial band organizations. But I think one of the biggest things that's important to me is that, as the Children's Advocate and youth advocate, that we pay very close attention to that transition because obviously the First Nations, in my view, have weathered the storm in the transition process. So the Métis can learn a lot from that particular process.

That being said, if the exercise between the federal and provincial governments are simply intended to save money on this whole transfer process, then it defeats the purpose of a culturally sensitive entity, as you mentioned. I think it's a really important point because we see similar standards in say for example education, where we see on-reserve education receive a lot less per capita than off-reserve. Housing allocations are

way below expectation so that you have crowded family conditions. So all those external factors certainly have a direct bearing on the wellness of that child.

The other important aspect is that I hope your office undertakes a fairly rigorous view of parents that are trying to find their child help for blatant drug use. Right now if a mother or father or grandparent has trouble with their child and wants to get him away from drugs or alcohol abuse, then there's very few services that exist, and a lot of the times they feel powerless to make that change.

So I'm just making sure that in the future that we have these discussions. People really watch. They have a lot of expectations of your office, and they know that your office holds high standards in approaching the challenges that you've approached in the past. But they maybe expect more, and I certainly expect more in the sense of the transition, the value for money, the reaching out and helping many of our Aboriginal youth. Because as evidence shows, if you don't respond to the problem, you have a high level of suicide rate amongst the Aboriginal youth.

So timely interventions, good support mechanisms, looking at the relationship between the federal and provincial government as it relates to the transition, whether it's Métis or First Nations, historical or future discussions — all that requires some heavy oversight. And I think one of the offices that has to be involved is your office. There's others that may become involved, but the big question we had to all ask ourselves is, if you want to be smart of investing taxpayers' money into this process, then we must develop a solid matrix of interdepartmental supports. And many times, as your experience will tell you, being where you were before, many times departments operate in a stovepipe mentality, and that's not an intelligent response to the crisis that many Aboriginal families — Métis and First Nations — find themselves in today. There is a crisis there, and we simply can't be . . . not expect the best result. We should always expect the best result.

So on that front, I would leave you with those two messages. I think I'm going to be paying a lot of attention to that as our caucus is, but that work is so fundamentally important to begin ASAP [as soon as possible].

**The Deputy Chair:** — I'll wait for a response from Mr. Pringle.

**Mr. Pringle:** — Well thank you very much, hon. member. You've put that very well. I just want to say that in our annual report that we just released, a centrepiece of that report . . . Well there's really three things. One is an analysis of the child and youth agenda, how well that's going and where we believe there are some gaps. I mean I'll just say we fundamentally agree with the goals to give children a good start in life, to prepare young people for their future, to support families, and to build capacity in communities so they're supportive no matter what the community is. We agree with that, and I've identified in the report that we support those goals. But we believe that in order to get there, there needs to be a better integration between some of the ministries and some of the community agencies and also an enhancement of addictions and mental health services for children and their families that are accessible. And so we feel

pretty strongly about that.

So our report focuses on the child and youth agenda, and some very good things have happened there as well. And I think we need to be fair, and we've tried to be fair in our report.

Also it focuses on the rights of children. Children have a right to be safe. They have a right to be protected. They have a right to have opportunities that give them the best chance of having a successful adulthood — and so the best health care we can afford, the best education.

And then the final part related to that in terms of those three pillars of this report is that we need to do better for Aboriginal children. The outcomes are not good enough, and so we need to do more there. And I don't think . . . I've met with all the ministers and no ministers really argue with me on that point, and the feedback I've had is our critique is fair. So then we will all need to get on with the job together.

And one of the things that I would say about our role, I'm not just going to sit back and criticize. I think our job is to, if you look at our strategic plan and our annual report, is to roll up our sleeves and also offer research and best-practice ideas and come to the table with some solutions.

I actually went to Manitoba for five days as a guest of the Métis Nation from Saskatchewan to study what's happening in Manitoba and how it worked out there. And I worked closely with Gerald Morin, the deputy minister of the social sector. So we try to make sure that we keep in close communication with the key people in both the nations. And as I say, I went very deliberately. I'm not saying this for any reason, but I believe I am the only advocate that's been to the Human Rights Tribunal just to observe because I want to understand, myself, is there a differential service on-reserve and prevention services? And if so, what's that amount? Because I need to understand that myself, so I went to listen to the arguments.

And certainly the federal government has to be at the table. You know, that's just . . . And they need to step up to the table more than they are. There's no doubt about that.

And so we'll . . . And I just wanted to make one other point if I could. And when we're hiring our systemic advocate on the 1st of May . . . But actually every case we have — because there are themes that emerge, and we interact with thousands of young people a year, so there are themes that emerge — I expect every one of our staff members to be thinking about the systemic issues as they're doing their casework. And we do have a process to feed into what systemic issues we will prioritize. That's where we come to some of the conclusions in our annual report about what the key issues are. It's just now that we'll have somebody to focus addressing those systemic issues and providing the leadership around research and so on so that it doesn't become something we'd like to do but never get to, but something we're actually doing.

So I heard you about paying close attention and I . . . You know, feel free to call me at any time. I welcome sitting down with members. Thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, committee

members. Seeing no further questions from the committee, we'll now proceed with the vote. Would you rather do it at the end, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** — At the end.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Okay, we'll do them all at the end then. So what's up next? All right, I'd like to thank Mr. Pringle for his comments. Mr. Speaker, is there anything else you want to add at this point? Or Mr. Pringle?

[15:45]

**Mr. Pringle:** — Madam Chair, I just want to say thank you very much for this opportunity, and I thank all hon. members and Mr. Speaker. And we really appreciate the support that we've been given and the co-operation we've had with government and opposition members as well, so thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Pringle. We're now going to move on to questions and answers in relation to the estimates for the Chief Electoral Officer. And we'll just take one moment to switch chairs. I believe we're not going to recess, but we'll just ask the officials to come forward and we'll begin questions right away on that.

All right, thank you. Mr. Speaker, are you ready to proceed with estimates for Chief Electoral Officer? You are ready? All right. Mr. Belanger? Or do you want to start with some comments? Okay, we'll start with some comments then. I thought you were just waving at me.

**General Revenue Fund  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Vote 34**

**Subvote (CE01)**

**The Speaker:** — I'm always very friendly. Yes, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Michael Boda, who is relatively new in the position, pretty well a year now. And so this will be his first full budget cycle that he has gone through. I'd ask Michael to introduce his staff and any statements he wishes to make.

