



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

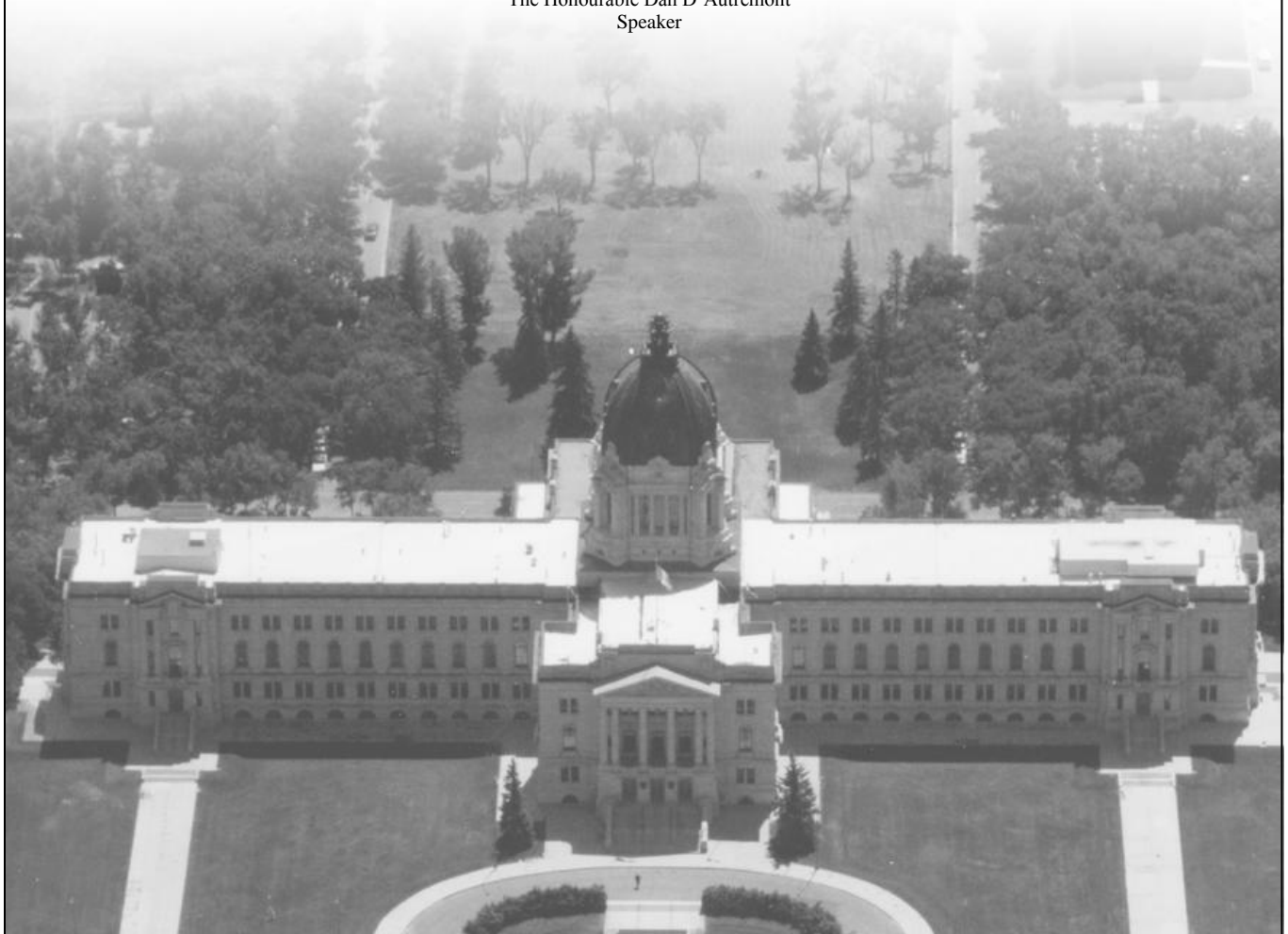
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

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



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Dan D’Autremont  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — John Nilson

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu’Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce about 20 individuals seated in your gallery. They make up the STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] board as well as STARS executive. There are 20 and I'm not going to read them all because I started reading through some of the names and I thought I'd butcher them. So I thought I'll just say, there they all are.

