



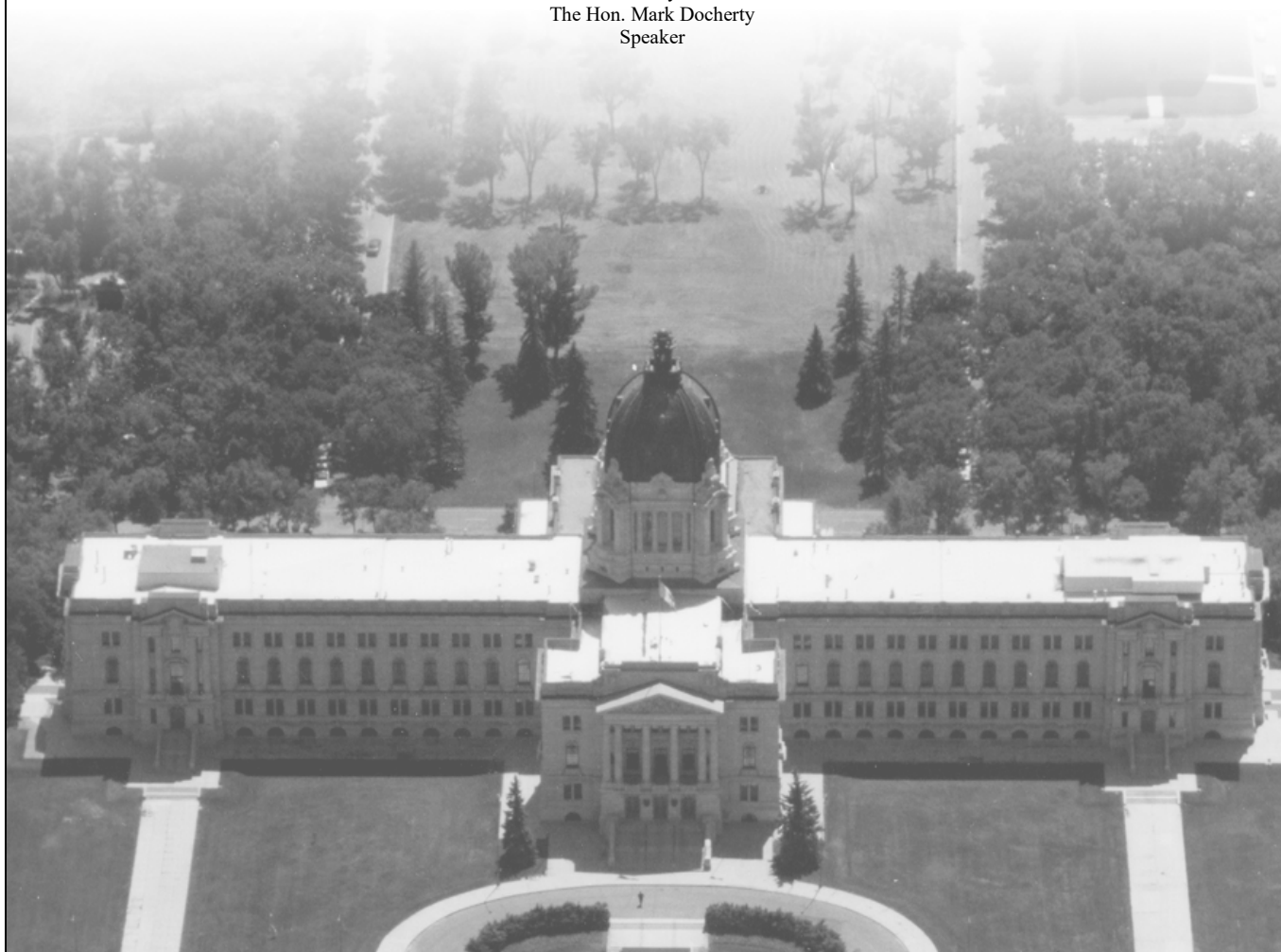
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
4th Session — 28th Legislature

Speaker — Hon. Mark Docherty
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

Beaudry-Mellor, Hon. Tina — Regina University (SP)
Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)
Belanger, Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)
Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)
Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)
Brkich, Greg — Arm River (SP)
Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)
Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)
Chartier, Danielle — Saskatoon Riversdale (NDP)
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)
Cox, Herb — The Battlefords (SP)
D'Autremont, Dan — Cannington (SP)
Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)
Docherty, Hon. Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)
Doke, Larry — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)
Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)
Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)
Forbes, David — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)
Goudy, Hon. Todd — Melfort (SP)
Hargrave, Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)
Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)
Hart, Glen — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)
Heppner, Nancy — Martensville-Warman (SP)
Hindley, Everett — Swift Current (SP)
Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)
Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)
Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
McCall, Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)
McMorris, Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Meili, Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Michelson, Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Olauson, Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)
Ottenbreit, Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Pedersen, Yens — Regina Northeast (NDP)
Rancourt, Nicole — Prince Albert Northcote (NDP)
Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Ross, Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Sproule, Cathy — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Stewart, Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Weekes, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)
Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Regina Walsh Acres
Vacant — Saskatoon Eastview

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 46; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13; Vacant — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

Hansard on the internet

Hansard and other documents of the
Legislative Assembly are available
within hours after each sitting.

<https://www.legassembly.sk.ca/Calendar>

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — Why is the Premier on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave to make a statement.

The Speaker: — The Premier has asked leave to make a personal statement. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the members of this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, today we are faced with an unprecedented health challenge in our country, our province, and our world. Our government is committed to taking every step to reduce the risk and to protect the people of Saskatchewan. We are prioritizing our efforts in three main areas: restrictions, resources, and recovery.

First with restrictions. We will implement restrictions as required based on the advice of medical professionals in order to minimize the spread of this virus and to keep Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan families safe. The chief medical health officer ordered a number of restrictions on Friday and over the weekend on large gatherings, on visiting hospitals, on visiting long-term care facilities, and on returning travellers to our province.

Today, Mr. Speaker, additional measures have been taken. All pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] classes will be suspended indefinitely at the end of the week. Essentially, visitors will only be allowed to visit hospitals and long-term care home beds — only essential visitors, Mr. Speaker. Faith-based organizations must now follow the ban on public gatherings of under 250 people. Casinos Regina and Moose Jaw will close until further notice.