**Mr. Boda:** — Sure. I'd just like to introduce a couple of officials who've come with me. Saundra Arberry is our director of operations at Elections Saskatchewan and Brent Nadon is our director of finance at Elections Saskatchewan. Thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Boda. Mr. Belanger, do you have questions?

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much. I'm keenly interested in your particular role as a Chief Electoral Officer because obviously we have a lot of issues that I want to be educated on, and I want to certainly educate you, if I can, on some of the issues I think are really important.

But before I get into that, how many office staff do you have in terms of the people that actually help you monitor and to administer an election, say a provincial election?



**Mr. Boda:** — Okay, Elections Saskatchewan, as you may know, is in a position of transition. I arrived in Saskatchewan June the 1st of last year, and over the past few months we have been working towards listening to stakeholders as to how we might effectively change the institution so that it can better serve the province of Saskatchewan and the voting public.

We're currently going through a process which is based on what is called the Hamilton report that was completed in 2009. And within that report — I have indicated from the time I was hired that I would use that as a framework for the kind of election management body that we're establishing — within that report there was an indication that there would be 13, what some would refer to as permanent employees, full-time employees who will be hired ultimately. In addition to this, the area that we work in is very specialized, and there would be other experts that we would draw on over the course of the electoral cycle. So 13 would be the core group.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Obviously, you know, as the Chief Electoral Officer, it's a pretty important role. And I've noticed over time — I've been in this Assembly for 18 years — that most everyone respects the role of the Chief Electoral Officer. I don't believe I've seen any evidence of tampering or some particular MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] buying you a steak, you know, before election. That kind of activity, none of that ever have I heard of it nor seen it, so I think the integrity of your office is something that is very valued. I think it's respected across party lines and, certainly from my perspective, I think the public in general view your office as being independent, impartial, and professional in that sense.

You obviously get, sometimes you're subjected to the tos and fros of the political battle that happens during the election process. I understand that, but do you commit any of your 13 staff to what I think is becoming a common theme in Canada, which is tactics like voter suppression. Is any of your staff involved with that particular aspect? Because obviously you want to protect the integrity of the electoral system. You want to encourage full participation by as many of the public as you can because it's great to do that. But in any of your educational effort through your Chief Electoral Officer budget, have you dedicated any members to investigate concerns or complaints such as voter suppression?

**Mr. Boda:** — Well as I mentioned, we are currently in the situation where we're ramping up in terms of the staff that will be hired. There will be three service lines that will be involved, and one of them is called corporate services and electoral finance. And in that context, there will be a deputy who is tasked with overseeing complaints. I think, in listening to stakeholders over the past number of months, I think that one of the highlights that I've heard is that Elections Saskatchewan doesn't have the capacity to deal with complaints in a proficient manner. And so there will be an individual who'll be focused on complaints in general, and if there are complaints about voter suppression, that would be the individual who would begin to deal with that particular issue.

**Mr. Belanger:** — I'm actually very pleased to hear that. Because obviously you don't want to encourage continual complaining about electoral cycles. That's not what you want to do. But you want to investigate real and hard issues such as

voter suppression.

I'll give you a good example of what I mean by that. The most recent changes being made to encourage people to have a photo ID [identification] to vote, that's one of the recent changes made. And I didn't like that at all. Because when I walked into the hall back home to vote, the lady that was working at the desk was a former employee of mine, and another lady that used to work for me was there as well, and a couple of my relations — distant, but they're related.

I said, I've come here to vote on the candidate. And they said, well we need to see your photo ID. I said, well I'm Buckley. I'm the candidate. I've come here to vote. No, we can't give you this without you presenting your ID, your picture ID. And I had my mother with me, and she doesn't have a photo ID. You know, she's got her card. So I had to go back and get the appropriate identification, well for her. I had it in my wallet. But many people like my mother don't carry their ID around.

Now you contrast that to First Nations communities. And I'm actually applauding the First Nations communities where they have somebody there in the hall that could attest, to confirm that person's residency, and it is who he or she says who she is or who he is. So the double standard here, how is it that I can't have somebody in my community of Ile-a-la-Crosse attest who I am? I've got to have photo ID, even though everybody knows who I am. And you contrast that to the First Nations who are allowed to attest. And they're allowed to attest for their own voters based on some really solid arguments that the Indian chief made at the time. I know the member from Cumberland has more information on that.

So my only argument is we need to find ways and means in which people like myself, people that know each other in the community can make . . . You make it easier to vote, not harder. And you're seeing that the Aboriginal community themselves are voting less and less. And you wonder, why is that happening? So this whole voter suppression tactic is a blight, it's a mark on our electoral process as a country.

Now my father fought in World War II for freedom. I have a lot of family members that are in the Canadian Armed Forces, and that's not how they viewed a free country. So I guess from the perspective of voter suppression tactics, we can't have that. Because photo ID, that hurts the First Nations community. It hurts the Métis community. It hurts the elderly. It hurts the immigrants that are coming here. It hurts those that maybe have some other issues where they can't get a photo ID. It makes it even harder for people to vote. Why would we make it harder for people to vote? That's a confusing issue that I have in my mind.

So in terms of the voter suppression tactics, we have to do something about it because it's counter to a democracy that we think we enjoy in Canada. So I guess I would ask for your comments on that.

**Mr. Boda:** — I'll begin by saying that I've interacted quite a bit with your colleagues on your side of the Assembly and with the others on the Board of Internal Economy. And together, they hired me. And I believe one of the reasons they hired me was for the experience that I've had internationally in terms of

electoral best practice in international standards. And this is something, while I was born and raised in the province and this is home to me, I've had a lot of experience abroad for the last 20 years. So I hope that I can bring some of that experience back here.

As I look at the jurisdictions that are elsewhere, not just in Canada but around the world, identification is increasingly a part of that equation in terms of elections. Not all require it yet, but many do. And as a result, as the Chief Electoral Officer, it's my role to look at what the different case studies are that are out there. And so to . . . I would find it difficult to put voter ID and voter suppression, you know, put them together necessarily. They can be, but necessarily.

And as a result what I would want to do as the Chief Electoral Officer, what I'm constantly looking for is ways that I can minimize the barriers to voting, yet do it within the legislation that's provided to me and in a manner that's consistent with best practices. So as a result, I think that some of the issues that you raise can be considered. But when I look at Saskatchewan's legislation, I'll look at it with an eye towards best practice and how, given the legislation, I can minimize the voters' access to the ballot, no matter where that voter comes from.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Now do you think there's a fundamental flaw in our system when you can go to a band hall, First Nations band hall, and somebody's sitting there, whether it's the band administrator or a councillor, saying that, okay, this individual is allowed to vote. I can attest for them, that they are a band member, and that they do live here. Nothing wrong with that. I'm just saying that's one circumstance.