But I will, I do want to identify one person of course who's no stranger to this House. And I've just kind of been thinking about the introduction and what I would say to Rod Gantefoer today, the day after the budget. I'm sure he's feeling a little different today than he did in '08, '09, and 2010 after delivering the budget, and excellent balanced budgets he did deliver. And that certainly has continued on with the last two budgets with our now Finance minister, excellent balanced budgets.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all members to welcome the STARS board and the executive to the Legislative Assembly. I will be meeting with them later on today as they're in with meetings today and I believe tomorrow. I look forward to meeting with the many, many familiar faces and great friends. So we're all looking forward to the launch of the STARS program here in Saskatchewan and the excellent work it will do and provide our citizens. So if all members could join me in welcoming them to the Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these individuals to the Assembly. We know that ambulance care in the province is very important, whatever form it may be, and I would welcome all the individuals from STARS here in the Assembly today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Northeast.

**Mr. Doherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the Minister of Health and the Health critic in welcoming the STARS board, but in particular a couple of members of the STARS board, Mr. Speaker, who have had an impact on my life.

I see Pat Youzwa sitting up there. Pat is no stranger to this Assembly or to the Government of Saskatchewan, having been a long-time senior civil servant in the Government of Saskatchewan. And then most recently, a couple of years ago, Mr. Speaker, was president and CEO [chief executive officer] of SaskPower, obviously the major electrical utility here in the

province and one of the few female executives at that level across Canada, and did a great job, and was my boss at one time, Mr. Speaker. So welcome, Pat.

And as well, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, Mr. Gantefoer who probably doesn't know this, but had a profound impact on my life as well. When I was a young teenager, one of my first jobs ever was picking chickens at Rod Gantefoer's farm. And I did it for three days in a row and, on the second day, Mr. Speaker, I came home and my mother said, how's university looking to you now? And it helped shape my life. So welcome back, Rod.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I'm very pleased to introduce some people who have had not only a cultural impact on this province, but an incredible economic impact. Today here in the gallery we have Anand Ramayya with Karma Film — Anand, could you give us a little wave? Torin Stefanson with T3 Digital Productions; Ell McEachern, the director of finance and production for Angel Entertainment; Melanie Jackson who's the producer of Dark Thunder Productions; Kelly Balon with Karma Film; Tim Tyler with Cheshire Smile Animation; and not least, Teresa Mead, who's Anand's partner and probably the big brains behind Karma Film I suspect, or the big support person anyway. And I'm sorry I don't know their son's name, but we're very pleased to see you. As a mom of two kids myself, I'm always happy to see kids in this gallery. So with that, I ask all members to welcome these people to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in your gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce two people that are very important in my life. I have my little sister here today, Shauna Weninger. If you can give us a wave here today, Shawna. And we have Gavin here today. Can you give us a wave, Gavin? Gavin's always proud to say at child care or at daycare, he tells all the kids that his Uncle Trent works at the park. So he's proud. I'm glad that Gavin came to the park today to see the proceedings here today.

And Shauna and her husband Grant both live in Regina. Shauna has built her career at SaskTel. She's on mat leave right now. She has three beautiful boys, three nephews for Stephanie and I. We're pretty lucky on that front. She juggles a busy household, and it's nice to see her and Gavin here today. So I ask all members to join with me in welcoming two very special people in my life. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater protection for late-night retail workers by passing Jimmy's law. We know in the early morning hours of June 20th, 2011, Jimmy Ray Wiebe

was shot two times and died from his injuries. He was working at a gas station in Yorkton, alone and unprotected from intruders.

We know in British Columbia and other provinces, they've brought in several safety precautions through law, including a requirement that workers cannot be alone during late-night, early-morning hours. And if they are required to work, they must be protected by barriers, such as locked doors and protective glass. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately enact Bill 601, Jimmy's law, to ensure greater safety for retail workers who work late-night hours.