Further restrictions may be added by the chief medical health officer as required, based on the best medical advice available today, Mr. Speaker.

Second is resources. We will make sure that we have the resources in place to address this crisis. By and large, our health system has been keeping up in terms of testing and in terms of treatment. There have been some areas that have needed to be addressed, however. The 811 HealthLine, for example, has not always been able to keep up with the higher number of calls that they have been faced with. So we are significantly increasing both the number of lines and the number of staff that are answering those calls in order to meet the increased volume.

We have also developed an online self-assessment tool to help Saskatchewan people determine whether they should be tested for COVID-19. You can find this self-assessment tool at

saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. And there's a lot of other good information available out there to protect yourself, to protect your family, and to protect others from COVID-19.

Our government will ensure the Saskatchewan Health Authority is provided with all of the resources that it needs to address COVID-19. That's the reason that we are proceeding with this budget on Wednesday. And I know some have asked, why go ahead with this budget at all at this moment? Why not delay until we know the full extent of the impact of coronavirus on our health care system and, Mr. Speaker, on our Saskatchewan and Canadian economy? And that's a legitimate question.

Well, Mr. Speaker, here's the answer that we have. Wednesday's budget contains a significant lift in health care funding, including many more millions for the Saskatchewan Health Authority, additional funding that is needed right now in the fight against COVID-19. Mr. Speaker, if this isn't enough, we will increase the funding and we will add resources that are necessary, that may be necessary to protect Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan families. But it is a significant increase, and if we aren't able to move forward with that budget, we wouldn't have the legal authority to move forward with that new health care funding, Mr. Speaker, as we start this new fiscal year. More to say about this on Wednesday, but we need to increase the funding in our health care system now, Mr. Speaker, and for the foreseeable future.

Finally with respect to recovery, when we are through this, we will take the necessary steps to ensure that our economy recovers and Saskatchewan people are able to get back to work. This budget will also contain a number of measures in it that, in some regard and in other reasons, will allow us to move forward with that sooner rather than later so companies can start planning for the upcoming construction season, for instance.

Will it address the economic impact of the current crisis that we see in our stock exchanges and commodity prices, Mr. Speaker? Likely not. But it's a significant start, recognizing that more will need to be done and the budget will need to be adjusted in the weeks and the months ahead, Mr. Speaker.

It feels very different for us today in this Assembly. There are no guests in the gallery and there won't be in the days ahead. It's a very visible reminder for each of us here today of the challenge that we are facing. This is a place of all-too-often heated political debate, and under normal circumstances I would put forward that that is a good thing for a healthy democracy. But these are anything but normal circumstances in our province and in the nation of Canada.

So I intend, for one, to tone it down, Mr. Speaker. I will be toning down the political rhetoric and use this place as more of an opportunity each and every day to provide Saskatchewan people with the information that they need as we work through this crisis together, Mr. Speaker, parties on both sides of the aisle in this House.

Our government will take all the necessary steps based on sound medical advice to protect Saskatchewan people through what we know is a very challenging time. To the people of this province, to Saskatchewan: we will get through this and we will get

through this together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Why is the Leader of the Opposition on his feet?

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make a statement in response.

The Speaker: — The Leader of the Opposition has asked leave to make a response. Leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The entire world is focused on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that there are now many thousands of cases around the world. In Canada we've seen our caseload go, in just a week, from just over 100 to now over 300 cases. We've now seen cases show up here in Saskatchewan, and the people of Saskatchewan are thinking a lot about what this means for their lives.

And they're worried. They're worried about their own health, the health of their friends and family, their neighbours, their loved ones. They're worried about what this is going to mean for their kids and whether they're going to be able to finish their school year. They're worried about what this means for the money that's coming in and whether they're going to be able to make ends meet at the end of the month. They're worried about paying the bills. They're worried about their businesses.

People are concerned. And there are a lot of questions, a lot of questions about how to make sure they can avoid getting this illness themselves and spreading it to others, how to respond if they are concerned about their own health and the possibility of having contracted the virus. And it's all of those questions and all of those concerns that make this a time where it's so important that we, in these elected roles that we sit in, show leadership; that we work to provide information that is clear, that is abundant; that we're making sure that everyone has all of the information on exactly what's going on as quickly and clearly as possible.

Right now in Saskatchewan, we are still in a moment where we can be leaders in this. We can flatten the curve. We can do a great job locally and avoid some of the worst outcomes that we've seen around the world. We're still in that moment where, if there is community transmission and it's not yet detected, we're still in that moment where we can flatten the curve and avoid those big spikes that can overwhelm the health care system.

This is the time to act. And I am pleased to see some of those actions being taken. I am pleased to hear today about the decision around schools, the decision around gatherings. These are things that are really important. And it sends a message to the public that this is a serious matter, and it's time for them to take it seriously and be involved. And right now we need to continue to send the message to the public.

We've been talking for days about the personal social distancing measures that we can each take. It's weird in our jobs to not shake everybody's hand. That takes some getting used to. But people are starting to learn that. They're starting to learn about the

distancing measures needed around respiratory etiquette and how to keep a good distance, cough into your elbow, all of those things. People are starting to heed the advice more and more to stay home. And I think that's been made clear by the Prime Minister and the Premier. And that's a message we need to continue to share: that all of us need to think about wherever we are on a given day, do we really need to be there? Are we posing any increased risk to ourselves or to others by doing so?

Together, by focusing on that, we can flatten the curve. That's the most important thing. But we know that will not result in zero cases. We know that won't protect any influx from happening into our health care system. So there's also a real importance that we have clear information on who should get tested and when, where people should present, and that we have a clear indication now today of the capacity of our health care system to respond. And that every resource possible is being mobilized to make sure that as we see an influx of patients into the health care system, it's able to respond in a way that's safe — high-quality care that protects the patients who are presenting and also protects the health care workers who are putting their lives at risk by being on the front lines every day. And we have to show our gratitude and respect and kindness to those folks in health care who are putting themselves in a very difficult situation but are coming to work committed to protect us and respond to illness.

We also know there already are massive economic ramifications. This will have a big impact on Saskatchewan businesses, on Saskatchewan households, on people's ability to pay their bills, people's ability to keep the doors open in their business. And we really need to see a commitment from this government and from all the folks in this room and from community leaders around the province to acknowledging that and to putting forth resources to address it.