And then you go to a community of Ile-a-la-Crosse where I, as a candidate, had to produce my ID, and that we don't have the same person that's sitting in there or even the town administrator or even a neutral scrutineer. Maybe not a scrutineer is a good word for it, but a neutral person that can say, yes Buckley can vote here. He lives here. I know who he is. This is him. You see why the two different ways of getting people to vote, that's the confusing part.

**Mr. Boda:** — If you're talking about inconsistencies, I would suggest that inconsistencies are inappropriate within the system and that is something that we'll go back, we'll look at very carefully. And inconsistencies are diminished. You're never going to get rid of inconsistencies entirely. Part of the issue is that in order to conduct an election, we're responsible to have a team of 10,000 people, the size of the civil service, in place and to be working with us on that election day.

Now those on the Board of Internal Economy will know that this is one of my fundamental concerns, that Elections Saskatchewan is responsible to hire 10,000 people over the course of an electoral cycle. That's no small feat. And I think that the emphasis on that, on training, on ensuring consistency, and making sure that we do due diligence in terms of our democratic stewardship in this province, I think we have to focus on that much more. And over the past nine months, that is where I've begun to place my focus increasingly. So I think inconsistencies like the one you have described may be inappropriate. I'd have to look at the particular situation.

[16:00]

**Mr. Belanger:** — But I would certainly concur. I'm not debating your argument at all that you're going to have inconsistency in every electoral cycle. I'm agreeing with you 100 per cent. But I would suggest that this is a glaring inconsistency, that you can't have one standard for a First Nations band location for voting and a different standard for a non-First Nations in terms of a testing that that person's allowed to vote there. Okay?

And I go back to my example. I had to show my ID to vote even though I was a candidate and everybody in that room knew who I was. Now remember the La Ronge band didn't have to do that. They had somebody saying, yes this person's allowed to vote. Now that is inconsistent.

**Mr. Boda:** — So it was an inconsistency between bands. Is that correct?

**Mr. Belanger:** — No, no. It's inconsistency in the practice. Yes so I would just point out that from the perspective of small communities, whether they're in rural Saskatchewan or whether it's even in northern Saskatchewan . . . It might even be the cities because the cities you could view as a cluster of small communities. But if they're allowed to attest for people that they know have lived in a certain constituency for years, own a residence there and is allowed to vote, then they should be allowed to vote. Now if there are some places where there's some concerns, well then they need to provide more ID for the purpose of voting. I understand that. But there are times right now that I see that our folks, as you can see, they are participating less and less in voting primarily because now they've got to have an ID. And I don't think that that's fair nor proper.

The other issue is when you look at your employees. You know, we've seen a bit of that in the national scene for robo-calling, you know, where . . . I think there was somebody charged for misleading voters to a different poll. Now if that were to occur here in Saskatchewan, would your office be involved in something like that?

**Mr. Boda:** — This would be something that our office would deal with on the provincial level, yes, if it related to provincial level elections. And as I indicated to you, we would need to manage that complaint in a professional manner.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Now if I had a concern, say as a candidate . . . I was a candidate a few times. But if we had a situation where, as the Chief Electoral Officer, if I went up to you and I said, look, our party ran on a system of resource revenue sharing for the First Nations last election and we know that there was some phone bank or robo-calling happening by the opposition party at the time, the Saskatchewan Party, misrepresenting what the NDP were planning when it talks about the First Nations resource revenue sharing, and I'd like a transcript of that phone bank as to what they were telling the people of Saskatchewan through this automatic phone bank system. Would your office get involved with that? Because I wouldn't mind knowing what was said to people when the robo-call centre got a hold of this information, and on behalf of the Sask Party, they phoned everybody to say, look . . . I don't

know the exact wording, but would your office be involved in something like that?

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Belanger. I just remind you to keep your questions as much as possible limited to the vote for the estimates. Thank you. Mr. Boda?

**Mr. Boda:** — I guess my response would be, we would have the capacity in order to deal with a specific complaint and we would look at the legislation specifically as to what the authority of the office is and then we would pursue it accordingly.

**Mr. Belanger:** — And the connection I would make, Madam Chair, is that the Chief Electoral Officer did indicate that there was going to be a position for corporate services that would look at what I would assume would be glaring, blatant inconsistencies because every election has inconsistencies, is his point. And to me, I want to make sure things like voter suppression tactics, robo-calling, you know, being fair about the process, that I'm assuming that's what the corporate services personnel would be responsible for. And you did indicate that it was one of the positions that they were looking at.

But there's no question I want to reaffirm and to re-emphasize that paramount to this whole process is the integrity of your office. And if there's voter suppression tactics happening, if there's robo-calls that are of the unsavoury nature and misrepresenting the other party's views on a number of things, that if there's any kind of fraud or is any kind of major concerns of a candidate, that your office ought to be involved. And I'm pleased to see that there is that effort being undertaken by your office to strengthen our democratic system.

I'm not even going to mention the negative ads. I don't think that's part of your process because they happen. They're part of our life. But I wouldn't mind knowing, in the event that there's robo-calling happening in Saskatchewan, that if there's any negative comments made towards the NDP [New Democratic Party] or their position on certain matters, that your office be allowed to monitor them and report back, as such. Now under the corporate services aspect, one would assume that it would be fine.

**An Hon. Member:** — That has nothing to do with the estimates.

**Mr. Belanger:** — It has everything to do with the estimates. He's talking about corporate services here in terms of finding personnel to deal with inconsistent issues. Now if the member from Meadow Lake wants to produce that transcript, I'll take it from him any day of the week. But my point being is that we need to find a fair balance where you don't have people swaying other people based on a number of bad assumptions but good politics on their part.

So this corporate office, are you going to have one, two or three, or just one particular person dedicated to that?

**Mr. Boda:** — This will be a service line that will be headed by a deputy who's responsible for that particular area and will work with our legal counsel in that regard looking at the legislation and determining whether there's enough evidence

for us to pass that along to the Department of Justice. In terms of . . . You're using a very specific example of robo-calls, and I can tell you that we would certainly look at that. But again we would go back to the legislation and look in the context of what is or is not allowed. I do know that negative calls, as long as the individual who's calling says where they're from, is allowed within the legislation.