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition are from Esterhazy, Gerald, and Langenburg, and Melville. I do so present. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the management and reporting of our provincial finances. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to provide Saskatchewan people with a fair, true state of our finances by providing appropriate summary financial accounting and reporting that is in line with the rest of Canada in compliance with public sector accounting standards and following the independent Provincial Auditor's recommendations; and also to begin to provide responsible, sustainable, and trustworthy financial management as deserved by Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Saskatoon and North Battleford. I so submit.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition concerning the proposed legislation of a seniors' bill of rights, calling on Sask Party members to do the right thing and support the legislation:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that many Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to social and economic security and a right to live free from poverty; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security, and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of trappers of Saskatchewan. The current regulations being enforced are creating challenges that are a concern for our traditional trappers. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize that the experience gained through practical experience be valued; and in so doing to cause the government to review the current legislation and regulations with respect to trapping regulations and firearms use in consultation with traditional resource users.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It was signed by many trappers in northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

### United Nations World Water Day

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is United Nations World Water Day. Each year World Water Day highlights a specific aspect of fresh water. This year its theme is Water and Food Security. Food security was a focus of an event two weeks ago at the Saskatoon Farmers' Market where local chapters of three international NGOs [non-governmental organization] hosted a celebration of the contributions women have made to food production around the world.

But the connection between availability of water and food security is an important issue both globally and locally. It will be important, Mr. Speaker, to watch how the lower amount of snowfall we've received this year in Saskatchewan will affect farmers' crops. But it's also important to draw attention to the achievement of the UN [United Nations] millennium development goal of safe water for 88 per cent of the globe's population. This is great news and should not be overlooked.

But however we need only to look to our north in Prince Albert to see what it was like to live without safe drinking water. Prince Albert just recently finished six weeks of a boil-water advisory due to mechanical failures at the water treatment plant. We cannot take our water for granted. There is still a lot of work to be done in ensuring safe drinking water here in our home province, in our First Nations communities right across

Canada, and right across the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the United Nations World Water Day as we all keep in mind the important role water plays in keeping us in this world alive and healthy. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Melfort.

#### Revenue Sharing for Municipalities

**Mr. Phillips:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Finance rose in this House and delivered a budget that's all about keeping the Saskatchewan advantage. It's about keeping the budget balanced, keeping spending sustainable, keeping our economy growing, and keeping our election promises.

Mr. Speaker, with this budget, we are working with municipalities to keep this province moving forward because vibrant communities are central to the Saskatchewan advantage. And, Mr. Speaker, the 2011 census shows that Saskatchewan is now the third fastest growing province in the country. In order to ensure that community programs and services can keep pace with this growth, our government has delivered on its promise of revenue sharing for municipalities. Altogether Saskatchewan RMs [rural municipality], cities, towns, and villages will receive a record amount of revenue sharing in the form of municipal revenue sharing. Yesterday the budget represents an 87 per cent increase over the 2007-2008 budget, and when we take into account overall funding to the municipalities in this year's budget, it's a 15 per cent increase.

Mr. Speaker, our government's commitment to Saskatchewan's communities can also be seen in additional funding for libraries, urban parks, and policing. Yesterday's budget charts the course for keeping the Saskatchewan advantage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

#### Better Business Bureau of Saskatchewan Torch Awards

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Better Business Bureau of Saskatchewan's eighth annual Torch Awards were held this past Wednesday evening here in Regina. The Better Business Bureau continues to recognize organizations that consistently conduct their business practices in an ethical fashion. The 2012 Torch Awards honoured companies of various sizes whose efforts have ensured that our marketplace remains fair and honourable.

The Torch Awards also recognize not-for-profit organizations, and the winner for this category for 2012 was Regina's own Circle Project. Mr. Speaker, I know first-hand the incredible work done by the Circle Project on behalf of Regina's inner city children and families. And I want to congratulate and thank all the good folks of the Circle Project, the staff and volunteers, especially Executive Director Ann Perry; President Bob Cantin; board members like Keon Flamont, Councillor Fred Clipsham, Carol Lyman, and Brian Sklar; and last but certainly not least, elders and spiritual advisors Kokum Florence Isaac and Kokum

Shirley Bonk.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate and commend the other nominees in this category for the Torch Awards, which this year included the Salvation Army Prairie Division, the Canadian Home Builders' Association, and Souls Harbour Rescue Mission.

Mr. Speaker, I'll finish where I started, the Circle helps children and families. They do tremendous work, and it's great to see the Circle Project be recognized for it with this 2012 Torch Award from the Better Business Bureau. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:15]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Estevan.

#### Generosity of Saskatchewan Donors and Volunteers

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to recognize the people of Saskatchewan. Now we, the members of this House, may be slightly biased, but I truly believe that Saskatchewan is home to the most generous people and the nation's most giving volunteers.