And the Premier made a few comments about the budget. This is a budget that was designed a lifetime ago. This is a budget that was designed before COVID-19 has done what it's done to the world and to our economy. The budget is no longer valid as a document. There are other ways to get the money, through special warrants and other means, to have the money available to take the steps that we need to do now. It is extremely important that we not go down the road of projections that are no longer valid and spending that is no longer in line with the needs of the population. A new plan is needed, and we'll continue to call for a plan that's relevant to the needs of today.

Mr. Speaker, these are the things that are on people's minds: their ability to pay the bills, their ability to get the health care they need, to have the clarity of information that they have to have to have peace of mind in this difficult situation . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You know, like the member, we're all getting calls from all over the place that are asking us to address this. Today is our opportunity as legislators to show leadership, to speak clearly, to make sure that we're identifying, responding to people's needs, and giving them the kind of answers they need to feel safe and to be safe. And together, I will repeat, I firmly believe that Saskatchewan can do this — that we can be leaders in this, that we can get ahead of this, that we can flatten the curve. And I and all the members on this side are 100 per cent here for this work.

Thank you very much.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills. Are you reading a petition?

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose an unfair and ineffective carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan.

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: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed from the good citizens of Moose Jaw, Mortlach, and Belle Plaine. I do so present.

[13:45]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Recognizing Saskatchewan Health Care Workers

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like many members in this House, I've been in conversation with health care workers around the province in recent days, health care workers who do difficult, stressful work every day in every situation. But as our province faces COVID-19 and the impacts it will have, I want to thank those workers for stepping up in a new reality in a new, difficult situation.

For those workers on the front line, we know that you're placing yourself at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 just by going to work every day. We know that you're sacrificing your closeness to your family to go to work every day at a time when people are coming together and staying close to one another.

It is critical that we recognize this sacrifice, and it's critical that we support health care workers as they do this work. We know that leaders on the front line and in leadership roles in our hospitals and public health officials are working long hours to ensure that our health care system is prepared — prepared to respond and care for people as they become ill.

On behalf of the people of the province, I want to express our sincere gratitude for the work that you do. There's one thing I know about Saskatchewan: it's that when we face difficult times, we come together.

We are fortunate to have dedicated, selfless health care workers who we know will step up to do just that. To those workers: thank you; be safe. We're counting on you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Safety Measures During Pandemic

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are our number one priority. At this time the Public Health Agency of Canada has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for the general population. But with today's news, we understand how fast things can change.

We applaud the federal government's decision on closing the border to most foreign travellers and will continue to encourage those who have recently travelled to please self-isolate for 14 days. Mr. Speaker, our thoughts are with every Saskatchewan resident who may be abroad. And if they are listening, I sure hope they know that it's time for them to come home.

More than ever, it is important that we try and stay healthy, wash our hands, and social distance when we can to ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities are protected. Mr. Speaker, we know not everyone can work from home during these difficult times, but to those who must continue to serve our province, we hope that they stay safe and we want to thank them for their efforts.

I encourage all residents to use the tools that are available like 811 when appropriate or the Saskatchewan.ca website for more virus and prevention information such as a self-assessment tool. Thank you to our chief medical officer for his direction, and we will continue to work very closely with the Health Authority in the days ahead. Thank you.

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

Supports for Local Businesses

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we know that the impact of COVID-19 on local businesses and workers leaves them extremely vulnerable, and that they're bracing for serious challenges. Saskatchewan workers need and deserve urgent support. And our small and independent businesses are leaders, anchors, and champions in our communities.

They are our gathering places, our employers, our friends, and our neighbours. They and their staff are responding quickly and proactively to this crisis as it unfolds. They're adjusting as best they can, and they're looking to the provincial government to step up and ensure the information and the support is in place as they navigate this difficult time. Mr. Speaker, local Saskatchewan businesses are looking to us for leadership and for a support plan to help ensure that we all emerge from this difficult time. May we show them the support in the coming days that they've shown our communities time and time again.

Our team in the official opposition stands with all local businesses in this incredibly difficult time. And our message to you is this: we're standing shoulder to shoulder with you, and we won't stop fighting for the needed supports and economic actions. And I encourage everyone in our province to consider how they can help support local Saskatchewan businesses during this terribly challenging time.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lumsden-Morse.

Agricultural Safety Week

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, March 15th to 21st is Agricultural Safety Week. Agricultural Safety Week is about awareness of on-farm safety issues and its goal is to help reduce the number of injuries and fatalities.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture is one of Saskatchewan's largest and most vital industries. Unfortunately it can also be one of the most dangerous. Seventy-five per cent of farm fatalities involve machinery and equipment, and of all serious injuries that occur, 14 per cent involve youth. Luckily, Mr. Speaker, organizations such as the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, Agricultural Health and Safety Network, Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies and Exhibitions, and many more all help equip producers with the tools needed to make their operations safe and healthy for everyone. We also offer the farm safety program through Canadian Agricultural Partnership, which provides funding for safety education and mental health initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, today members are wearing ribbons to acknowledge Farm Safety Week. The AgSafe ribbon campaign raises awareness of farm safety and celebrates safe farms. We are committed to educating the farming community about safety in hopes of eliminating all workplace injuries and fatalities. And on behalf of my colleagues, I extend well wishes and hope that all producers are safe today and every day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Government's Preparedness for and Response to COVID-19

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As case counts grow here in Saskatchewan and around the world each day, Saskatchewan people are deeply worried about the COVID-19 epidemic. They're worried about their own health, about the health of their family, their friends, their neighbours. They're worried about being able to pay the bills, on how they'll manage to make ends meet during this massive economic disruption.

Members on this side are eager to be part of the response to those needs. Community leaders from across the province are eager to be responding to those needs. How will the Premier be involving all those who are willing to pitch in and help flatten the curve, ensure high-quality health care, and respond to the acute economic challenges posed by COVID-19?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the member opposite for a question, a very important question as to how are we going to help one another out in this province over the course of the next number of days, weeks, possibly months, Mr. Speaker, the foreseeable future as we face in this province, like the rest of the nation and the rest of the world faces, this coronavirus or COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of initiatives that we are taking with respect to the restrictions here in the province: restrictions,

for example, into our long-term care facilities, our health care facilities; restrictions on the number of people that should gather in any one place, Mr. Speaker; and a significant restriction, just today, on our pre-K to 12 education, which will have classes suspended later this week, Mr. Speaker.

