



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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Ms. Judy Junor, Deputy Chair
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Mr. Denis Allchurch
Rosthern-Shellbrook

Mr. Cam Broten
Saskatoon Massey Place

Ms. Doreen Eagles
Estevan

Mr. Serge LeClerc
Saskatoon Northwest

Mr. Greg Ottenbreit
Yorkton

[The committee met at 15:00.]

The Chair: — Good afternoon committee members. I'll call the committee to order. This afternoon on our agenda we'll continue with consideration of vote 37 and 169, Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, immigration, and it's my understanding that we will be dealing with the immigration piece.

The next item after that on our agenda is Bill 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act (No. 2), 2008. And then we will proceed to consider the estimates of the various departments that are responsible to this committee.

We have with us Minister Norris and his officials. I would at this time ask the minister to introduce his officials, and then we will proceed from there.

**General Revenue Fund
Advanced Education, Employment and Labour
Vote 37**

Subvote (AE06)

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, legislative colleagues. I'd like to introduce Wynne Young, our deputy minister; Rick Pawliw, the acting ADM [assistant deputy minister] for immigration. As well, Trina Vicq Fallows is here. She is the acting executive director of corporate services; Eric Johansen, director, SINP skilled worker program — that's the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program; Darcy Cherney, who's the manager of the program responsible for the entrepreneurship side; Mary Didowycz, and she's acting director, policy program support; Rachel Ratch, acting director of finance; Cathy Zhao, senior policy analyst, international education; and Giovanna Pirro, the director of community partnerships and settlement. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister, and welcome to your officials. I recognize Ms. Atkinson.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you. Mr. Minister, I know that you're also the Advanced Education minister as well, and your government had continued the freeze on tuition in the province of Saskatchewan. Can you advise me whether this freeze also pertains to international students?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much for the question. In a general statement, yes a tuition freeze applies across the board in Saskatchewan.

Ms. Atkinson: — So international students did not see an increase in the tuition charged by the two universities.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — That's right. There may be one program where there was a service fee shift where some of the programming instruments may have been incorporated in, but the response is, you know, across the board on a general basis that tuition freeze holds as well for international students.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Minister. Minister, there was a press release indicating that you are going to be leading

delegations to the Philippines and also to Ukraine. Can you tell me, explain the nature of your mission to the Philippines?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Again I appreciate the question. The question was premised on both upcoming missions, and a third element to that is we're also going to be increasingly active in Ontario.

But as it related specifically, as I understood it, to the Philippines, the principal focus here relates to recruitment, and it has a couple of components to it. First and foremost, we're obviously going to be having government-to-government relations with the Philippines as well as working very closely with the federal government. And the principal focus here is supporting Saskatchewan employers as we move to address goals of meeting labour force demands as well as building increasingly cosmopolitan and dynamic communities within Saskatchewan.

Ms. Atkinson: — Are there companies that will be accompanying you on the trip?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, there are.

Ms. Atkinson: — And can you indicate to us the length of your trip, which companies thus far will be accompanying you, and the meetings that you have set for the Philippines?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, there will likely be an announcement with those kind of details coming forward in the coming days.

Ms. Atkinson: — You indicate you have government relations; can you indicate which government officials you'll be meeting with?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, I think again, without getting into the details of specific government officials, I think what we can easily do is speak to the organizations that we'll be involved with. Rick, why don't I get you to just hit both of those.

Mr. Pawliw: — We've made arrangements for the minister to meet with embassy officials involved in immigration and trade. We'll also be meeting with the secretary of labour, the officials from the Philippines overseas assessment agency. There's also a couple . . . While the minister is there, he's going to take the opportunity to meet with some representatives from the post-secondary education field as well, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the Commission on Higher Education?

Ms. Atkinson: — When are you planning on going to the Philippines? When do you leave?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — As I said . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — And how long is your mission?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — As I said, there'll be an announcement in the forthcoming days with those specific details.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well you had a press release indicating that you're going to the Philippines and you can't give . . . is it June,

July? Is it August?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — In the coming weeks, yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — So May, can you give us the month?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Sure. May.

Ms. Atkinson: — May. Okay. And in the month of May, is it a 10-day mission, a one-week mission?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Those details will be coming out, as I said, in an announcement that will be coming forward shortly.

Ms. Atkinson: — And you're just going to be in the Philippines, or are you stopping in Korea or China or Taiwan? Are there any other places that you will also be setting down?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, the transition point is through Hong Kong, and we'll be spending some time in Hong Kong, a number of hours.

Ms. Atkinson: — So you're not going to be going to Korea as part of on your way over or on your way back?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, no not in this, not in this visit.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay thank you. And so the goal of your trip is to recruit more people from the Philippines, to continue government relations with Secretary Brion, and visit with the embassy and visit with the representatives of post-secondary education. Is the post-secondary education, trade schools or technical schools, or is it higher education like nursing education, or what we would call university education?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — The categories would be both, yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — And you've indicated that there will some companies travelling with you?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — Are there other organizations, health regions, universities, technical schools, SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], or will you be with companies only on this mission?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes it's the private sector in this.

Ms. Atkinson: — Private sector. Okay. Thank you. And will there be any immigration consultants travelling with you?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — As consistent with the POEA [Philippine Overseas Employment Administration], we'll be working within their parameters, so we're working specifically with the employers.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay so as part of your head of the delegation that's going to the Philippines, it'll be yourself as the lead, officials from the department, and some private sector companies that are looking to bring skilled workers to the province. There'll be no immigrant consultants on this trip accompanying you.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, various employers will make various arrangements that they need to make, but as far as the official delegation, no there won't be any consultants with us.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you. Minister, one of the roles that the department has played is to work with private sector companies in making those contacts in the Philippines. Are officials assisting companies in making those contacts before you leave on your mission?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much for the question. The question really is about the role of the state. And the fundamental role of the state here is to help support Saskatchewan employers so the, you know, the principle roles that you'll be familiar with, they're mostly . . . what we going to be doing is focusing on process.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you. As you know there is a memorandum of understanding with the Government of the Philippines. Do you intend on amending that memorandum of understanding or entering into another memorandum of understanding with the Government of the Philippines?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Certainly the MOU [memorandum of understanding] has been a topic of discussion between the two governments, and at this stage I'm just satisfied that we're going to be going forward. And that may be an issue that comes up during the discussions.