You don't need to look far to find examples that help back up my claim. Just last week \$101,189 was raised by Estevan and surrounding area in support of the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation Radiothon for Life. Volunteers of all ages pitched in to help pull off this inaugural event. Patients, hospital staff, and physicians offered testimonials about the impact of the foundation. Access Communications provided free phone services and advertising to promote this worthy cause, and a businessman from Lampman matched donations up to \$50,000 prompting a huge volume of donations.

Just this month Telemiracle 36 set records by raising almost \$6 million. Whether it is helping underprivileged children, taking care of the elderly, or organizing for our Grey Cup celebrations, our people do their part. Mr. Speaker, the average annual contribution from the Saskatchewan donor is \$544. The volunteer rate in our province is 58.2 per cent, and the average amount of time donated per volunteer annually equals 143 hours.

I would like to extend my gratitude on behalf of this Assembly to all the men, women, and children who step up and contribute when the need is there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

#### Provincial Judo Championships

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, March 17th, St. Patricks Day, I had the pleasure of attending as well as bringing greetings on behalf of our government to the 2012 Saskatchewan judo provincial championships. The event was held in the gymnasium at 15 Wing Moose Jaw and attracted over 160 entries from 13 clubs across Saskatchewan. It was a great day full of hundreds of participants from the ages of nine to senior citizens, each who all worked extremely hard to reach this level of success.

My congratulations to all the event organizers, and a big shout out to the Moose Jaw Koseikan Judo Club on collecting the most points, 185 points, in the Judo Saskatchewan team trophy competition. With my background in martial arts, I understand the dedication and perseverance it takes to reach this elite level. I wish all the athletes the best of luck in their next competition, the Edmonton international judo championships, a four-day competition which will be held in two weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to join me in congratulating not only the dedicated athletes but also the hard-working event organizers on a great day of martial arts in good old-fashioned competition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

### United Nations World Water Day

**Mr. Doke:** — Mr. Speaker, today marks United Nations World Water Day. It is held every March 22nd to bring attention to the importance of fresh water and sustainable use for fresh water. With an ever-growing world population, it is important that sustainable, fresh water use be pursued by everybody in the world.

Mr. Speaker, wise use of our water is essential to our health, our economy, and to Saskatchewan's future growth. The Government of Saskatchewan continues to deliver the highly successful provincial toilet replacement rebate program. To date about 45,000 toilets have been replaced in Saskatchewan, saving over 2 billion litres of water and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by about 7000 tonnes.

Mr. Speaker, water conservation is just one essential water management tool used to ensure sustainable water supplies. The water availability study is another approach undertaken by the Government of Saskatchewan to help ensure sustainable water supplies and support the province's growth. This multi-year water availability study will provide critical information related to the water supply and demand to not only support future growth but to adjust to changes in our water supplies due to climate variability.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan has also made progress on the boreal watershed initiative. This plan gauges and ensures that the ecological integrity of our northern watershed is maintained. It is designed to ensure environmental protection of this precious region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas Park.

### Education Funding

**Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday our government tabled a strong, balanced budget, a budget that focused on education initiatives that will have a positive impact on students across this province. The 2012-13 education budget focuses on providing fair, balanced funding for all Saskatchewan school divisions, improving student support available to new immigrant students, and increased capital spending throughout provincially funded schools.

This budget was an opportunity for our government to launch the new education funding distribution model. The new funding model aims to ensure funding equity is experienced throughout the province's 28 school divisions. This year's education budget continues our government's commitment to improving the student achievement of First Nations and Métis students, with \$4.3 million committed to initiatives that support more equitable outcomes.

Government's overall funding to school divisions in 2012-13 will be \$1.74 billion, an increase of 5 per cent over last year. Of this increase, \$59 million will go directly to school operating funding. With this budget, Saskatchewan learners can expect to see facility upgrades, new schools being built in the coming years with the province's school system receiving \$38.6 million to begin new school projects around the province, and an additional \$50.1 million allocated for 15 major school capital projects.

Mr. Speaker, our children are our future. The 2012-13 education budget is yet another example of our government's commitment to the present and future of this great province. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

### Provincial Budget

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, budgets are about priorities, and yesterday's budget has the everyday families questioning where that government's priorities lie. That government is choosing to spend millions of dollars on three more politicians instead of addressing the needs of Saskatchewan people. That government has chosen to increase prescription drug costs for seniors and for children, young families; eliminate the film industry; increase tuition fees; and leave many K to 12 classrooms with resources that are unfulfilled.

