



## Saskatchewan New Democratic Party Caucus

Room 265, Legislative Building  
Regina, SK S4S 0B3  
Phone: 306-787-7388  
Fax: 306-787-6247  
E-mail: caucus@ndpcaucus.sk.ca  
Website: www.ndpcaucus.sk.ca

---

### NEWS RELEASE

#### NDP Introduces “Respectful Language Act”

Posted: April 18, 2011

NDP Social Services critic David Forbes today introduced Bill 625, the Act to Respect People with Intellectual Disabilities in Saskatchewan, which would see hurtful language such as ‘mental retardation’, ‘retardation’, ‘retarded’ or ‘retard’ - often referred to as the “R” word - eliminated from all legislation, regulations and Government of Saskatchewan materials and replaced with the appropriate use of ‘intellectual disability’.

“For far too long society has tolerated hurtful language to refer to those living with intellectual disabilities,” said Forbes. “While most people do not intend to harm others when using this language, we know that terms such as these have been used as derogatory insults to lessen the value and ability of some individuals. We feel that the government must lead by example by passing our bill and incorporating respectful and inclusive language in all laws, regulations and Government of Saskatchewan materials both in print and online.”

Forbes said as an example, the proposed bill would amend the current Saskatchewan Rehabilitation Mentally Retarded Persons Regulations to the Saskatchewan Rehabilitation People with Intellectual Disabilities Regulations, among other current acts with similarly outdated titles.

“Forbes will be writing all Ministers with specific examples of hurtful language, and called on all Ministries to change the language as soon as possible.

“People with intellectual disabilities are equal, contributing citizens and the language we use both in and outside the Saskatchewan Legislature should reflect this reality,” said Forbes. “By changing the way we speak and refer to people living with intellectual disabilities, we are paving the way for respectful and inclusive communities which will ultimately lead to a more tolerant society. We urge the Wall Government to support this bill so that all people in Saskatchewan will be recognized with the dignity they deserve.”

-30-