Ms. Atkinson: — So at this stage, this is not a mission that is a precursor to amending the MOU or adjusting the MOU?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — No. The principle element here relates to Saskatchewan, serving the interests of Saskatchewan.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay thank you, Minister. Now you're also going on a mission to Ukraine. Can you describe that mission as well?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Sure. Yes, thanks very much for the question. It'll be similar in focus — probably more broadly based — so it'll be obviously representing the province of Saskatchewan, the peoples of Saskatchewan. The focus again relates to recruitment, but obviously because of the institutional ties we're also looking and working towards finalizing a program that may be much more specific in some of the institutions, for example, with the advanced educational focus.

Ms. Atkinson: — So is this mission not only about recruiting skilled workers, but it's also about recruiting students to the province?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well I think certainly there's scope for that, and it's also meant to ensure that some of the existing relationships between post-secondary institutions receive the attention that they deserve.

Ms. Atkinson: — So on this mission to Ukraine, are there going to be companies accompanying you? People from the university accompanying you? Or technical institutions? Can you give me some indication of who might be accompanying you on this trip to Ukraine?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, the principal focus again will be with the private sector, but certainly we . . . because it's a little bit further off, there are still some discussions about a Saskatchewan-based, community-based organization perhaps being involved with this. As well, one of the institutions, Saskatchewan-based institutions would have representatives there on the ground already. So we intend to meet with those officials.

Ms. Atkinson: — So can you lay out what your objectives are for this mission?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Sure. Both missions, it's pretty straightforward. That is, we're going to be serving the interests of the people of this province, and that is within the context of Ukraine. We're looking obviously again at labour market demand, as well as helping to build more broadly based dynamic cosmopolitan communities within Saskatchewan. And within the Ukraine context, that would include also visiting some specific institutional partners of Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions.

Ms. Atkinson: — So on this mission, once again it will be led by yourself, but there will be business people from various companies that are seeking skilled workers. There will be people from our institutions, whether they're post-secondary institutions. And this is to increase our ties with . . . well the province of Saskatchewan with the Ukraine or region of Ukraine, or?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, with the Ukraine, obviously working within the broader context in both the Philippines and Ukraine, within the broader context of working, you know, within the context of Canada's interests and Canada's presence internationally, yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — And how will you know if you've met your objectives?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — There are some . . . It's a great question. There are some pretty explicit objectives that we have regarding recruitment, and again those will be part of our announcements that will be forthcoming, and that will be one of the key significant tangible indicators of how to define success. On the advanced education piece, we see certain significant steps just as far as being more closely engaged as a new government.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay thank you. Do you intend on having any members of the legislature accompany you, or are these two missions something that you'll be providing the leadership for on behalf of the government? Or are there other MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] that will be joining you on these missions?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I'll be providing the leadership for both missions.

Ms. Atkinson: — There won't be any members of the legislature accompanying you on either missions?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — That's right.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay thank you. Minister, we had an earlier

conversation regarding the immigration branch, and I'm wondering if you're in a better position to provide me with any information as to those agencies that will be receiving funding from the branch in this fiscal year.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Sure thanks very much for the question. Yes. There's a great degree of continuity here. What I'll do is I'll just go through those with existing partnerships and they'll see continuity. There are some new organizations; they won't be included in this.

So for citizens of Saskatchewan making reference to this, this isn't an exhaustive list. It wouldn't be appropriate for us to make those announcements in this form as far as new funding. But we're happy to review as far as the existing work that's going to continue to be supported, agencies like Moose Jaw Multicultural, Beth Jacob Synagogue, Regina Open Door Society, Regina Immigrant Women Centre, the Ukrainian cultural congress in Regina.

City of Saskatoon — Filipino-Canadian Association of Saskatoon, Global Gathering Place, International Women of Saskatoon, UCC [Ukrainian Canadian Congress] in Saskatoon, U of S [University of Saskatchewan] College of Medicine, German Canadian Club, Global International Community Help Association, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, Saskatoon REDA [regional economic development authority], Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, Saskatoon REDA, Saskatoon Open Door Society.

Sunrise Community Futures, Cypress Hills Regional College, town of Gravelbourg, Battlefords Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures Lloydminster, Carlton Trail REDA, town of Hudson Bay, town of Tisdale, Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise, Saskatchewan capacity of international professionals, provincial council of UCC.

Then we have Public Policy Forum, Battlefords chamber, International Women of Saskatoon, Moose Jaw multicultural, Regina Open Door Society, Saskatoon Open Door Society again, Moose Jaw multicultural, Prince Albert multicultural, the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement Agencies.

From there — this relates to language training — Moose Jaw multicultural agency, Regina Board of Education, Regina Open Door, Global Gathering Place, International Women of Saskatoon, UCC Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, Saskatoon Open Door, Cumberland Regional College, Cypress Hills Regional College, North West Regional College, Parkland Regional College, Carlton Trail Regional College.

So those would be some . . . There's an initial overview. As I say, there will be additional organizations.