Mr. Speaker, how can this minister expect everyday families to take less when the government is spending millions on more politicians?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the record of this government over its first term is a very positive one. We have addressed many, many inadequacies that the NDP [New Democratic Party] left. We ensured that the seniors' income plan was changed, something that hadn't been changed for 16 years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the personal exemption for people in this province prior to 2008 was just under \$9,000. Today that personal exemption is just under \$15,000, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that means every person in the province of Saskatchewan, including seniors, are now able to have an income of \$6,000 that is not taxable — that was taxable under the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are many changes that we have made to ensure that we recognize that this province needs to be there to

provide the services; we need to be there to ensure that we continue to grow, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of that, you see the investment in health care. You see the investment in education. You see the investments in infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, and all of that is within a balanced budget.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, leadership is about example. In yesterday's budget the government continued its four-by-four plan, cutting 500 more public service delivery jobs, but not a single job — not a single job — was lost in the Premier's Executive Council offices. It's a time for prosperity for the Premier's office and staff, but cuts to jobs and programs for everyday families. Mr. Speaker, why does this minister reject leadership by example?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all add to the very first preamble of that member who stood in this Assembly, stands here time after time and says the investment in three additional MLAs is millions. Mr. Speaker, that's just absolutely not true. Look in the public accounts, Mr. Speaker — \$240,000 per MLA. That's what they're worth; that's what we're worth as well, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's have a look at what the NDP did versus what the Saskatchewan Party government is. Mr. Speaker, compared to the last year of the NDP, the Saskatchewan Party has 19 fewer staff in Executive Council, and this pays out, Mr. Speaker, \$87,000 less per month, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, not a single job cut in the Premier's Executive Council offices. What they did receive over the last years was 100 per cent increases in their pay, Mr. Speaker. That's the Premier's office. That's not what Saskatchewan people are getting.

This government is taking money out of the pockets of everyday families, and it's advancing misplaced priorities such as advancing many more politicians at the costs and time of millions of dollars. They're cutting funding in many school classrooms. They're cutting 500 public service jobs, but not one in the Premier's office. And they have absolutely nothing in this budget to close the Aboriginal education gap. Mr. Speaker, how can the minister stand and tell everyday families that he has his priorities right when he's asking them to pay more and get less? It isn't fair, and it just doesn't make sense.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, our government has been very conscious of ensuring that we were delivering services in a more efficient and more economical way. Mr. Speaker, I want to add, I want to add that the travel for government members, Mr. Speaker, the travel is down \$3.5 million, Mr. Speaker — 3.5 from the NDP. Mr. Speaker, we know that there are other changes that we're going to make, and we're going to make sure that we're moving forward.

The member mentions priorities. Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the school division that I live in, the Good Spirit School Division, receiving \$3.7 million more, is pretty happy with this budget. They're not making cuts, Mr. Speaker. They're not making cuts.

If the member wants to talk about priorities, let's talk about an additional \$16 million for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Let's talk about \$4 million for colorectal screening province-wide, Mr. Speaker. Let's talk about 50 more million dollars to ensure that the surgical wait-list initiative is implemented. Mr. Speaker, that's progress. That's providing services to the people of Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

### Resources for Northern Firefighting

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday's budget made it clear that the Sask Party's priorities are in more politicians rather than services for people. Nowhere is this more apparent than the dangerous cut to forest fire protection staff of northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday's budget featured a \$2.3 million decrease in forest fire operations. In every area, Mr. Speaker, it's a drop. They are decreasing the number of staff. They are cutting the supplies to northern forest fire fighters to do their jobs, and they're not updating the equipment to make sure it's dependable and safe to work with.

My question to the minister, Mr. Speaker: with an expected dry year up north, why is he leaving our people in the northern communities and the tourism and the forestry industry less protected?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for the question, Mr. Speaker. We believe that we can offer fire services in northern Saskatchewan in a much more cost-effective way, Mr. Speaker. Moving to the new four-man crews, four-people crews will be done over some time, Mr. Speaker, as we know that in these positions that we average between 20 and 40 per cent annual turnover in these positions. So we'll be doing this in a way that ensures that people that are employed in these areas, when they come back for the fire season, those that are previous employees will be maintaining their positions, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, these staff in northern Saskatchewan have long stood proud in the fight to protect communities and the livelihoods of the forestry industry against forest fires. But this Sask Party government has cut the funding for the teams on the ground. They're putting the safety of the communities at risk by decreasing response teams, Mr. Speaker. With fewer boots on the ground, there is one less person to help carry equipment and perform time-sensitive, critical tasks in the face of what could be a life, death situation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these forest fire fighters are proud. And

they're proud to say to the people of Saskatchewan, we've got your back. Mr. Speaker, why doesn't the Sask Party have theirs?