And we need to provide resources, resources to those families across the province, Mr. Speaker, resources most particularly into our health care system, Mr. Speaker. And engage our business community and those working for businesses, our employees across this province, Mr. Speaker, on how do we rebuild our economy after the fact. How do we support Saskatchewan families through the next number of weeks and months, Mr. Speaker? And then how do we ultimately build this strong economy here in the province back to the strong economy that we know it has been, Mr. Speaker, and that we strive for it to continue to be?

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of conversations that will be coming out and made public and being unrolled over the next number of days and weeks, Mr. Speaker. We will be engaging not only the members of the opposition, but we'll be engaging the communities across the province — the business communities, the service providers, Mr. Speaker, and the people and families in general.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Jim Pattison Children's Hospital is now at a state of over capacity where they've had to convert family visiting rooms into in-patient rooms. They've now had to convert the out-patient clinic into in-patient rooms as well. That's as of yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

This is a result of a design with too few beds for the needs that we already have in terms of pediatric care, and this is before any new influx of COVID-19 patients, Mr. Speaker. How will the province ensure top pediatric care during the pandemic when the months-old children's hospital is already over capacity?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we're thankful we have that children's hospital and thankful for the investment that we were able to make only with the strength of the Saskatchewan economy to have that facility, Mr. Speaker, and the services that are being offered by the 70-plus specialists that we hired to go in and offer services in that facility, Mr. Speaker, many services that previously had not been offered in the province of Saskatchewan where families had to leave this province for just such services.

So we're very thankful for the strength of our economy so that we are actually able to make that investment. That being said, Mr. Speaker, there is a need for the services that are being offered there. And that's evident by the number of families that are utilizing the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital and utilizing the services that are being offered in that facility.

I can assure the members of this province, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatchewan Health Authority is starting to take the preparatory action, if you will, to ensure that we will have all of the capacity that we can have available, Mr. Speaker, to address any of the health concerns that will and could be arising over the next

number of weeks due to a COVID breakout here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

And I would also remind the people of this province that at today's level we have seven cases, seven positive cases of COVID-19, Mr. Speaker. And we are making every effort to stem the transmission of that disease here in our communities, most notably today with the announcement around our pre-K to 12 schools.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regina emergency physician Ankit Kapur was exposed to COVID-19 at work, and he's now self-quarantined for 14 days. This is the first Saskatchewan health care worker sidelined by the virus, but he won't be the last. This is a huge contributor to emergency care in the province now unable to work for two weeks as we are ramping up need.

We've heard from emergency medicine leaders in the province a prediction of a 30 per cent drop in their workforce as they face these challenges at the same time when we expect to see an influx of at least that magnitude of new patients into the emergency room. These emergency medicine leaders are reaching out to colleagues in other specialties, asking about their comfort coming into emergency to back up the care that's provided there.

Our emergency rooms have already been under enormous pressure. We've already been seeing the situations with hallway medicine here in Saskatchewan. What is the plan to increase capacity to meet the need in the context of personnel challenges and a great increase in demand in our emergency rooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And an important, fair question with respect to the capacity that we have in our health care system here in the province, Mr. Speaker, a capacity that we've invested in significantly over the course of the last number of years, only due to the strength of the economy that we have here in Saskatchewan. We've invested in physicians. We've invested in additional nurses, Mr. Speaker, and in infrastructure, such as the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think Saskatchewan is unique in the fact that if we were to have a wide-scale outbreak here in the province, Mr. Speaker, and we are not able to bend that curve — as we have been talking about for weeks and collectively are making efforts in this House and in this province to achieve, Mr. Speaker — this will be a significant impact on the capacity that we have here in the province, as it has been in other areas of the world.

So that precipitates why we are making the very early decisions in Saskatchewan's case, like we have last Friday, over the course of the weekend, and ultimately today, Mr. Speaker. And I can assure the people of Saskatchewan that the Saskatchewan Health Authority is starting already to look at the capacity that they have and scale back some non-essential services, Mr. Speaker, so that we can ensure that we have all of the capacity that we may require available for the people of this province should we need it.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Front-line health care professionals are putting themselves at risk every day on the front lines of our response to COVID-19. Will the Premier ensure that health care workers who need to self-isolate are given the supports they need? And can he explain how having returning travellers self-quarantine for 14 days but health care workers who are returning from travel going immediately to work, can he explain how that is part of a strategy of preserving the health of front-line workers and stopping the transmission of the COVID-19 virus?

An Hon. Member: — With respect to . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Pardon me, Mr. Speaker. With respect to travellers that are returning, Mr. Speaker, and working in the health care industry and being able to self-monitor as opposed to self-isolate for a period of 14 days, first we went through this in the press avail we had this morning. Dr. Shahab, the chief medical officer, went through that most certainly those involved in the medical profession here in Saskatchewan are self-monitoring on an ongoing basis.

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, there's a very few select disciplines where it is considered an essential service, where on their return they would, Mr. Speaker, not have the self-isolation requirement for 14 days but would very certainly self-monitor. And they have some additional requirements with respect to some of the personal protective equipment that they would use. And this is a very, very small number, Mr. Speaker, in what would be considered essential services. And this is mirroring the federal law that the federal government had put in place and again reiterated here today.

With respect to supporting our health care workers if they should have to self-isolate for 14 days, Mr. Speaker, and the support that this government will have, for certain that will be there.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan workers must be able to take time off from work to be able to care for themselves in situations of self-isolation or illness. They need to be able to take time off of work to care for children who aren't able to go to school.

Will the Premier commit today to putting in place measures which will help families, including paid sick leave supports, and insisting that employers waive any requirement for sick notes for employees? And will the Premier step up in response to the level of need that we're seeing here, that we're about to see, ensure that no one will lose their job due to COVID-19, and ensure that families will have the direct financial support they need to weather this difficult time?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to losing their job

due to self-isolating for 14 days, no one in this province will lose their job due to self-isolating themselves for 14 days. With respect to sick notes that may be requested by an employer here in Saskatchewan, we would truly hope that employers will not be considering that type of action, given the global pandemic that we are facing here in our province and in our communities, and we would be hopeful that employers are most certainly taking a step forward to support their employees in their choice.