Ms. Atkinson: — Minister, can you — and you may not have this with you today — but can I have a list of all of the organizations that receive funding from the branch, including settlement funding, along with any additional funding they may receive for delivering the specific programs? I'm particularly interested . . . You mentioned the REDA, the Saskatoon REDA. I'd be interested in knowing how much they would receive from the branch and other organizations as well. Can you

provide us with that information?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I'll have to review that request with the officials. Yes, because of some of the ongoing negotiations, those aren't available at this time.

Ms. Atkinson: — When do you expect that . . . I suspect there is an interim list of funding that's already been provided. Could you provide us with a written list? Could you provide the committee with a written list of those organizations that have received funding?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Unfortunately we're not able to give the dollars. My recommendation is the member may just wait for public accounts.

Ms. Atkinson: — So will you ever be able to . . . Would you have this organized by December or January?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. Public accounts occurs in the fall.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well no. Actually public accounts usually come out in July, August, September. So I'm talking about this fiscal year, the 2008-09 fiscal year. So what you're indicating is that once you've made all of your decisions, you're not prepared to share the funding arrangements with all of these various organizations with this committee.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. That's an unusual request. And again the answer would be, given the unusual nature of the request, there are means and mechanisms through which these resources are accounted for, and we'll just follow that regular means.

Ms. Atkinson: — You indicate it's an unusual request. And can you provide me with your evidence that this is an unusual request? Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. The key criterion here actually relates to privacy. And that is . . . I'm sure it's not the member's intention to actually pry into the financial operations of some of these other organizations.

So I think what you're asking for relates to public monies. And we have mechanisms to account for those, and we'll be following those.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well your response is highly unusual, Minister. Members of committees ask for information as to funding of various organizations on a regular basis. It certainly happened in Social Services. This is not unusual.

But if your position is that we wait until public accounts which — it is public information; it's not private — any money that's spent by the province has to be accounted for and is in the public accounts. But if that's your position, then that's your position.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well I think public accounts provides an opportunity for that kind of accountability.

Ms. Atkinson: — But this committee also provides an opportunity for members to ask questions. And my experience is that — usually once programs are negotiated and the money

is going out the door, the contract has been entered — it's not unusual for governments to provide that information to committees. But if that's your position, then that's your position.

So I asked about the Saskatoon REDA. It sounds as though there was some funding that was given to the REDA. You have the number there. Is that a number you can share with this committee or not?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Not at this time.

Ms. Atkinson: — And is the REDA already in receipt of the money?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I'm actually, I'm not going to get into the details of . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — I'm not asking you to. I'm just asking you if the REDA, the Saskatoon REDA is already in receipt of the money.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes and I'm not going to get into those details at this time.

Ms. Atkinson: — So, Minister, are you saying you're not prepared to answer the question whether the Saskatoon REDA is in receipt of the money? If you're negotiating it, I can understand that.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Chair, I think I've answered it. There are ongoing negotiations with a whole range of organizations, some of which I've read into the record. As my preamble, I said, because there are ongoing negotiations with this variety of organizations, I'm not going to get into specific details at this time.

Now what the member, as I interpret the question is, she's asking me to make a specific comment on a specific organization. I — in fact my opening remarks, the preface — actually turned and said, because of ongoing negotiations, I'm not going to be getting into specific details. So while I appreciate the question, I believe I have answered it.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well we do know that, for example, in a previous committee, it was indicated to this committee that funding, a specific amount of money went to the Regina Open Door and the Saskatoon Open Door. There didn't seem to be any difficulty there. I'm wondering. Do you have difficulty in providing the committee with information regarding the core grant to the Moose Jaw multicultural settlement agency? Can you provide the committee with that information?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Chair, again I mean the specific references to specific questions . . . What we've done is turned and said, because of the range and because of ongoing negotiations, I think it's best . . . Obviously the member with her experience in government would appreciate negotiations are underway with a whole range of organizations that we're speaking about. And I'm not prepared to speak about any specific negotiations or discussions underway with any of those organizations.

Ms. Atkinson: — Does the minister acknowledge that there are four settlement agencies in the province that receive core funding from the province?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. It's to confirm that there are four that receive funding at this time.

Ms. Atkinson: — And they receive core funding. Is that . . .

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Core funding, yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — That's true. And then on top of the core funding, the branch negotiates various agreements for the delivery of specific programs. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — As I've said in the preamble, yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — And can you tell us what the core funding is for the four settlement agencies?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. At this time, Mr. Chair, again I'm not going to get into, I'm not going to get into specifics.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Chair, it's difficult to ask questions when the minister refuses to answer. I'm not asking for the negotiated contracts that they might have with the settlement agencies. I'm just asking for the minister . . . and if he could put on the public record the core grants that, as I understand, haven't changed from last year.

The Chair: — Ms. Atkinson, are you asking the minister about this funding? Is that part of (AE06)?

Ms. Atkinson: — Yes it is.

The Chair: — I guess the minister will answer the questions as he sees fit. It certainly, if the questions are pertaining to that particular subvote which is entitled immigration, the questions I believe are appropriate. The minister, I'll leave it to his discretion as to how he would like to answer it.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — This is, and the member I think is quite aware it would be inappropriate to speak about specific amounts before the arrangements with various agencies have been finalized. I mean, we're in the midst of obviously a dialogue, discussion — a healthy one — regarding the public monies of this province. And these monies, these public monies will be going to various organizations and institutions.

And the request is for us here to turn, for me to turn and begin to spell out in detail what the results of negotiations will be. And (a) it's not responsible, and (b) it wouldn't be fair to our partner organizations. That is, this is about negotiations being undertaken in goodwill in a spirit of co-operation, and it would be completely inappropriate for me to take a unilateral stance and say that here's a final word on the final allocation.

So, Mr. Chair, while I appreciate the questions, I think the member from Nutana can appreciate full well that negotiations are underway.