**Mr. Belanger:** — I look at some of the similarities, what our federal government is doing versus what Saskatchewan might do. And the standards, even in terms of redrawing the federal ridings, there is robo-calls happening all day long. And my only argument is that when Saskatchewan undertakes some of that effort — and granted, I'm biased from where I sit — but I can tell you one thing is that voter suppression tactics are effective in my riding because a lot of my people didn't vote last time. There was a whole pile of older people leaving the hall not to vote. And is that fair? Is that a fair, democratic system? Absolutely not. When you go three hours east of Ile-a-la-Croise to La Ronge, where a band councillor could attest that this elder was from there and should be allowed to vote, that is a glaring inconsistency.

So on smaller communities where you are able to encourage people to vote, a lot of the elders in my hometown, their primary language is Cree. They don't drive a car. They survive on \$1,100 a month. Yes, they may have a social insurance number. They may have a health card. Most everybody does. And for them to come and vote, it gets tougher and tougher for them to vote. So they're not going to vote if you're going to have photo ID. So I know of a lot of cases of people who have gone to the hall and walked out because they couldn't vote. And these are elders in our communities that have huge respect.

So I think that's one of the first things that we ought to do, is that we ought to find a way, especially in the northern communities, Aboriginal communities that are so closely knit. They're so close to each other that they all know each other. Small town, everybody knows everybody's business, right? Well to be able to vote is a basic thing that should be allowed if somebody recognizes you or can attest for you.

So on that note, again I give you my experience. I walk in. I said, hello, I'm here to vote. I'm the candidate. I'm sorry, we need to see your photo ID. I say, well it's me; it's Buckley. You know, I'm running. My name's on the ballot. And no, we need to see your photo ID. So I tried a third time. Come on, you know who I am. No, photo ID. You know, that's just plain silly. You know, it's not democratic.

So I would encourage you from the perspective of that issue, is that the integrity of your office is something that we value and appreciate. So I would encourage you to look at the corporate services even if it's a call-in line to fix that particular glaring problem. Thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Belanger. There will be an additional question from Mr. Vermette. Mr. Boda, did you want to respond to that last comment or just move on to the next question?

**Mr. Boda:** — I will respond. Just to indicate that I'm grateful for your comments in terms of suggesting that my office needs

to be independent. And this is something that I take very, very seriously, having worked around the globe with some election managers who quite frankly don't have that independence. And it's something that I take very, very seriously and I intend to pursue election management in the province based on a best practice and international standards approach.

You raised some good questions and in terms of the system itself, know that we implement the election according to the legislation. That's what gives me my authority in the province and I have every intention of implementing the elections according to the legislation with an eye towards ensuring that every voter has a chance to vote equally.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Boda. Mr. Vermette.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you. And I guess just for clarification, and I realize you have . . . Your office will be doing certain things and you're undertaking dealing with some of the situations, whether past elections or best practices. And when I look at that, I just want to say, and maybe this is something I can contact your office later with, a concern that I have. And I just want to talk because maybe this is part of the dollars being used to go forward would be used to do this.

Now we talk about having IDs, and they want voter ID, picture ID, driver's licence. And I'll give you an example. You can go in to receive your driver's licence. And you walk into the place, and they take your picture. And they put your . . . There's a provision on there to have your address, your street address or box number. In some of our northern communities, and a lot in rural communities, they actually don't put your physical address. They put just an automatic box number because they're going to mail you your driver's. How do you see this?

[16:15]

And here's another suggestion maybe with your office. And you're going to be getting some staff in there, but maybe they could talk with SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] to make sure that on the driver's licence it's mandatory that they put the street address and the mailing address if that's what it is. This way it would help clarify.

Because I know people went in there, and they've got their picture. They've got their driver's licence. They went home and then I asked them, well I said, as long as you have your driver's . . . Oh, I've got it here. And they'd pull it out, and what it had was the box number. It didn't have their physical address on there. And that, unfortunately, for some people wasn't an option they were given when they got their driver's. So who's ever working there just automatically puts the mailing address.

But now, in light of the way we're going with photo ID, it would be good to say if you're in a community where we use the mailing address and a street, that you have to use both on there. It would be something for your area for you to look at, just as a suggestion. I'm going to follow up with you when I'm done here to make sure that could be something that you could work with some of the ministries to see that that happens with the individual you're talking about — putting on, you know, best practices.

**Mr. Boda:** — First I want to thank you for bringing that up. And I would encourage you to follow up with us on that particular issue. On that particular issue I do know, having not been here for the last general election, I do know that there were issues specifically on the point you've raised.

I have been in discussion with Elections Canada on the issue in terms of they have a permanent registry. And they're just as concerned about this issue as we are. I know that there are some issues with SGI, that they have been addressing this particular issue. But it's certainly something that we're following up on and we will need to look at in terms of our legislation and how we'll implement the next general election. So I thank you for that comment, and please do follow up.

**Mr. Vermette:** — I just want to make a last comment. I know the member from Athabasca raised it in talking about different ways attestation was being used. And I'll be one that's . . . very clearly that it affected my constituency lots because I have some of the First Nations that are there and the largest in the province. And it was used, attestation was used. It was used very well so people could actually cast a vote. And that way . . .

And I hear the member's concerns, but I'm not sure . . . And I want to be clear. I know he would like the Métis communities — and he talked about that — to make sure they're covered off in smaller communities, provisions in there. When you talk about best practices, you look at that. And I do. I truly commend what some of the First Nations leaders did when that came up and they were concerned that members would not, First Nations that are living on reserve would not get to cast a vote because they didn't have the ID, that attestation was used. It was used very effective . . . And I know it was . . . a large number used it in my constituency. And I would encourage that and say, yes, in that sense it worked well. I wish it would work in some of the Métis communities and the smaller communities, so there is some area and work that needs to be done if someone doesn't have that ID that there was provisions in there.

And I, again, commend the office and the leadership from the First Nation that went together with the Saskatchewan elections office to come up with that attestation. It was used, and it worked well for us. And I just want to say thank you for that and give my comments on those regards. And anyway, I'm done with my comments.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Vermette. Mr. Boda, Mr. Speaker, any further comments? Any other questions from the committee? Seeing none, we can now . . . We'll adjourn consideration for vote no. 34 for the time being. We'll move into, now, consideration of estimates on vote 55, which is the Information and Privacy Commissioner. And we'll give the members, the officials some time to rearrange the seating.

**General Revenue Fund  
Information and Privacy Commissioner  
Vote 55**

**Subvote (IP01)**

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, would you like to introduce your officials, please?