If they are required to self-isolate, Mr. Speaker, we want people to self-isolate. That is how we are going to be able to bend the curve, to flatten the curve, if you will, Mr. Speaker. And it is our expectation and our true hope that employers are going to participate in that, Mr. Speaker, and we will be engaging with our employment community over the next number of days and weeks, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that our message is being heard by them.

Right now we are focused on restrictions, Mr. Speaker. Very shortly we are continuing the focus on the resources that are made available not only in health care services and services in our communities but the resources that are being made available to not only the Government of Saskatchewan's employees but those in the private sector in this province as well.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has now made the decision to close Saskatchewan schools later this week. Will teachers, educational assistants, and other support staff continue to receive their salaries throughout this period of closure?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, they will. We have made what was a difficult decision, Mr. Speaker, with respect to winding down, if you will, the suspension of our classes here in the province, that teachers, our education staff will receive compensation during this period, Mr. Speaker.

Although the students will have their grades, we have allowed those that want to — and we hope all of them will — continue with their opportunity to have access to that curriculum. They'll be supported by those teachers and the school divisions through some different methods of distance learning and alternative learning measures, Mr. Speaker. But for certain our educators and our education community will be compensated in the days and weeks and months ahead.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The decision to close schools has left many parents scrambling to find child care or to make arrangements to be away from work. Not everyone can afford to use vacation time or to miss work. Will financial support be available for parents now that we've closed the schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, again not just in the case of the education sector but yes, families right across this province. This

is why this was such a challenging decision, Mr. Speaker, is now we have children that will not be going to school after the course of this week, Mr. Speaker. This is why we wanted to ensure that . . . We still wanted our educators, our teachers to provide those supports to students that want to continue with their curriculum and have access to that curriculum for the end of the year, but understanding that educators are parents as well, Mr. Speaker, and they have children that would either be in school or would also be in child care services here in the province.

So again, Mr. Speaker, these are exactly the conversations that we are having today and into the future on how can we best support Saskatchewan families, Saskatchewan families that in many cases are working together, leaning on one another to get through what is really an unprecedented situation. So, Mr. Speaker, we are looking at what type of resources the Government of Saskatchewan would be able to provide in conjunction, quite likely, with the Government of Canada, as we work our way through the next number of weeks and months, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly I would say this to the people of this province: this is a time for us to reach out — not to touch one another but to talk to one another, Mr. Speaker — and to support one another in our communities and in our province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Finding child care for kids who are out of school or out of daycare will be a challenge, particularly for those on the front lines providing essential service. A couple of questions here. What communication has the province had with licensed child care providers? Will they be closing in the coming days? And what is this government's plan for emergency child care for people on the front lines, including health care workers who are essential in responding to COVID-19?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, this is a situation that is evolving not only daily but in some cases hourly. And we saw that yesterday in a neighbouring province of Alberta with a number of community transmissions of COVID-19, Mr. Speaker, of which we have had none yet in this province, Mr. Speaker. So the decision with respect to additional action when it comes to licensed child care facilities in this province has not been made for today.

However I would say that that may be a decision that we may have to address in the days and weeks ahead, Mr. Speaker. I think it's fair to say that all decisions and all actions may come to the table of not only the provincial government but the federal government as well, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to engage with our parents across this province to ensure that we are working with them to provide the supports that are necessary when they are needed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Ontario has announced that they will delay their budget. The federal government is delaying their budget as well. Clearly,

despite assertions to the contrary, that is absolutely something that can be done here in Saskatchewan as well. The information in the budget scheduled for Wednesday is hopelessly out of date. We all know there will be much more to do to respond to the needs of Saskatchewan families. Our revenues have changed. Our spending priorities have to change, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier postpone the budget and commit to working with leaders throughout the province to develop a plan to protect our economy from the effects of this pandemic? Will he shelve this out-of-date budget and work to bring forth a budget that's actually reflective of today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll be introducing a budget on Wednesday and beginning that budget debate, Mr. Speaker. This is a budget that is going to continue to invest in health care. It's a budget that is going to also have initiatives in it to ensure that as we find ourselves on the back slope of this curve, whenever that is, that we have every opportunity to rebuild the economy here in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's important that we move forward with this budget so that we are able to provide all of those supports and more if necessary.

And I would also say this: with respect to formulating any type of a new budget, Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult to even begin that process given today's environment. The fact of the matter is we are going to move forward with the budget that we have before us. We feel it is a budget that needs to be introduced to the people of this province because of the supports for our health care, the supports for our education sector and our families, the supports to ensure that we can rebuild the economy here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

We'll be moving forward with that budget, Mr. Speaker. And we will commit to ensuring to be totally transparent, as transparent as possible, as the decisions that we make post-budget are made — whether they be on the investment side, Mr. Speaker, or whether they be on the revenue side — for certain by first quarter and quite likely even before that.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Introducing a budget that's completely divorced from the fiscal realities of today is a move that makes absolutely no sense. It is time to postpone that expired budget and work on something that's actually connected to today's reality, Mr. Speaker.

This morning the SHA's [Saskatchewan Health Authority] chief medical health officer indicated there are 100 ICU [intensive care unit] beds in the entire province, but that most of them are already occupied. This may not be enough if we see a spike in critically ill patients. My question to the Premier is this: how many ventilators are there in the province today? How many of them are currently use? And what's the plan to add capacity to the system in the event that that current amount of beds and capacity isn't enough?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I don't have the current number of ventilators that are available, Mr. Speaker. But I can say that on the phone call I was on last Friday with the Prime Minister and all of the other premiers from the 10 respective provinces and the three territories, that we had discussions just specific to our supplies that we have in our health care centres and how we ultimately can apportion those if we need to and where we are sourcing those from. And is there an opportunity for us to work very closely together to ensure that we can source all of the personal protective equipment that we need in our health care centres, all of the ventilators that we need.