Ms. Atkinson: — Are there negotiations taking place regarding the core funding for the four organizations that do receive core

funding for settlement services?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — That's exactly right. The amounts, you know, will be established. And I wouldn't be as pessimistic as the member from Nutana. In fact there may be some good news here, but we're not going to go through that around this committee, obviously. Those are discussions and dialogue and decisions to be made with our partners.

Ms. Atkinson: — In an answer to an earlier question on April 21, you indicate that there was not going to be an increase in their core grant. And so are you indicating now that it's possible there may be an increase in their core grant?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. I think what we did . . . the earlier phrase is to offer reassurance to those organizations about the stability of the core grants. There are some discussions about certain potentials for building upon that.

Ms. Atkinson: — So I guess I'm not understanding your answer, Minister. So is there a possibility that there will perhaps be an inflationary increase in their core grant? I'm sorry; I didn't understand your answer.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I think the answer would be, potentially.

Ms. Atkinson: — So potentially there is a possibility of increasing the core. So what has changed then since April 21 when you indicated on page 169 that you were “. . . keeping that constant and enhancing the specific initiatives”?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, I think the quote that's been offered was to offer reassurance and certainly we're having a look at what some other options are.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay. Well fair enough, Minister. If the community-based organizations, of course settlement agencies, are looking for . . . or its potential that they might be able to receive an inflationary increase to their grant, that will be good news to them, because I think they were under the impression that their grant was going to stay constant, to use the words that you used on April 21, 2008.

So just so I'm clear, it's your position that once all of the negotiations are done with all of the various organizations — and I think there are about 80 of them that receive some form of money from the immigration branch to provide services — that it's your position that the members of this committee just wait until public accounts before we know how public funds are being spent out of the subvotes that we're going to be voting on. That's your position? You're not prepared . . . This committee may meet in January or February or March, and you're not prepared to share with the committee the outcome of your negotiations. That's your position?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I'm certainly willing to get a legal opinion on this, and if it's appropriate, then we will. As well as we'll also take into consideration past practices from the previous government on any and all related information that was released to this committee.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well the committee structure is new and it's fairly new. We used to do all of this in the legislature, and I

think it's fair to say that minister has tried to be as forthcoming as they could.

But I'll just go on to the next question. Are any of the CBOs [community-based organization] under the Immigration branch being invited to the CBO summit?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. We certainly have every expectation that there will be representation from across the selection of CBOs. We don't have the finalized list, but that's our expectation. Yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — One of the things that I've been asked about and I haven't been able to provide any information, do you have any sense when the summit might take place? Is it the fall or the winter?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — You'll have to direct that inquiry to Minister Harpauer.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay. And finally, Minister, can you provide us with a list of the people that work in your office and their positions in your office and the salaries that they receive?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well based on what the member said, members of the official opposition said in question period today, they seem to have access to that. Similar requests have been placed and the government is making efforts through the Legislative Assembly to respond to those. I think the question is related to Executive Council.

I don't know what specifically that request, Mr. Chair, has to do with what we're talking about today. But if there is some direct relevance that can be drawn into the discussion, then I guess we'll have another look.

Ms. Atkinson: — I think ministerial staff are paid through the department, so I think it would be helpful. It certainly would be helpful to know who is the go-to person in your office when there are issues around immigration. So that would be helpful as well.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I think the key for the likes around this table is to turn and say the minister is the go-to person, hence ministerial responsibility.

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay. Okay. There are times when constituency offices certainly contact ministers' offices. The minister may not be in and there usually is a ministerial assistance that might have the immigration file or student loan file and so it would be helpful to know who that individual is in order to expedite the public's work. Mr. Chair, we are getting close to 4 o'clock so those are all my questions.

The Chair: — If there are no other questions, we have a few minutes left to deal with these estimates. But if there aren't any other questions for the minister with regards to immigration, I think we can take a small recess and we will proceed with the next item on our agenda, Bill 24. We'll have a short recess to facilitate the change of officials.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

The Chair: — I'll call the committee back to order. Before we commence with consideration of Bill No. 24, I'll simply inform the committee that we have a substitution. Mr. Iwanchuk is substituting for Ms. Junor.

Bill No. 24 — The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2)

Clause 1

The Chair: — The item on our agenda that we will be considering is Bill 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2). I see the minister has some officials with him and I would at this time invite the minister to introduce his officials and if he cares to make a short statement he could do so at this time. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Chair, legislative colleagues, thank you very much for the opportunity to join you. Wynne Young, many of you will know very well, our deputy minister; Mike Carr, our associate deputy minister, labour, employee and employer services division; and Mary Ellen Wellsch, acting executive director, labour planning and policy — all from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

I do have a few brief remarks to make and as we move through these final days of this legislative session obviously I'm very pleased with the work that's been undertaken by our government. We've made it clear that our goal is threefold. We want to help ensure that we're sustaining growth. Second, that we're sharing the benefits of this growth with the people of our province. And we want to ensure as well that based on lessons learned from other jurisdictions and best practices from across the country, we're keeping our promises. And indeed to date we've kept over 60.

As we move forward we'll work hard to do better, to communicate even more effectively, and to continue ensuring that we're serving the interests of the people of this province. As well, obviously out of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, we've also, in addition to other tasks that have been in hand, we've had an ambitious legislative agenda.

Bill 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act (No. 2) is another example of our government delivering on its promise to establish a fair and balanced labour environment. And certainly the core element of this, or the essence of this, is to provide for the opportunity, if you want, to have an option of having either one or two Vice-Chairs regarding the Labour Relations Board. And we see this as an important legislative innovation. That is, we feel there are efficiencies to be gained by having this option and certainly our intention is to move forward with one Vice-Chair.