**The Speaker:** — Thank you. What we have this afternoon is the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Mr. Gary Dickson with us. Gary has been serving in this role for almost 10 years now. And I believe this is your last budget that you will be submitting, so I'd like to thank Gary formally at this point in time for the service that he has provided to the province of Saskatchewan in his role as the Privacy Commissioner. So I'd like to invite Gary to introduce his staff, and to make any comments that he would wish.

**Mr. Dickson:** — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. And Madam Chair and members of the committee, I'm pleased to be here and respond to your questions. I'll look forward to it. I'm sorry, I neglected to identify my colleagues with me today. Diane Aldridge is our director of compliance in the Information and Privacy Commissioner office; and Pam Scott, just beside the Speaker, is our director of operations. Thanks.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Dickson. We will start with discussion in relation to subvote (IP01). Are there any questions from the committee? Mr. Nilson.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Ms. Deputy Chair. And good afternoon; I'm happy to have you here. From the information that we see here, my sense would be that you have basically a status quo budget with about a \$51,000 increase. Is that an accurate assessment?

**Mr. Dickson:** — Yes. Yes it is.

**Mr. Nilson:** — So my questions this afternoon relate to the work that you're doing. And one of the positive aspects of this year in your budget is that it comes with nine years of experience in dealing with many different issues. And one of the questions that I have relates to a fundamental role of the Privacy Commissioner, which I see has maybe not received as high a place as it should have, and that relates to the review of legislation that comes into this legislature.

And I raise that because there have been two or three pieces of legislation this session where the information that we get from your office is that it hasn't been reviewed. And can you explain what's happening here or where some of the problems arise, and how we can save us all a bit of time and effort in the future?

**Mr. Dickson:** — Sure, I'll certainly endeavour to do that. Actually, we've offered commentary on five different bills that are currently in front of the Assembly: Bill 58, Bill 65, Bill 81, Bill 85, and Bill 95. And it seems to me of the five, the only one where there was a — I'll describe it as a solicitation — I think would have been *The Workers' Compensation Act*. And that was a more general solicitation for submissions that started last fall.

It's interesting. If I reflect on the nine years I've had the privilege of being the commissioner, I remember when we started out, on a number of instances, the Ministry of Justice consulted our office in a proactive fashion about prospective legislation or subordinate legislation. And we had an opportunity, I think, on the statute dealing with testing a first responder for blood-borne infectious disease, that sort of thing. We had discussions around the personal information protection Act, the private sector privacy law in the two provinces to the

west. And so it seemed to me there was a fair bit of consultation. And then for reasons that aren't clear to me, just there . . . It was sort of less consultation in subsequent years. So it's a bit hit and miss.

We still every year would have perhaps 30 to 50 files where public bodies come to us in advance of first reading of a bill and chat with us. And we're happy in those cases to provide what we describe as confidential advice. In other words, we share with them our perspective on a proposed program or policy or bill or regs, regulations, and it's up for them to do what they wish with it. Our hope is that we're encouraging them to build in stronger privacy or access features. And if they do that, that's fine. We're happy then if that goes forward to offer positive comment.

But we always caution that if they decide to go forward with the bill or the program or the policy, and we think it has negative impact on Saskatchewan residents' access and privacy rights or information rights, then we think part of our obligation is to share that with the public. And so typically we would then put some information on our website and take that position.

I guess my perspective also is that if I look at colleagues across the country, it's pretty uneven. In some cases there's a great deal of consultation, and in other provinces, a whole lot less so. And you know, at different times in my nine years, there's been more consultation, and other years, less. I'd have to say it's a bit disappointing, in terms of the current sitting of the legislature, there'd be so many bills that would have an impact on citizens' information rights that we would learn of basically by accident or through a third party alerting us to something in the bill.

I'm sorry that's maybe a bit of a lengthy answer, but there's not a more precise answer I can offer you.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Well thank you. That's my perspective as well, as somebody who's been around for a while, that there seem to be more this year than other years.

I guess, a question based on what you see across Canada and maybe through jurisdictions that you've looked at other places: is it a role for an officer of the legislature maybe to have a more formal certification of legislation before it actually is introduced in the legislature so that sometimes we can solve problems and save time? Other times we can be alerted fairly early on to something that is not going to withstand subsequent court action. And so I was just wondering, are there any jurisdictions where, through the Speaker I guess, that there would be notice or certification of legislation before it's introduced in the legislature?

**Mr. Dickson:** — No, I can't think of any Canadian jurisdiction that would have that kind of an institutional apparatus. What's interesting is the federal House of Commons, they have a standing committee on access, privacy, and ethics. And that committee's actually been very active. They've, for example, brought a lot of input to the federal government on the federal private sector privacy law, the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, amendments to the *Privacy Act*, which is actually the one other statute in Canada where it hasn't been updated, or revised in that case, for some 30 years.

But my own preference would be to, I think, make the most of the flexibility in an office to consider more of an informal convention, a practice that there's more frequent consultation in advance. And I don't know what happens these days, but at one point I remember it was a screening mechanism that executive government had. And I think there were some Justice lawyers and maybe others who sat on some kind of a panel, and there was actually a formal vetting process. If somebody was bringing forward legislation and perhaps regulations, they'd have to be vetted with that particular panel.

And on a number of occasions I've been called by deputy ministers or people in a ministry saying, we've been told by, when we appeared in front of this legislative review committee, that we should have a chat with the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

So I can think of three, four, five times in my nine years where that was the reason a ministry had come to us. And we welcomed that opportunity and were happy to provide input in each of those cases. The institutionalizing, codifying, it's an interesting proposal. I'm just not sure I've seen it in any Canadian jurisdiction. And I think what would be optimal really would be just more of a practice that maybe wouldn't be invariable but would pertain in most cases of proposed legislation, for sure.

[16:30]

**Mr. Nilson:** — Well thank you. I appreciate your comments there. I think it's helpful to have this discussion on the record as people are working to make the laws in Saskatchewan more I guess stronger would be a better . . . make the legislation stronger for protection of individuals' privacy.

Another question relates to the legislation itself. And I know that it's been around for a long time. So we're actually I think you said the oldest of the provincial pieces of legislation. And I understand there's a possible review coming forward. Is it such that you'll be part of that review or is it going to happen just after you go or do you know?

**Mr. Dickson:** — Actually all I know of it was at the Board of Internal Economy meeting. The Government House Leader, who was a member of the board, had indicated that there would be a review of the privacy laws in the province and on account of that, my request for the two additional investigators would be denied but would be reconsidered, as I understood, in February of 2014.