And there is some challenges around ventilators around the world today, Mr. Speaker, as well as some of the other equipment ultimately that would be needed. So we're working collaboratively with other provinces, the territories, and our federal government on how we can ensure that we can source the supplies, the medical supplies that we will need in a timely fashion, not just here in Saskatchewan but in other provinces as well, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's important that we share this information with the public, and I'd ask the Premier to please come forward as soon as he's able with the number of ventilators, the number that are in current use, and what the modelling suggests in terms of need.

When it comes to respirators or the N95 masks and other personal protective equipment, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that our health care workers have access to the proper equipment to care for patients is vital to avoid the spread of COVID-19. We are hearing concerns from front-line providers that there isn't sufficient personal protective equipment available. What is the government's plan to ensure that nurses, doctors, all health care workers have access to the appropriate respirators, gloves, gowns, face shields, and other equipment?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member of the opposition for that question. We are not aware of any shortages that have arrived or been communicated to the Saskatchewan Health Authority as of yet, Mr. Speaker. We do have a number of orders in for this personal protective equipment that we have worked with other provinces, territories, and the federal government on our expected need that we will have, Mr. Speaker. And we also have those orders in with a number of different suppliers around the world, understanding that other areas of the world have orders in as well, Mr. Speaker. So we're going to continue to work collaboratively with other partners in our federation here, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we can all access the supply that we need.

And to my understanding, and to the Minister of Health's understanding, we have not had any shortages as of yet. And we're going to endeavour to continue to do everything that we can to ensure that that remains to be the case.

Meanwhile as we do that, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we continue to shift, if you will, the operations of the Saskatchewan Health Authority to scale back on some elective and

non-emergent surgeries, Mr. Speaker, so that we can ensure that we have the capacity in our health care system, Mr. Speaker, should we need it in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is the basis of the decision to not test non-travellers who display the symptoms of COVID-19 infection? Is this because there's a lack of concern about community transmission, or is it because there aren't enough swabs in the province to be able to do all of those tests?

An Hon. Member: — Mr. Speaker, we . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Again I jumped the queue there. Mr. Speaker, we have had no shortage with respect to the supplies needed for testing here in the province. If you look across Canada, there are provinces that have tested a number significantly more than Saskatchewan because they have a significantly larger population. And I would say also, they also have . . . international airports is where much of this has started, Mr. Speaker, with international . . . Either guests to Canada or people returning from other nations have brought COVID-19 to Canada.

And I would just say again that the six initial cases here in Saskatchewan, and I believe the seventh, are all connected in some way with travel, at least outside the province, Mr. Speaker. So to my knowledge, we have not had any shortages of any of the equipment that we have and that is required either for testing or for treatment here in the province, Mr. Speaker. And we are making every effort and every attempt to ensure that that remains to be the case into the future.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When does the Premier expect that he'll be recommending non-essential business closures? And how will he be supporting the Saskatchewan small businesses impacted by closure and decreased revenue as people are encouraged to stay home?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. We heard the Prime Minister today talk about, you know, if people don't need to go out, they should make the choice to stay at home. Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is this is an evolving situation. I said it evolves day by day. It at times even evolves hour by hour. We've seen that over the course of this weekend. We saw it over the course of even some of what occurred last week.

So we continue to work very closely with the chief medical officer here in the province, Mr. Speaker, with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and with all of those involved to make the very best decisions. Yes, on a day-by-day basis but at times even on an hour-by-hour basis, Mr. Speaker, that's how we have conducted ourselves thus far, is with that collaborative effort, Mr. Speaker. And that's how we will continue to make decisions, whatever they may be about, in the days and weeks ahead.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. COVID-19 can affect anyone in the province but some people are at greater risk. Indigenous people in Saskatchewan are especially vulnerable to the impacts of outbreaks as many already face challenges of crowded housing, of underlying health challenges. What is the plan for the Premier to work with First Nations, Métis governments, tribal councils, and the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] to have a dedicated approach to reducing the impact of this virus on First Nations and Métis communities?

An Hon. Member: — Mr. Speaker, that is a . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — I'm just a little bit quick, which no one has said to me ever before, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is a good question with respect to not only our rural and remote communities in the North, our Indigenous communities. Also we have a number of remote work camps, Mr. Speaker, in the mining industry and throughout northern Saskatchewan.

So the fact of the matter is, specific to the Indigenous community, Mr. Speaker, I myself have been on the phone with Chief Bob Cameron a number of times over the course of the last few weeks, a few times over the course of the last few days to ensure that the FSIN . . . I know some of my colleagues have been on the phone not only with Chief Cameron but other Indigenous leaders as well so that they are aware of the decisions that we are making. And at times these are happening in quite rapid fashion, Mr. Speaker, without a lot of lead time. But to ensure they're aware of the decisions that we're making, and then working collaboratively as well because some of these decisions they have to make, Mr. Speaker, in response to what we're doing here in the province.

So this is a collaborative effort between communities, Aboriginal and otherwise, Mr. Speaker. It's a collaborative effort between industries, and it's a collaborative effort on behalf of all of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I'm advised that His Honour the Lieutenant Governor is here for Royal Assent. All please rise.

ROYAL ASSENT

[At 14:20 His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following bills.]

His Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly in its present session has passed several bills which in the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour, and to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Clerk: — Your Honour, the bills are as follows:

Bill No. 174 - *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires*

- Bill No. 176 - *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act/Loi sur l'accès des fiduciaires à l'information numérique*
- Bill No. 177 - *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 175 - *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019*
Loi modificative de 2019 sur le mariage
- Bill No. 188 - *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 178 - *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 190 - *The Expropriation Procedure Amendment Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 191 - *The Business Corporations Amendment Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 192 - *The Legal Profession (Law Foundation) Amendment Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 193 - *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2019 (No. 2)*
- Bill No. 205 - *The Children's Law Act, 2019*
Loi de 2019 sur le droit de l'enfance
- Bill No. 206 - *The Children's Law Consequential Amendments Act, 2019*
- Bill No. 200 - *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019*

His Honour: — In Her Majesty's name, I assent to these bills.

[His Honour retired from the Chamber at 14:23.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 195

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 195 — *The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate around Bill No. 195, *The Lobbyists Amendment Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes several changes. One of the most important changes to this bill, and most significant, is the reduction of the threshold for registration as in-house lobbyists from 100 hours to 30 hours, Mr. Speaker. There is still an exemption for non-profit charitable organizations with less than five employees who lobby for a total of less than 30 hours annually from registering as an in-house lobbyist, which I think is important to keep that exemption.