On that, it's an exciting time for Saskatchewan. Our focus is to ensure that this sustained momentum remains and that, as I've said, people from right across this province are sharing in the benefits of our growth. And, Mr. Chair, committee members, I'm delighted to be here this afternoon and I'm also pleased to address any questions you may have on this issue.

The Chair: — I recognize Mr. Iwanchuk.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Just I guess if you could just go, just explain briefly the need for this so we kind of get when you realized you needed this and what was the thinking around this Act?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — As we came into government, again based on the mandate given to the Saskatchewan Party on November 7, as I said, we came forward with an agenda to help ensure that the interests of the people of this province were being met. That agenda included, obviously, some core elements. It ultimately would manifest itself in the budget that we've just been speaking about around this committee table, that is the *Ready for Growth* budget, largest infrastructure budget in Saskatchewan's history. As well we've had, you know, a very focused legislative agenda. And certainly this committee is familiar with Bills 5 and 6 that we've been focused on, but there are other elements as well.

Obviously we've been focusing on meeting our campaign commitments, and so we can talk about set elections dates; we can talk about other areas of governance. What we did is we said that we would have certainly a more focused look in the new year regarding the Labour Relations Board. We certainly did that. And went back, did a little bit of research into, if you want, the governance structure of the Labour Relations Board. It wasn't too long ago where there simply was one Vice-Chair — one Chair and one Vice-Chair. If I'm not mistaken, in around 1999-2000 that shift was made to a second Vice-Chair.

And so we began to look at that in some detail. I guess what struck my attention was that, you know, since 2004 what we've seen is a growing backlog of cases unresolved and unreported by the Labour Relations Board. And so certainly it allowed us to ask a question, I guess you might be able to phrase it, are there too many cooks in the kitchen? That the increased number of Vice-Chairs didn't have a connection, a necessary connection to increased productivity of the board. So that certainly was one of the key questions that we focused on, on a go-forward basis.

What we said is, we wanted to enhance efficiency. We think there are some ways — and certainly Ken Love is undertaking some of those steps to reach that stride — but it allowed us to ask a fundamental question about the governance of the LRB [Labour Relations Board]. And the approach that we've opted to take is, we want to go forward with the system of one Chair, one Vice-Chair.

And at the same time to be prudent, because we think obviously serving the interests of the people of Saskatchewan, there's plenty of room for prudence and we want to demonstrate that prudence and so to have that option, to turn and say, here's what we think will serve the interests of Saskatchewan. At the same time there's prudence there to turn and say, if at a future date it's open for re-examination, there's scope there for two Vice-Chairs.

And probably . . . My sense on this is, probably the previous government had missed an opportunity. What we're talking about is of course, if I'm not mistaken, of no more than about three words being changed. And the previous government had an opportunity to do something like this to provide greater flexibility and to be attentive to what was going on at the Labour Relations Board.

So our focus is, we want to enhance the efficiency. We think we can do that at the LRB by moving with one Vice-Chair and at the same time to offer prudence.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — What are the new wages of the Chair and the Vice-Chair?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well the Vice-Chair position, that's an open competition and I think we're just moving into the interview stage, if I'm not mistaken. And so it would be inappropriate probably at this time to offer that. But as far as the wage of the Chair, if you'll just give me a second, I'll just confirm.

We're just looking for a couple of numbers, but the immediate question is 180.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Now you mentioned in — I think you said '98 or whatever — there was one Chair and one Vice-Chair. What would you see the budget increase then? Because you just said you might contemplate moving or changing to two Vice-Chairs or if . . .

Hon. Mr. Norris: — No, I want to be clear. I mean the question as it was, what's our intention. Our intention is to actually help reduce some of that money going to the upper governance and what we want to do is actually go with one Chair. What we've done is simply introduced a three-word amendment that offers us the opportunity at a later date — or any government for that matter — at a later date to review that. But no, our intention — I want to be explicit about this — our intention is go forward with one Vice-Chair.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — In terms of 1998, did you do any comparisons of what was happening? I'm just using '98 because it's in there when the change was.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well it's 2000.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Or 2000 then, okay. Then in 2000 did you do any looking or analysis in terms of comparing 2000, what was happening at that time to what you have now? Or are you simply . . . your efficiencies are simply based that you will pay more and get better efficiencies out of the Chair?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — The answer is, we did some pretty extensive analysis. I'll give you some of that if that's all right.

I'll give you a few numbers. In 2002-03 there were applications received by the LRB. There were about 260. By '06-07 that number goes down to 180. What we actually see is applications being received by the LRB going down. What we see is work taking longer as the number of applications decreases. So going back to the previous amendments to The Trade Union Act that . . . We'll see going through, you know, the LRB's got to get done its homework on time. So what we saw was actually fewer demands placed on the LRB and the LRB taking longer. So that was pretty compelling research when you have a look at that.

As well here's something that caught our attention along the way. And I remember seeing this for the first time. I actually did a double take. So average number of days, average number of days for the LRB to complete its work on a specific

application, so in 2002-2003 the number of average days, 56 days. By '07-08, again 124 days. We see this extraordinary stretch occur — 56 days in '02-03, 124 days in '07-08 — and declining demands. And so that caught our attention.

We said we need a much more effective and efficient LRB, and it was that kind of research that informed our position that as work was declining and taking longer, we ought to have a look at the governance structure of the LRB.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — In terms of going over this, how did you miss this that you needed to bring in the legislation? I mean . . .

Hon. Mr. Norris: — . . . actually dismissed the question. I didn't dismiss it at all and . . .

Mr. Iwanchuk: — I'm sorry. I said miss, not dismiss.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well frankly what we said coming in is we had a lot to do in those early opening weeks. We got to work right away on Bills 5 and 6. And it's on the public record, the broader questions relating to the LRB, relating to the research that began to inform some of the questions we asked, as well as this amendment. That was done in the new year. It wasn't a matter of missing.