[10:30]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as that member will know, as a former Environment minister . . . In fact, Mr. Speaker, of the nine members on that side, a full one-third of their caucus are former Environment ministers so they should know that we do have, to this point, we've had five-member crews in northern Saskatchewan. We also have four-member crews across this province in northern Saskatchewan. We also have, Mr. Speaker, three-member crews.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that we can provide these fire services in an effective and efficient manner, Mr. Speaker, by making this change. In fact, Mr. Speaker, that member should know that we have float planes that deliver fire crews in northern Saskatchewan. Many of them only have capacity for four members, Mr. Speaker. In the event that we have to deliver crew, this means that we can interchange those crews at a much more effective way, Mr. Speaker. This is in line with what other provinces are doing. BC [British Columbia] in fact has three-member crews. Alberta has four-member crews, Mr. Speaker. This is what many provinces are doing.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, first of all they blame mother nature. Now it's the aircraft in the North that's the problem, Mr. Speaker. All the rhetoric spewed by this minister won't change the facts. He is gutting the ministry's wildlife management branch by millions. He's leaving our communities and firefighters in jeopardy by risking their lives in unsafe working conditions and smaller response teams, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, to sum it up properly, he has failed to stand up for his staff and his department, Mr. Speaker, pure and simple. So my question again to the minister: why are three more politicians a higher priority than the safety and the protection of our firefighters and our forest communities, Mr. Speaker? Why? Why?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think I need to remind members of this House, but I will. Mr. Speaker, there have been two members of this House that have spoken in favour of adding more MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] to this province before the next election. One was the Minister of Justice when he introduced the Bill and the other was that exact member on that side, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can talk about what he said. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, he said:

Because right now in the Assembly, we have a certain number of seats, and as the minister alluded to, as the population grows, do we need more seats, for more

MLAs? And the obvious answer is yes . . .

Mr. Speaker, he said that not more than two weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the fire crews, as I said, we have between 20 and 40 per cent turnover. That's how we're going to move to these new positions, ensuring that people that have their jobs — unlike the member from Saskatoon Centre in 2004 when 200 people in the Ministry of Environment alone lost their jobs under his colleague, Mr. Speaker. That included six northern fire bases that were eliminated.

**The Speaker:** — I want to remind members to put their questions and responses through the Chair. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

### Support for Film Industry

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week we've talked about SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network] and the importance of investment in local production to the film and television industry. The loss of SCN just a short while ago has been referred to by Emmy award-winning producer Ron Goetz as losing an arm.

Yesterday, to many people's shock and disbelief, this government cut the Saskatchewan film employment tax credit, and with it cut the jugular of the industry. Not my words, Mr. Speaker, but those of film producer and Gemini winner Anand Ramayya. To the minister: can he stand and explain the rationale his government used to come to this ill-informed decision?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we presented the people of Saskatchewan with a balanced budget. And we all know that that requires that difficult decisions be made. The film employment tax credit program was a difficult decision. It was certainly one of them.

Since 1998, successive provincial governments, both NDP and Sask Party, have provided over \$100 million to our film industry through the film employment tax credit program in hopes of growing the industry. Despite our best efforts and the best efforts of the people in the industry itself, it hasn't turned out that way. Instead of growth, we are seeing decline.

Film production is down over two-thirds in the last five years and 18 per cent last year alone. Through the film industry task force, industry members themselves advised that the only way to maintain the current level of film production is to provide even more public investment. While we respect the industry's recommendation to make that extra investment, we don't think it's sustainable and made the difficult choice to discontinue the program.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Perhaps had the minister actually read his own task force report he'd realize they weren't asking for more



money. They were asking for a better way to spend the money. They had low-cost and no-cost suggestions, Mr. Speaker.