However, the reduction is a positive step forward, Mr. Speaker. We believe that it's not quite enough, and we would like to see that the hours required to register be reduced, frankly to zero if possible, to ensure as much transparency as possible in who is lobbying our government, Mr. Speaker. This is important for

democracy, and it's important for transparency in governmental decisions.

I believe the member from Saskatoon Centre is the critic for this bill. If not, either he or myself will be speaking to members of committee on this piece of legislation. Either way I know we're both looking forward to it, and to allow that to happen, I am prepared to allow this bill to move on to its next stage.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 195 be now read a second time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 195, *The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019* be committed to the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 196

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 196 — *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate around Bill No. 196, *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act*. This Bill makes several changes; most notably, I think, Mr. Speaker, is the change that requires that a description of the assets of any private companies controlled by a member or a member's family be included in the disclosure statements.

Mr. Speaker, this is to allow an increased measure of transparency in the disclosure statements of members. Now often you'll see numbered companies listed in the disclosure statements, but that doesn't provide any sort of understanding of what type of business that company is a part of or what kind of assets are being held under that particular numbered company, Mr. Speaker. So this is a path forward in terms of transparency and accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's also important that not only members but members' families' assets be included in that, which is in this change. I know my colleague the member for Saskatoon Centre will have many questions about not just this provision but other provisions and what we can be doing moving forward in terms of

increasing disclosure and transparency in our disclosure statements as a step forward toward further democracy in our government and in our represented officials, Mr. Speaker.

To allow my colleague to have the opportunity to ask questions about this bill to officials, I am prepared to allow this bill to now move forward to its next stage.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 196 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 196, *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019* be committed to the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 197

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 197 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Prince Albert Northcote.

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm looking forward to putting some of my remarks on the record with regards to Bill No. 197. There's a lot of changes that are going to be implemented with this bill, and so it'll be very interesting when this comes to committee so that we have more discussion on it.

[14:30]

Some of the changes are with regards to the appeal system. So it looks like there'll be some changes on how appeals will happen. And there'll be questions with regards to if this is going to be a change that is going to be more convenient for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] or if it's going to be more convenient for the individuals who would be placing the claim appeal in.

So I know there'll be a lot of questions on that as well as how many appeals are made and how that will impact cases, or if this will have a very little impact. So there'll be a lot of questions with regards to that and who requested these changes. Was it something that customers were requesting, or was this something that SGI wanted to put forward? So there'll be some questions in committee with regards to that.

Also there'll be some changes on housekeeping items, but also some language and terminology. And the minister indicated this was to make it more clear with regards to the legislation. But sometimes when we change language we've got to see if it's going to be an efficient change as well.

Also there's some changes with regards to a person's licence when it's surrendered. And so there'll be a lot of questions with regards to that on how this is enforced within the province but also outside of the province, so if a person's licence is surrendered here, if they go apply for a licence outside the province, what that entails. How will they know that this is happening? Or if someone's licence is suspended outside the province, when they renew their licence here, how are we informed about that?

So again there's quite a few changes here with a lot of the legislation. I'm hoping once this gets to committee, some of the regulations will also be included in that. So there could be more answers to some of the changes that's going to be happening here.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much more I want to discuss now. I'll bring my comments to committee. And with that I'm going to adjourn debate on Bill No. 197.

The Speaker: — The member's moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 198

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 198 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 198, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2019*. I know that SGI had run quite the campaign about making people aware about distracted driving using cell phones, hand-held devices, about the impact of injuries, collisions, and the loss of life from people distracted from, you know, cell phones, hand-held devices, and I guess distracted driving overall. And they had quite the campaign and are they trying to make people aware. And I know SGI has asked the province of course to come up with stiffer penalties, and they have done that. We've seen about February of this year, we've seen distracted driving using a hand-held device in your hand, the fine will be doubled. You get caught a second time, it goes up quite a bit actually.

And I was just looking at some of the fees. I guess it goes to \$580 on your first-time offence. And then if you go a second time, it goes to 1,400 within a certain time, and 2,100 if you're caught within a year a third time.

And then obviously they're talking about impounding someone's vehicle, because they're taking it serious to send a message out

there to people in light of the campaign and awareness. I guess we're hearing, by the amount of tickets and infractions and loss of life and injury and damage that has occurred, that the government is taking a stand as well as being recommendation. And I'm assuming it's coming mainly from SGI, you know, of the concerns that they're dealing with, and probably individuals who have been in an incident or an accident and somebody, you know, they know was distracted using a cell phone or for whatever reason, you know, a distracted driver.

So I'm not going to get into a lot of this. It makes it very clear. They're taking it serious and taking some more action to try to make the public aware of how serious the infraction is of using a hand-held device or, you know, just undue care and attention and, you know, the fines. And I think it's important to say that they do have the ability now to impound a vehicle. And I think that's going to send a strong message, hopefully you know, anything you can do to save one life. And I think SGI has asked that.

I know my colleague will have more questions in committee about some of it and maybe get some of the information from the officials when the committee comes together. So I don't have a lot more to say. I know that we see this as, from this side of it, as stronger penalties and trying to make the awareness with SGI that how serious it is, and hopefully we will do the work we need to. So at this point we're prepared to, or I am prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 198.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 199

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 199 — *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter in briefly here this afternoon with respect to Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, 2019, but want to offer in that brief entry full support for this very important action, certainly to thank all that are involved in this legal effort to go after some of those individuals and companies that have brought incredible harm to people of our province, to the people of our country, Mr. Speaker.

And so to join this effort along with BC [British Columbia] and other jurisdictions is incredibly important to go after those that have manufactured and distributed opioids that have killed and devastated and stolen so many people from our province, Mr. Speaker, have stolen loved ones from far too many families. And of course have come at a tremendous cost to the health care system as well by way of very expensive hospitalization, certainly expensive treatment as well, Mr. Speaker — all the economic impacts that are attached to opioid addiction and, in our case in Saskatchewan, crystal meth addiction as well, Mr.

Speaker.