Actually frankly I can't believe that the NDP [New Democratic Party] made the changes they made in 2000 without having that option. The miss is actually the NDP's miss. Once again the Saskatchewan Party's getting down to work, rolling up our sleeves, and cleaning up a missed opportunity from the NDP. In this case the NDP in 2000 had the opportunity to make an amendment and make this shift so that it could go to one or two. So the miss isn't, the miss isn't from this government. In fact this is just a matter of due diligence.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — You're allowed your interpretation of history, I guess. That's okay.

In terms of who, again in terms of the advice and what sort of procedures or process did you go to in terms of reaching the decisions, and you talked a little bit about in your analysis of going to two members on the LRB.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, our decision is to go to one Vice-Chair from two.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Right.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — But to leave that open again for prudence. You know, this is a matter of legislative review. I mean we went through a process. Obviously the ministry was involved. Justice was involved . . . [inaudible] . . . was involved. The attention of our caucus colleagues and cabinet colleagues was obviously involved, and it didn't take very long to turn and say, you know, here's an obvious oversight from the previous government. And what we're doing is just ensuring that that room exists.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Okay I think it was kind of clear to us that it was your oversight. Not huge. I mean you have said you were busy, you know, to do that, but then to try and say that somehow we missed it and . . . But be that as it may, how will

they determine who sits where? Will the Chair sit in Regina and the Vice-Chair in Saskatoon, or how do you see that working?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — You know, the LRB works at arm's-length from government, and the Chair of the LRB is best positioned to make those decisions.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Well, the Chair, I mean, we have heard different statements being made that the Chair would follow the philosophy of the Premier actually. That was said. So I guess when you say arm's-length, could you explain that a bit?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — And we can dig out the legislation, but the LRB's a quasi-judicial entity that acts in independence.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — I guess and it's not . . . Far be it for me to say that. You have the labour lawyers of Canada writing you a fairly strong letter about, you know, what you are saying, you know, arm's-length here and being quasi-judicial and how important that is in terms of the trust. What do you have to say about that?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well we've discussed it around this committee table. That's one opinion from one stakeholder group. If I'm not mistaken, that stakeholder group has a certain perspective. There have been other professional and affiliated organizations that have had opinions as well on this.

And once again, this is a pluralistic society. Saskatchewan and Canada offer the opportunity for individuals and organizations to express their opinions. We certainly, you know, appreciate and support the rights about the opportunity to express those opinions.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Okay. And we understand that after this was pointed out to you, that this was missing in The Trade Union Act, that you went and changed that. But also you changed not only that, but you changed in how you were going to now hire the Vice-Chair. Can you explain how that happened?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. And I really question the premise of the previous query. This wasn't a matter of this being pointed out to us. As you can see, I mean, due diligence was undertaken here. I'm very impressed with the research that was undertaken.

Because if there's some notion this was missed, this wasn't missed. This is, we began to focus on issues relating to the LRB in the new year, and we just took this in stride. Obviously this is consistent with where we intend to go, and I think that was expressed in question period. There was no surprise on this question. We're moving to a one Vice-Chair model.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — My second question was, but you did change where you were going to hire . . . in terms of the process you would use for hiring the Vice-Chair after you came under, sort of, some questioning in the House and outside, to then come forward and say, okay we will be, you know, following a process. I mean that wasn't in your original statements.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — No, again I completely reject, I completely reject that. This is an open competition. I wanted to be specific on the phrasing that I used. But there was absolutely no question that we'd be going to an open competition. Over

the course of really hours, what I did is I wanted to make sure that I had the phrasing down. And if I'm to be held responsible for that, then so be it. I'm happy to ensure, in a time, that I wanted to ensure the exact phrasing. I took a little bit more time. I was sure of that.

The issue came up the following day in question period, and I answered it, first question. In fact one of the members that asked the question became frustrated because some of the questions she'd been preparing obviously no longer were relevant. So no, again I reject the premise.

I could have and should have communicated more clearly. But there was no change of position or philosophy. I just wanted to be sure of the language that I was using.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — It always good to get these things for the record. We can go back and check that.

I guess the other thing I was just a bit taken aback in terms of . . . because I guess in a final analysis, the minister, whatever goes across your desk, you know, you might say whether the research was done or not. I don't know who did it. I mean I think we went through that before in terms of you feeling that we were somehow trying to find out who exactly did it. But I mean at the same time you have, you have to take that responsibility. So when we ask you the question, it has to be to you. You can't, you know, say it was my staff, much like the emails or when you want it . . . said, you know, one of the staff did it. I mean I was kind of disappointed in that.

But I guess the other thing in that was, there were letters with that as well — those emails — in terms of what came out, that you changed the letters, and so surely you would have looked at that. But I just, I just raise that because I'm sort of hearing the same thing here around somehow saying that, you know, the research was sufficient and, you know, the point when we ask you the question is that you, as a minister have to take . . . I mean, you agree with that, don't you, that you have to take final responsibility?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — I take full responsibility.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — What I will say, and responsibility was taken in the House regarding that regrettable email. But let me tell you, let me make this really clear . . . and I had thought we'd dealt with this. Your colleague is sitting right over here. When he stands up in the House and begins to ask those questions, what he didn't do, what he didn't do was black out the name of one of the people that works in my office.

So yes, I am responsible, and that is the position. But when a single mother who works in our office whose name is on a document that's made public by the official opposition, you too are held responsible. And I haven't heard that. So yes, you've got a minister right here that takes responsibility, but I haven't seen the same level of responsibility taken by the official opposition. So it's a little rich.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — So then you would understand that when you have one person and that goes out and there are 1,300 other

names, that there are a lot of people feeling those exact feelings that you are just expressing now, that they might be thinking that they are somewhat concerned about that your office put out 1,300 names and you are concerned about one.