In yesterday's speech, the Finance minister used the words economic impact when discussing incentives in his budget for other industries. With a decision of this magnitude, with economic impact for both an industry and a province, I would hope the minister and the government have done their homework, although it would appear this has not been the case.

To the minister: could he please acquaint this House, and the people of our province, with the economic analysis that informed this decision? And could he please table those documents today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last November 7th, the Saskatchewan Party government was given a strong mandate from the people of Saskatchewan based on our platform of continued fiscal prudence. As the Premier has stated, we don't have to look far to see examples of what happens when governments don't control their spending.

The provincial government, successive provincial governments have provided \$100 million to Saskatchewan's film industry through the FETC [film employment tax credit] program since its inception in 1998, support which was obviously intended to help the industry grow and prosper. As we mentioned, Mr. Speaker, it hasn't turned out that way.

Many of the contributing factors are beyond the control of the industry and beyond the control of this government. Attracting investment capital is becoming more challenging given the global economic turndown. Our Canadian dollar has risen to par with the US [United States] dollar, completely wiping out the competitive advantage that we used to enjoy over American jurisdictions. And, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian film industry continues to concentrate its activities in Vancouver and Toronto, moving away from our province. Mr. Speaker, that's the economic justification.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Ms. Chartier:** — How about Manitoba, Mr. Speaker? After the economic collapse, Manitoba took the right course of action and invested in their film and television industry and are reaping the benefits, and are reaping the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the decision to cut this tax credit has a heavy economic impact, but it also has a very human impact. There are several people in the gallery today who were so stunned by this decision that they felt they had no option but to come to the legislature today to let the government know this is a short-sighted decision that affects real families. One of them is Anand Ramayya of Karma Film. For the very little, the government investment in the tax credit, he and his company provided a huge return on investment, creating jobs and economic spinoff, not to mention pride and the chance to share Saskatchewan stories like *Wapos Bay* around the world.

To the minister: what does he say to Mr. Ramayya and all the others who tell him the loss of the tax credit is the death of the industry here?

**The Speaker:** — I want to remind the guests in the gallery, they are not to be participating in events on the floor, including applause. I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, we're still supporting the sound stage facility. We're still supporting the SaskFilm operations. We're still supporting SaskCulture's film programs. And we're still supporting Saskatchewan Arts Board's film programs as well.

Mr. Speaker, we're also supporting affordable housing, we're supporting people with disabilities, and we're supporting better health care in the province of Saskatchewan. And although the Leader of the Opposition doesn't think it's very important, apparently, we're also supporting Saskatchewan's farmers and communities. Finally, Mr. Speaker, we're supporting a balanced budget with no, no deficit, and that maintains the Saskatchewan advantage of a strong economy and sustainable spending. Manitoba has chosen a different path, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba has tabled a deficit budget.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Mr. Speaker, is that minister telling Anand Ramayya and everybody else who works in the film industry that they don't know what this industry needs and that he does? Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister stated he was . . . Does he have any idea how the film industry works? I don't believe so, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact he's the Minister of Culture.

Yesterday the minister stated he was concerned the tax credit cost \$100 million since 1998. We heard that from him again today. What he failed to mention was the industry generated over six times that in production values in the same time. And that does not include spinoff activity. This industry is important, and it also generates other economic benefits. For example, Mr. Ramayya's last project, *Rufus*, brought to Saskatoon, in just 22 days, \$150,000 in accommodations alone.

In yesterday's budget the government made it clear they can make room for three more politicians but they have no room for those wanting to build a career in cultural industries like film and television here in Saskatchewan. To the minister: could he please explain to Mr. Ramayya why the economic activity he generates is less valuable to the government than that of other industries?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 2010 the Government of Saskatchewan decided to work collaboratively with the film industry task force to find ways to stabilize the industry and increase its competitiveness. Despite their very best efforts, the industry was not able to come forward with a plan that doesn't require significant additional public resources. We did fulfill other

recommendations of the task force by dramatically reducing the time it takes to process FETC payments, and, Mr. Speaker, by increasing the funding for SaskFilm's marketing budget by a full 27 per cent.

We took cost-effective measures to support the industry. Other jurisdictions have responded by significantly increasing their film support. We decided to take a different path, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, money for affordable housing, money for supporting people with disabilities, and money for improving health care and for farmers and for municipalities — all those things within a sound budget, Mr. Speaker. Those were our priorities.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

### Status of College of Medicine

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We learned today that the Minister of Advanced Education was notified that the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine may be placed on probation. It's a very serious matter, Mr. Speaker, because it affects the international reputation of our province's medical school.