And then subsequently there's been an exchange of correspondence with the Minister of Justice. And my recollection . . . I don't have the letter in front of me, but I think the minister indicated that there would be a role for my office, that there would be consultation with my office in the review. And I think I'd also offered the minister what probably was a longer list than I started out with, of suggestions in terms of process in terms of how the review, some of the ways that might be done.

So I think I'm in the position of waiting eagerly when the review of what I hope will be *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, The Local Authority Freedom of*

*Information and Protection of Privacy Act, The Health Information Protection Act*, and ideally a possible personal information protection Act that would mean, for the first time in our province, the employees in the grocery store and in the car dealership and private businesses would have privacy protection which is taken for granted in our province by everyone who works for a public sector agency, whether a local government or a provincial government institution.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Just one moment. I want to inform the committee that I have received a substitution form from Doyle Vermette for Trent Wotherspoon who is now sitting in for Doyle Vermette.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you. Well I think we're all looking forward to that kind of review. Just for my information, can you give an indication right now of which province in Canada seems to be the furthest ahead and has the most recent or postmodern legislation? Because often that's a good place to start, and then we get to work on it and make it even better so that we're the best.

**Mr. Dickson:** — You know, for a long time the gold standard was the Ontario *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. That legislation was implemented some 30 years ago, approximately 30 years ago. And then what happened was the province of British Columbia enacted a statute in 1994 and that was significantly more sophisticated, more comprehensive, and so the British Columbia Act became kind of the new gold standard. The following year Alberta enacted its legislation, and that had some features that built on Ontario and British Columbia, in both cases having a commissioner with order-making power. So your OIPC [Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner] became a form of administrative tribunal rather than purely an ombudsman.

And since that time I'd say PEI [Prince Edward Island], when they adopted their legislation, Newfoundland, when they developed their legislation, relied primarily I think on the Alberta model.

And then the most recent legislation would be a step backwards, from our perspective. And that was in Newfoundland and Labrador. Their legislation had only been in existence for five years. They had done what a number of jurisdictions have where they actually have a statutory mandated review. It's built into the statute. Every five years or seven years there would be a review of the legislation.

So they had five years of their legislation. Somebody did a review, made a series of recommendations. The government then introduced a bill that in fact took only some of the independent consultant's recommendations, made a bunch of other changes like dramatically expanding cabinet confidences, prohibiting the commissioner from being able to view and make a determination with respect to solicitor-client privilege with respect to cabinet confidences. And I'd have to say in Canada's access and privacy community it was actually seen as a retrograde step, that they'd taken legislation that was probably pretty good — it wasn't sort of cutting-edge or leading-edge — but then took a big step backward.

And you might recall there was a lengthy filibuster in the

Newfoundland Assembly specifically over those changes. But at the end of the day the changes were made and the FOIP [freedom of information and protection of privacy] bill, as we describe it in Newfoundland, is law. But I'd certainly lobby vigorously that that not be the standard. I think Alberta and British Columbia would represent I think the most effective legislation we have in the country.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you. I just have one more question and this relates to I guess protection of information. And it's kind of related to the whole issue of securities legislation and the fact that we have a securities legislation system where we all work together as provinces and territories to effectively have national securities legislation. And so there's a sense of I guess protection outside of our boundaries. But right now if Saskatchewan information is located in another province, do you have any jurisdiction over getting that information? Or are there some arrangements between different provinces around how this works or what is the . . . What do we do, I guess is basically the question.

**Mr. Dickson:** — Well I only have obviously the three statutes to frame and define my jurisdiction. Let me come at it this way. If a government institution, a local authority or a health trustee contracts with a company in New Mexico for information management services or data storage or something like that, obviously I have no jurisdiction over the contractor. We would only be able to look to the health region or the ministry in this province in terms of whether they had taken the appropriate measures to safeguard the information.

Now there — and I digress just to say we have what I've described since I think 2005 — is a gaping hole in our FOIP Act and our local authority FOIP Act. All modern privacy legislation has an explicit duty to safeguard the personal information in your custody or under your control. And that typically requires administrative safeguards, physical safeguards, technical safeguards. This wasn't a big deal 30 years ago and when the Ontario Royal Commission on individual privacy and access to information issued their report, that's really what our FOIP Act in this province is based on. Every other province has gone back though and updated their legislation and so on.

So our province and the federal *Privacy Act* are kind of the only two old statutes in terms of dealing with privacy that don't have that explicit statutory obligation to protect, reinforced by an offence provision and a substantial fine. We don't have those. We don't have those features. I'm sorry I got so busy in the digression. I think I've lost track of where we started. Can you . . .

**Mr. Nilson:** — I guess the specific question is, and I think you've answered it, that you don't have jurisdiction when information that's here in Saskatchewan gets outside of Saskatchewan other than dealing with the institution that's located in the province. And my specific question is: what happens if that institution is the province of Saskatchewan itself and they put the information outside of the boundaries of the province? I guess in following your answer, your only method of dealing with it is dealing with the province directly.

**Mr. Dickson:** — In point of fact, it's interesting you raised that

particular scenario because right now in this province there's no law that prohibits any public body from contracting with an outfit offshore. And that may be in California, it may be Massachusetts, it may be in Mexico, it may be Nicaragua, it may be, you know, North Korea or South Korea. I mean they could contract in any of those places.

And what we've done that's interesting is the approach taken in our province is we look to the language in the contract and that's really the only kind of protection that's there. And you may or may not be aware that the Public Accounts Committee recently dealt with this issue. The concern came about the *USA PATRIOT [Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism] Act* and what kind of a threat that it posed to outsourced personal information of Saskatchewan residents.

And the Provincial Auditor had in fact incorporated by reference our outstanding recommendation that it's not enough to rely on the contract language. This is where it becomes important to have an explicit obligation to protect in the statute, reinforced by an offence provision, reinforced by a significant penalty. In HIPA [*The Health Information Protection Act*] we have a \$500,000 fine for an organization, a \$50,000 fine for an individual. Not likely to be meted out any time soon, but it helps to focus and concentrate the minds of people working with that kind of information.

So my concern is that our first, last, and only form of protection when public bodies take our information and contract and send our information to the cloud, offshore, to other companies is the language in the contract. And I've also advised Justice that this goes back to I think 2005, that the . . . I have a difficulty with the way they deal with it in contracts.

The best practice is you specifically identify you have personal information or personal health information. Well what Justice has been recommending is that everything, all information that the contractor gets from government, is treated as, quote, confidential information. Well part of it may be personal information, but all kinds of other things, much of which clearly wouldn't be withheld under FOIP, under one of the mandatory discretionary exemptions.