I would venture to say, did you check if there are other single parents on that, that you sent out names to other . . . to 1,300 without blacking any of those out?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — No, here's the point, Mr. Chair. The point is what the official opposition is attempting to do is to take an issue that's been dealt with and move away from the substance of this amendment and begin to — I don't know — have a very curious conversation.

So if the member can't make the distinction between an issue that the minister stands up and says, obviously I'm responsible and it was regrettable, to then compare that to an explicit action, there's been no expression of regret. I haven't heard anything on the public record by the official opposition on this. Now's an opportunity. On behalf of the official opposition, would you like to express . . . You could do it. You can do it right here with the exact same principles and priorities and turn and say, you know, you regret that. I haven't heard that.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Chair, there's probably an appropriate place for that, but I have another question.

You read to us in an opening statement — I'll just read it back to you — that was:

To borrow from his 1918 work, that of William Lyon Mackenzie King, very well-known prime minister obviously who did significant and substantive work regarding industrial and labour relations, he noted that "The existing attitude of capital and labour toward each other is too largely one of mistrust born of fear." [An industrial, he went on] "An industrial system . . . [categorized] by antagonism, coercion and resistance must yield to a new order based on mutual confidence, real justice and constructive good-will."

He then went on to say that there must be a vision, and on and on he went. I guess the point is here is that, in raising these issues, and you taking responsibility, you had a thousand people, whatever, on the steps here. And you were saying that somehow this . . . Is this your definition of goodwill? Is this your definition of confidence, of mutual, real, constructive goodwill? I mean, it seems if it is, it's definitely out there, I would say on the edge, if that's the new approach of the Sask Party.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes. I think there are a couple of elements. And the previous government had on several occasions labour disputes and actions and protests. So if that's your criterion . . .

I actually think we're making progress because on the substantive issues, on the substantive issues — Bill 5 and 6 — let's look at some recent polling data. And if you want to be on the other side of this, that's okay. We didn't do this with polling in mind. We did it because it's the right thing for Saskatchewan.

But you want to oppose essential services, if the official opposition wants to oppose that, that's fine. The government is in favour of ensuring the safety and security of the people of Saskatchewan. And you know, the people of Saskatchewan are onside — 70 per cent. If you want to oppose secret ballots, you can do that. The official opposition can stand up and say they're opposed to secret ballots. The government's in favour of it and ran on it. Seventy-five per cent of the people of Saskatchewan are in favour of it.

So if there's a notion that Saskatchewan is anything other than a rich, dynamic, diverse, pluralistic society, I don't know what it is because that is Saskatchewan. And people here are passionate about their public policy perspectives and the views that they offer. And I think it's a sign of health and vitality in the new Saskatchewan.

You know, by the way, recent numbers — I don't know if you saw them on Friday — year over year, 17,300 new full-time jobs; 17,300 new full-time jobs, April over April in Saskatchewan. There are a lot of people, working people, that are very happy in Saskatchewan. We see incomes on the rise. So this notion that somehow people freely expressing their opinion reflects something other than a rich pluralistic society, it goes against the previous government's experience, and it certainly goes against what we're hearing both anecdotally and through polls on how pleased the people of this province are with the new government and our new Premier.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — I'd like to leave you with this. I have said before and I'll say again. If that question would have been asked me, I would have answered that I was in favour of essential services, that we are in favour of safety. So somehow that you keep thinking that that is a new idea or your idea, you can continue doing that.

And it's similar too that somehow the economy, where it is now, is that it started on November 7. That's foolhardy to do that. You know that. I know that. There was work done. You're attempting to build on it, you know, but to take credit in that way is . . . People see it for what it is, you know. It's politicking.

But on terms of safety, we're on safety, you know, just to make it clear. And I think this Bill kind of to us, summarize that, you know, that the rush, the kind of lack of thinking . . . because you said, well we had a lot of work to do. At the same time, you could've taken the time. You could have taken the time. You could have taken the time to go through these Bills. You could've taken the time to go through 24, the LRB. So you can say what you're saying, you know. Rational people out there see it for what it is and so be it. I'm not going to belabour that point but . . .

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well you know I appreciate the opportunity to comment on that. And after 16 years of the NDP in power, we didn't see essential service legislation. We didn't see it. So if you're in favour of it, there's an opportunity. There's an opportunity just to come out, say actually we support essential services. Sixteen years we didn't see secret ballots, didn't see it. There were plenty of opportunities for the party now that occupies a place of official opposition to come forward and to have created a much different labour relations

environment than that party helped to facilitate and foster.

And all we're saying is six months. We are working hard. We're learning from other jurisdictions. We're focused on sustaining growth. We're focused on ensuring the people of this province share in the wealth. And we're also focusing on ensuring that the labour relations environment within Saskatchewan remains one that's competitive with other Canadian jurisdictions and one that best serves the people of this province.

The Chair: — Are there any other questions for the minister? Seeing none, clause 1, short title. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to amend The Trade Union Act (No. 2).

I would ask a member to move that we report the Bill without amendment. Ms. Eagles.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — I believe that concludes our consideration of Bill No. 24. I'd like to thank the minister and his officials for appearing before the committee this afternoon. And I believe we will take a very short recess and we will resume with dealing with the estimates referred to this committee by the House.

I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Chair, thanks very much. In addition to thanking my legislative colleagues . . . Obviously the officials, both here within the legislature and from the ministry that have allowed us to proceed with our work, I appreciate greatly. And as we wrap up, if you'll join me . . . But I do have a question, Mr. Chair, and that is, are the officials required for the vote?