My question to the minister: when was he notified of this news and why did he choose to keep it a secret?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, the issue at hand goes back about a decade where the members opposite know very, very well, they know very well that the College of Medicine was put on probation, Mr. Speaker, about a decade ago.

Mr. Speaker, they also know that there were about 130 conditions that had to be met, Mr. Speaker. And although they made the first announcement for the College of Medicine expansion on the Academic Health Sciences wing back in 2003, they didn't do anything except a photo op which was in 2007, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me quote from the president of the University of Saskatchewan, that says, dated August 17th, Mr. Speaker, when I ensured I was in touch with the president, with the provost, and with the dean, and that there have been weekly meetings held since, up until December when their plan for action was then tabled to my office, Mr. Speaker. Let me quote:

Your government's support [that is the government under the leadership of our Premier] for health sciences has been visionary. The Government of Saskatchewan has done its part with the largest and most numerous accreditation issues resolved. There remain a number of matters for the university to work on and you have my assurance that we will deal with these orders in short order.

Mr. Speaker, that's from last August.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, it's not breaking news that the College of Medicine was placed on probation back in 2002. What the minister fails to mention, Mr. Speaker, what the minister fails to mention, Mr. Speaker, the final okay for the College of Medicine was given in 2006, Mr. Speaker. When members came in, the probation period had been lifted, Mr. Speaker.

This issue, Mr. Speaker, this decision is coming in under this minister's watch. After speech after speech, Mr. Speaker, from this minister about what had been done, to have this situation occur now under his watch, that is the concern. It's not about resources available. It's about the mismanagement, it's about the lack of oversight from that minister.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, quite simply what it's about is the members opposite, when they enjoyed 16 years of rule, Mr. Speaker, they starved that College of Medicine, Mr. Speaker. They starved it of resources, Mr. Speaker. Don't take my word for it. Here's the president of the University of Saskatchewan: "A decade ago our College of Medicine faced existential issues regarding resources, faculty, and facilities."

Mr. Speaker, there were 130 conditions that had to be met; 120 have been met, Mr. Speaker. They know the root source of this. We have made sure the resources are available, Mr. Speaker.

And as far as the claim from the member opposite — he's just suggested that there has been some kind of mismanagement, Mr. Speaker — that's a direct insult to the dean; it's a direct insult to the provost; it's a direct insult to the president. It's a direct insult to the board and board Chair, Mr. Speaker. They have all been working diligent, Mr. Speaker.

There are 10 more steps to take, Mr. Speaker. We're making sure that those are going to take place while the other members are heaping mud, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the concerns are being raised by the committee on accreditation of Canadian medical schools. That is who is raising the concerns.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't the first time that the minister has arrogantly dismissed problems that have occurred under his watch. This is not the first time. Every member of this Assembly and people of the Saskatchewan public know that through his oversight of the college merger mess, when concerns were raised he chose to ignore them and to sweep them under the rug.

My question to the minister: when was he informed? When was this minister informed about the possible probation? Why did he keep it a secret? And will he admit that it is happening under his watch?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

1:30 Monday morning.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, this budget that we're debating today in the legislature certainly is about dealing with current issues and future issues for the province. It's also about dealing with past issues left over from the NDP.

[The Assembly adjourned at 10:49.]

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was a minister of Health during this era we're talking about, and I think he owes the people of this province an answer to an important question. I was watching the CTV [Canadian Television Network] morning show this morning, and the reporter asked that member of this Assembly, they said, well if not the film tax credit, what would you cut? And do you know what that member said, the Leader of the Opposition said? Well we'd take a look at some of the initiatives around agriculture. We'd look at some of the things done for municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, that's the old NDP way, Mr. Speaker — drive a wedge in this province, ignore rural Saskatchewan, ignore municipalities. We make a choice to side with those sectors of the economy. We make a choice for a balanced budget and to keep this province moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the installation of the next Lieutenant Governor, I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Would the Government House Leader be prepared to hold that motion in abeyance so we can deal with written questions?

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, we should deal with written questions prior to adjourning.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 185 through 224.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled questions 185 to 224.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the installation of the next Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — The Government House Leader has moved that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This House now stands adjourned to



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