And I've suggested, not persuasively I guess, that that's not a particularly effective way of doing it. And so if your contract's going to be your first and only line of defence, you better make sure that the contract language is as clear as possible. And we've registered a concern. Fortunately most of the Crown corporations would use language that would model best practices, and lot of the local authorities we've seen have done a really good job in terms of doing it.

[16:45]

The Health Quality Council in one case was sufficiently concerned about the risk that when they were outsourcing data to an outfit, I think, in New England, Massachusetts perhaps, what they had done is they first sent the information to Markham, Ontario where a Canadian company stripped the identifiers out of the data. Then the data was sent to the US [United States] information management service provider to do their work with it. Then it came back to Markham where the

identifiers were reattached. And that was, for example, an interesting way to minimize the risk that personal information would go missing.

So there's some creative ways of dealing with it. I just think that to be relying only on contract language and then to use language that's less than a best practice leaves Saskatchewan residents in a position where I think there's an unreasonable degree of risk once their information goes out of the jurisdiction.

The other thing I'd just quickly add to that is as we move into the electronic health record, which is consuming a great deal of our office's time and attention, what's become apparent is the difficulty as information starts moving over borders. And the electronic health record is conceived as an interoperable entity where information will move from one end of the country to the other to follow the patient. Well the difficulty is you can have a breach. You can have a loss of information that involves more than one jurisdiction. Under my statute, I can't sit down with my colleague in Edmonton, the Alberta commissioner, or the Manitoba Ombudsman or the British Columbia commissioner and share information, even if that would be the appropriate thing to do, to be able to do a joint investigation to find out what had happened and to be able to report in an adequate and fulsome way.

The Alberta Legislative Assembly recently amended their *Health Information Act* to specifically enable their commissioner to be able to share information with either a federal or another provincial, territorial commissioner to the extent necessary to undertake and complete the investigation. And I've made the same recommendation to our government here. I mean I think, you know, information increasingly moves over borders. And it becomes more and more important that data protection authorities internationally and within a nation be able to work together, to collaborate, to be able to share, to be able to deal with entities and companies that are operating in multiple jurisdictions.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Well thank you for that information and explanation. And obviously the Minister of Justice and others have got lots of work in this area that will all be helpful in the sense that we'll ask some hard questions about it. I think that it's also clear that maybe in this year you may need some extra resources, but we'll let the board deal with that as you move closer to the time that's there. I know my colleague who's come has a few questions in another related area.

**Mr. Dickson:** — Thanks for your questions.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Wotherspoon, do you have questions?

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you and thank you to our Privacy Commissioner for being here today with officials. I just wanted to follow up as it related to the letter that you had sent to the Minister Responsible for the Global Transportation Hub as it relates to the new Act, the new entity that's being created. And if I recall the letter, your contribution to this process was that there should be some consideration to ensuring that that new entity is subject to freedom of information requests, that it's in essence a public government entity built with public dollars,

and that that's important to that operation.

And I guess my question at this point in time would be have you received correspondence from the minister as to whether those accommodations have been made and your request has been satisfied?

**Mr. Dickson:** — No, I've received no response to the letter I had sent. Let me just emphasize though, I mean, it's the job of legislators to decide whether something is going to be subject to the Act or not. My concern is, simply, that every time I see an agency that's spending significant public funds, I think it would be ideal if at least it's addressed, and so there's a declaration that this particular entity is going to be included in the schedule in the FOIP regulation as a government institution and then, you know, the legislation does what it does.

Just, you know, you encounter cases where just, I'm not sure everybody's minds focus quite like mine do on these three pieces of legislation. And it may easily be the thing that's simply overlooked. And for all I know, it was always the intention of the Saskatchewan government that this body of course would be a government institution.

But the point is, it takes action to make that happen. I mean, in some provinces they have . . . The scope and jurisdiction is defined by kind of an objective standard. In other cases it's whether it's prescribed or not. And in our jurisdiction, it has to be prescribed. And so I simply thought it would be useful to have the government indicate . . . It makes sense while the bill is still in the deliberation stage to have a signal whether it would be treated as a government institution.

And I should say, part of the reason I ask that, we continually run into cases where there are — and not just in Saskatchewan — where you get large organizations where there is substantial public funding but you have people, a board of directors that's sort of from the community, and you may have one or two members from government sit. It's not clear at all, and often if it's not prescribed, then it's outside the scope of the Act. People can't make access requests. They can't ask for privacy investigations.

And you know, I think that when significant public dollars are being expended, you at least would want to address the question. And as I say, I leave it for the men and women in the Legislative Assembly to make decisions, what that decision should be, what would be appropriate. But I think it's important to be addressed.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — I thank you for bringing it to the attention of our process. And certainly I concur that it is a valuable contribution to make sure that it's included, that the entity is FOI-able [freedom of information]. Could you just expand just a little bit to share with the public what risks and what concerns can occur when a public entity that's been built with public dollars is not FOI-able?

**Mr. Dickson:** — Well, let me come at it this way. There's a reason why the International Monetary Fund requires, before they provide funding to a nation, no matter how needy and how meritorious support would be, they require that that state have a freedom of information law. And the reason is, we now have in



Canada fully 30 years of experience with public sector access to information legislation. And we know, although it's not the only one, it's sort of tried and proven to be one of the most effective vehicles for promoting government accountability by requiring them to be more transparent. And I think every day you may open a newspaper or boot up your computer and see reports of some expenditure of public funds that has been subjected to some scrutiny because of an access to information request.

And then I'd just share with you something I remember one of my colleagues, when I was a legislator, saying. He said, you know, Dickson, the reality is we always have to remember most citizens are never going to go to the trouble of making, filling out an access request, making the submission, waiting to get the response, and so on. But the real value perhaps of an access to information law is that every time lawmakers and people in public organizations and leadership positions make important decisions about resources, about tax dollars and things like that, they know in effect that we're all looking over their shoulder through a vehicle like an access to information law. So I'll get off my soapbox.

But I think it's . . . I mean there are public accounts committees like the one you chair, and there's certainly other mechanisms. The Provincial Auditor is all about transparency as a means of building accountability. But freedom of information has been shown to be effective in terms of doing that.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you very much. I don't have any further questions at this point.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Dickson. Do you have any further comments at this time?

**Mr. Dickson:** — No, other than just I appreciate very much the Speaker's comments in introducing me. And to the extent I'm not going to have a chance to do this, I expect, in the future, I'd just like to say I've enjoyed very much the positive relationship I've had with both government and opposition since I came here for what I've always said was the most interesting and exciting job in Saskatchewan.