The Chair: — For the estimates?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Yes, for the estimates.

The Chair: — No.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Okay.

The Chair: — I believe it's in agreement that no officials are required.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Great. Well on that I'll just ask if everyone would join me in thanking our officials.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Great. Thank you.

The Chair: — The committee will take a short recess.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

The Chair: — I'll call the committee back to order. We have before us the estimates of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, vote 37; vote 73, Corrections, Public Safety and Policing; vote 5, Education; vote 32, Health; and vote 36, Social Services.

So we will proceed to vote the estimates.

**General Revenue Fund
Advanced Education, Employment and Labour
Vote 37**

The Chair: — We will begin with Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, (AE01) in the amount of 25,849,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Student support programs (AE03) in the amount of 55,984,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Post-secondary education (AE02) in the amount of 566,877,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Immigration (AE06) in the amount of 9,914,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Training programs (AE05) in the amount of 37,976,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Career and employment services (AE04) in the amount of 37,235,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Graduate retention program (AE15) in the amount of 12,000,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Worker's advocate (AE13) in the amount of 633,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Occupational health and safety (AE09) in the amount of 7,653,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Labour Relations Board (AE10) in the amount of 964,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Labour relations and mediation (AE11) in the amount of 673,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Labour standards (AE12), 2,403,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Status of Women office (AE14) in the amount of 418,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Major capital asset acquisitions (AE08) in the amount of 3,200,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, vote 37, in the amount of 761,779,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2009 the following sum, Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, \$761,779,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 37 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Lending and Investing Activities
Advanced Education, Employment and Labour
Vote 169**

The Chair: — We have an additional vote with vote 169. Will a member of the committee move the resolution funding the Advanced Education and Labour.

Mr. LeClerc: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. LeClerc moves.

Vote 169, Advanced Education, Employment and Labour in the amount of 43,000,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2009, the following sums, Advanced Education and Labour, the amount of 43,000,000.

Will a member so move? Mr. Ottenbreit. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 169 agreed to.]

The Chair: — I believe that finishes the estimates for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**General Revenue Fund
Corrections, Public Safety and Policing
Vote 73**

The Chair: — And we will move on to Corrections, Public Safety and Policing.

Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, central management and services (CP01) in the amount of 18,865,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Adult corrections (CP04) in the amount of 85,638,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Young offenders program (CP07) in the amount of 47,257,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Public safety (CP06) in the amount of 12,647,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Policing services (CP10) in the amount of 128,668,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Major capital projects (CP09) in the amount of 21,041,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2009, the following sum for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, the amount of 314,116,000.

Mr. LeClerc: — So moved.

The Chair: — Mr. LeClerc so moves. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 73 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Education
Vote 5**

The Chair: — The next ministry that we need to deal with, committee members, is Education, vote 5.

Central management and services (ED01) in the amount of 13,276,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to 12 education (ED03) in the amount of 757,796,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Early learning and child care (ED08) in the amount of 45,259,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Curriculum and e-learning (ED10) in the amount of 5,205,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Literacy (ED17) in the amount of 2,622,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Provincial library (ED15) in the amount of 10,436,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Education property tax relief (ED09) in the amount 156,584,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Teachers' pensions and benefits (ED04) in the amount of 25,569,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Vote 5, Education, in the amount of 1,016,747,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2009, the following sum, Education, 1,016,747,000.

Ms. Eagles moves. Agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 5 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Health
Vote 32**

The Chair: — The next department estimates that we need to deal with is the Department of Health.

Central management and services (HE01) in the amount of 15,686,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Provincial health services (HE04) in the amount of 177,742,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Regional health services (HE03) in the amount of 2,560,284,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Medical services and medical education programs (HE06) in the amount of 631,022,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Drug plan and extended benefits (HE08) in the amount of 351,663,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Early childhood development (HE10) in the amount of 9,537,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Provincial infrastructure projects (HE05) in the amount of 27,675,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Vote 32, Health in the amount of 3,773,609,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2009, the following sum, Health, vote 32, in the total of 3,773,609,000.

Mr. Allchurch. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 32 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Social Services
Vote 36**

The Chair: — Committee members, I believe this brings us to our last set of estimates to be voted, that is vote 36, Social Services.

Central management and services (SS01) in the amount of 34,314,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Employment support and income assistance (SS03) in the amount of 298,493. Is that agreed . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh sorry, we'll try that one again. It seemed a little . . . Sorry. We're spending a lot of money here this afternoon but we better make sure all the ministries are properly funded.

We'll try that again. Employment support and income assistance (SS03) in the amount of 298,493,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Thank you, committee members. Community inclusion (SS06) in the amount of 105,439,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Supporting families and building economic independence (SS05) in the amount of 69,113,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Office of disability issues (SS09) in the amount of 267,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Child and family services (SS04) in the amount of 105,739,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Housing (SS12) in the amount of 22,110,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Vote 36, Social Services in the amount of 635,477,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2009, the following sum, Social Services, vote 36, in the amount of 635,475,000.

Mr. Ottenbreit so moves. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 36 agreed to.]

The Chair: — Committee members, you have the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Services before you. We need a mover for a motion:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Services be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

Do we have a mover? Mr. Allchurch so moves.

Mr. Allchurch has moved that the third report be reported to the Assembly. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — I believe, committee members, unless the Clerk tells me different, we have completed our business and it's my understanding that this will be our last meeting of the spring sitting.

Before I call on a member to move a motion of adjournment, I'd just once again like to thank all committee members for their co-operation. We have certainly done a lot of work in this committee and it certainly wouldn't have been possible if it hadn't have been for the co-operation of committee members.

And with that, committee members, I would ask a member to move a motion of adjournment. And Mr. LeClerc so moves. This committee stands adjourned. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 16:56.]