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DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

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

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Bill No. 93 *The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act*

Mr. Forbes: Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I know this is the consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of the pooled registered pension plans and again a very important piece of legislation. And I've had a chance now, I think there must be three bills that act as a suite in this because I've had the opportunity to talk a bit about the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and its role in this, that it would be able to work with this, and how important that is, and then talking about the enabling legislation, 92, *An Act respecting Pooled Registered Pension Plans* and making consequential amendments to certain Acts. And then this is the third one, also acting to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of *The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Act*.

And as we look through it, it is interesting that we see the impact that this bill will have on other pieces of legislation. And I will take a minute to talk about this because I think that people need to know some of the pieces of legislation that will be impacted by this. There are many Acts. And this is, as I said in my earlier remarks, that when we get into this kind of legislation, it's one that has significant impacts in our economy and with seniors because this kind of thing . . . and for our workers in our province because this is one of their major concerns is, what happens with my pension plan. What are the impacts? What are the unintended or the intended consequences of this pension plan?

So we'll take a minute to look through this, and . . . [inaudible] . . . I see that we will be amending *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1997*. And clearly that is one that you can see is a significant one because when we talk about enforcement of maintenance orders, we don't want to have an unintended consequence where there's one Act or one pool of money . . . that when somebody has a maintenance order, we have to make sure that we have access to all their resources. And that's very important.

And of course the other interesting thing about this is that it's also in French and that this

is important legislation and that our language speaks to both the anglophone and Fransaskois community in Saskatchewan. And so these kind of bills are important that all the details, all the t's are crossed and all the i's are dotted, that as we move forward . . .

It took the federal government two years to put their legislation together after the discussions at the, I understand, the federal-territorial-provincial meetings, that they've now come up with this. And I know that we'll have questions, many questions, about this in terms of how is this right across Canada in terms of portability. And this is just one example, the enforcement of maintenance orders, that in fact that is portable, that it is enforceable across Canada. And it would be unfortunate if you saw a patchwork approach in Canada that some provinces went down this road.

And as I said, it's not my favourite tool in the tool kit, but it is one that is there, and we have to recognize it. And so when we do these kind of things, we don't have any unintended consequences, and it's something that is consistent right across Canada. And if there's a situation that speaks to how important consistency is, it's the enforcement of maintenance orders. And so I know that this will be one that we won't have, I don't think, as many questions. But I'm glad to see that it's here because it shows some due diligence, that it's been thoughtful, and it's been worked through.

But it will be part of that suite of bills around the pooled retired pension plans that really speaks to increased concerns that we have in our province and in our country around the adequacy of our retirement income and particularly for those, as I said earlier, around vulnerable workers. And if they do find themselves in particular family challenges, whether that be maintenance orders that need to be enforced, that type of thing, all of this can be looked after.

So we're not sure if there's other amendments that we may be seeing. You know, we are heading into the final weeks of session, unbelievable as it is. With the snow on the ground you'd think we just were starting session. But you know, when we think of that, it's hard to believe. But will there be more bills before us — I'm not sure — that relate to pensions? But we really want to make sure that we have completely covered the waterfront, as it is often thought of, that there are no gaps or no unintended consequences because when you talk about investing money in a pension plan or saving money, that it will be there, that it absolutely will be there for the retirees when they hit the age when they want to retire.

But again I just want to emphasize how important it is that we think about the whole suite of tools and that the minister be thinking about the Canada Pension Plan and how that can be enhanced so that everyone, everyone will have a more secure retirement. This speaks to the participation, the voluntary participation. It is a choice, and we understand that. That's fair enough. But even if you double the participation rates, it still leaves a big gap of people. As I said earlier, in Saskatoon or Regina where the participation rates are in the high 20's, low 30's, you know, now even if you doubled it, there's still 40 per cent of people who will not be participating. And you can just imagine that those people are probably those who are the most vulnerable because they couldn't put aside money, you know, to the extent that they needed to. And so this is a real, this is a real challenge.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, we'll have lots of questions, and we'll be ready to do that in the days ahead because we do think it's important, and we do take this very seriously. And we hope that we can have a thoughtful, productive dialogue with the minister when it comes to the whole suite of pensions when he plans on taking it to the next set of meetings about this, now that he's got this part done. Where do we go from here? So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks. Thank you.