

FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD) Published under the authority of The Honourable Dan D'Autremont Speaker

N.S. VOL. 57 NO. 45A THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2015, 10:00

Asbestos Awareness Week

Mr. Forbes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, April 1 to 7 is Asbestos Awareness Week, marked globally by the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization. This week is a time to raise awareness about asbestos-related diseases. Mr. Speaker, asbestos is the leading cause of workplace deaths in Canada and it is estimated that 152,000 workers in Canada are currently exposed to asbestos. These figures however only account for the number of accepted claims and don't include people who can't prove work-related exposure. The number of people who have been affected by asbestos is therefore likely much higher.

Mr. Speaker, we have a very special role here in the legislature, and it was incredibly encouraging to have members from both sides of the aisle co-operate on the creation of Howard's law, a mandatory registry of public buildings. Howard's law was brought forward on behalf of Howard Willems, a Saskatoon man who was lost to a rare form of cancer caused by inhaling asbestos fibres.

It's been now almost two years since Howard's law was passed in the Saskatchewan legislature. Significant progress has been made on the registry and we urge the government to complete the registry. When completed, this system would be the first of its kind in Canada. I call on all members to recognize this week as a time to raise awareness about asbestos-related diseases, to remember those lost, and to remain vigilant in the protection of Saskatchewan workers and families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.