And I'd like to say although you often hear me suggesting how we could do things better, I'd be the first one to acknowledge we've seen lots of progress in Saskatchewan in the last nine years. And that's not something I'm claiming credit for. I just say that there's been I think a significant increase in attention and focus on the part of Justice, it has a administrative responsibility; Health, it has administrative responsibility for HIPA and the folks who work in local authorities, government institutions, and health trustees. So I think, you know, we're seeing a much more kind of robust access and privacy regime. Not as good as I think Saskatchewan deserves and is capable of, but it's I think much stronger than it was some years ago. So that's a credit to all the members in the House.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Dickson. And if there are no more questions, we will proceed to vote on the estimates. I don't know if you or your officials want to sit around for this part. You're welcome to take your leave or you can certainly stay as we consider the votes on all the estimates.

**Mr. Dickson:** — Thanks, Madam Chair.

**General Revenue Fund  
Advocate for Children and Youth  
Vote 76**

**The Deputy Chair:** — First of all we'll consider estimates on vote 76, the Advocate for Children and Youth. And the first question is in relation to the subvote. So the Advocate for Children and Youth, subvote (CA01) in the amount \$2,273,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. The amortization of capital assets in the amount of \$72,000, this is for information purposes only, so no amount is to be voted there. So for the Advocate for Children and Youth, vote no. 76, the amount is \$2,273,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sums for the Advocate for Children and Youth in the amount of \$2,273,000.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**General Revenue Fund  
Supplementary Estimates — March  
Advocate for Children and Youth  
Vote 76**

**The Deputy Chair:** — That's carried. We'll now consider or move on to the supplementary estimates for March 2012 to 2013, vote 76, Advocate for Children and Youth on page 5. The Advocate for Children and Youth, subvote (CA01) in the amount of \$22,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — That's carried. The Advocate for Children and Youth, vote 76, \$22,000 in supplementary estimates, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — So that's carried. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2013, the following sums for Advocate for Children and Youth in the amount of \$22,000.

Mr. Ottenbreit. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — That's carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Vote 34**

**The Deputy Chair:** — The next vote we'll vote on is vote 34, Chief Electoral Officer on page 129 of the Estimates. Chief Electoral Officer, subvote (CE01) in the amount of \$3,800,000. And there is no vote as this is statutory. And for your information to the committee.

**General Revenue Fund  
Conflict of Interest Commissioner  
Vote 57**

**The Deputy Chair:** — All right. We'll proceed now to vote 57, Conflict of Interest Commissioner on page 131 of the Estimates. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner, subvote (CC01) in the amount of \$148,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. The total vote then, Conflict of Interest Commissioner, vote 57, is for the same amount, \$148,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. Now I will ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014 the following sums for Conflict of Interest Commissioner in the amount of \$148,000.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Wyant. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Information and Privacy Commissioner  
Vote 55**

**The Deputy Chair:** — The next vote is vote 55, Information and Privacy Commissioner on page 133 of the Estimates. The Information and Privacy Commissioner, subvote (IP01) in the amount of \$1,116,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. And then the total vote, Information and Privacy Commissioner, vote 55 is the same amount, \$1,116,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — All right. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014 the following sums for Information and Privacy Commissioner in the amount of \$1,116,000.

**Mr. Makowsky:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — That's carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Legislative Assembly  
Vote 21**

**The Deputy Chair:** — We'll now proceed to vote no. 21, Legislative Assembly, on page 135 of the Estimates. There's a number of subvotes here to vote on. First one, central management and services, subvote (LG01) in the amount of \$3,188,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. Office of the Speaker and Board of Internal Economy, subvote (LG07) in the amount of \$472,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. Legislative Assembly services, subvote (LG03) in the amount of \$5,296,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. You guys are expensive. Payments and allowances to individual members, subvote (LG05) in the amount of \$14,574,000. There is no vote as this is statutory.

Committees of the Legislative Assembly, subvote (LG04) in the amount of \$512,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. Caucus operations, subvote (LG06) in the amount of \$1,969,000. There's no vote as this is statutory.

And the amortization of capital assets is in the amount of \$114,000. This is for information purposes only and no amount is to be voted.

So the total for the Legislative Assembly, vote 21, is \$9,468,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2014, the following sums for Legislative Assembly in the amount of \$9,468,000.

Mr. Harrison. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Ombudsman  
Vote 56**

**The Deputy Chair:** — We'll now move on to vote 56, Ombudsman, on page 139 of the Estimates. The Ombudsman, subvote (OM01) in the amount of \$3,373,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. The amortization of capital assets in the amount of \$60,000. This is for informational purposes only and there is no vote needed.

The total vote for Ombudsman, vote 56, is \$3,373,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — That's carried. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sums for the Ombudsman in the amount of \$3,373,000.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Ottenbreit. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — And that's carried.

**General Revenue Fund  
Provincial Auditor  
Vote 28**

**The Deputy Chair:** — Moving right along to the last vote, vote 28, Provincial Auditor, page 141 in the Estimates. Provincial Auditor, subvote (PA01) in the amount of \$7,728,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. Unforeseen expenses, subvote (PA02) in the amount of \$520,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — That's carried. Such enthusiasm. Provincial Auditor, vote 28 for the total of \$8,248,000, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Carried. And I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sums for Provincial Auditor in the amount of \$8,248,000.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Wyant. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — And that's carried.

I'd like to now prepare or get a motion to present this report of the work of the committee to the Assembly, and the Clerk is distributing a draft report. So when she's done that, we will ask a member to move the adoption of the presentation to the Assembly of the second report.

Could I ask a member to move the motion before you? Should I read the motion? The motion is:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on House Services be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

So do we have a mover?

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Harrison. All right. We now have a motion by Mr. Harrison. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — So that's carried. I believe I'm now ready to ask for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Speaker, can you . . . Okay.

**The Speaker:** — Yes. I'm not moving it. I'd just like to thank the committee for their diligence in this matter and the legislature thanks you for your benevolence.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I guess it should be commented that it's fine work that's being done by the Legislative Assembly and we certainly look forward to next year's work as well. So you're now in a position to go ahead and do that work, of course, once the Assembly approves the motion.

So I will now ask, unless there's any further comments, for a motion to adjourn.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — I so move.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Wyant. So tomorrow we'll put this

towards the sitting Assembly and hopefully they'll concur. The meeting is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 17:11.]