So I attach just the highest level of support to this action against these predatory actions and behaviours of these companies, these actors in the opioid industry, Mr. Speaker, and stand as a full, constructive ally for this effort in any way we can further aid this effort, Mr. Speaker.

Quite simply opioids and crystal meth addictions within our province have ravaged the lives of far too many in this province, Mr. Speaker. And this is an epidemic and a crisis that we're dealing with right now within this province, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we're well on the record with the slow actions of government to respond to that epidemic and to the needs of people and to respond with timely and appropriate treatment for individuals and to fix our broken mental health and addictions services, Mr. Speaker. And we'll continue to push government for the needed action on those fronts. But this bill before us here today is an important measure and one we support fully, Mr. Speaker, one I support fully.

I just want to share, Mr. Speaker, that last year in Regina there were 82 overdoses in Regina. That's a terrible number. It's a terrible human cost, Mr. Speaker. But in Regina in just the last two months, just over the last two months to the current time, there were over 100, Mr. Speaker. Eighty-two in all of last year, which is a number that is way higher than it should be and represents terrible, terrible hurt and harm and tragedy within lives, Mr. Speaker.

But in the last couple months, Mr. Speaker, we've had over 100 overdoses. I've lost two constituents for certain, Mr. Speaker, in the last two months to this terrible addiction that's killing our community members, that's stealing family members from loved ones. And we need to be united in the fight against those drug dealers, Mr. Speaker, the opioid manufacturers and distributors, Mr. Speaker, and be tough as hell with them, Mr. Speaker, and to fight them with every legal means that we have.

But we also have to marshal the resources that we have within this province and to take up our roles and the duty that we have as members of this Assembly to give voice and to call for the needed action to save lives and to extend treatment and to fix this broken mental health and addiction services, Mr. Speaker. That being said, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, 2019.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 201

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 201 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this afternoon to speak to Bill No. 201, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act*. I think I'm not speaking to anything that anyone here isn't feeling by saying that it seems a bit surreal to stand up and to speak to anything other than those concerns that are front of mind right now across the province, Mr. Speaker, with the pandemic and uncertain economic times experienced by people right across the province.

But I will endeavour to do my best because at some point we will be past this. And there are people who I'm sure who are watching the progress of this bill because it will have impacts upon them and their livelihood, their job, and around the way that liquor is warehoused in the province. So I will be rather brief with my comments because I think I just want to hit them straight on.

But there are some questions and some concerns that we do have here. First of all the bill authorizes the SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] to enter into agreements with any person for warehousing and delivery of specialty liquor products. This is a change, Mr. Speaker, whereby right now we have warehousing of some beer products but not of the specialty liquor products.

Of course this is a further step to some of the earlier measures that we've seen with regard to the privatization of how liquor is distributed in the province. I, in some of the early days of being elected to this Assembly, sat in on committee where we heard submissions and concerns from the public about those changes, so certainly I do remember a number of those concerns.

Some of them would attach themselves to this further move towards privatization, and some of those concerns that people did stipulate in that committee have come to be true. Some, you know, perhaps further changes we might see later this year or later in the fall depending . . . It seems like our timelines now are all a bit up in the air, Mr. Speaker. But that commitment to the existing SLGA stores was due to expire later this year. We'll be waiting to see what happens there.

This also creates a penalty. I'll go back. This clarifies that only retail store permittees will be able to purchase alcohol directly from a person with whom SLGA has entered an agreement, so some stipulations around that initial move towards allowing for this warehousing. And it creates penalties subsequent to that for a person who refuses to produce identification to a liquor permittee and creates an offence to having or keeping beverage alcohol not purchased from or through the SLGA. So sort of the major change and then some changes through there.

[14:45]

I did note in the minister's second reading remarks that the province will still take . . . I can't remember. They will take a fee off of all of liquor markups through the third party warehouses, but I think that's not where the centre of the concerns arises from. It's around the privatization, the further privatization of liquor in the province.

One of the concerns that has been noted by others of my colleagues, but I think I will enter in to register those same concerns here, or those questions, are around a document called the Canadian alcohol policy evaluation. Mr. Speaker, this was an

evaluation that was meant to look at the use and misuse of alcohol in this country and some of the fallout from that, things like impaired driving charges. Of course we know here in this province that's something that remains high and is something we should be taking every measure to reduce. I know measures have been taken, but those rates do remain stubbornly high.

Within that Canadian alcohol policy evaluation there were two main recommendations. One was reducing the hours of operation of liquor stores. I know this has been a concern in some individual communities. They've taken measures to reduce the hours that alcohol can be purchased within those communities with an eye towards reducing some of those social impacts that are seen — drinking and driving, and other concerns.

But also the second recommendation is around reducing privatization. I think the public sector does a very good job of those roles of regulation, carding, and ensuring that procedures are met. Often you have people who are in the same job for many, many years and there's less turnover within those jobs. I can't speak to whether or not that is an issue in the private sector, but I do know that this is something that the public sector does very well.

You know, I think the minister also mentioned in his comments that this might improve the availability of some of the specialty liquor products. And perhaps that's a goal that we have, and maybe that is the case. I do know within the existing SLGA warehouse system, if they're not able to get something, they're often able to order it in and often in very short order. So just a plug out to, you know, those who do that work within the public liquor stores and are always there to give advice and recommendations.

I don't think if I continue on I'm going to be uncovering any new concerns. I think most of our concerns and questions about this bill, at least that we're going to have within this Assembly, have made their way on the record. As always, I suspect that the critic will have additional information and have reached out to stakeholders with regard to this bill and may have further questions and concerns in committee. But I think I will leave that business to her. And with that I am in a position to wrap up my remarks and adjourn debate on Bill No. 201.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 203

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 203 — *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill No. 203, *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*. Mr. Speaker, people have hard earnings that they work hard for and they invest

in for their retirement. They want to make sure that, you know, the government is putting in regulations and legislation that again protects them and tries to protect their hard-earned dollars when they give it over or hand it over to an investing company or someone to be there.

And what this legislation does, what I can see . . . And I know I'm not going to get into it lots. But what it looks like is it makes sure that whether you're a financial planner or a financial advisor, you're making sure that you have the education, the accreditation that it requires you to go ahead and meet with Saskatchewan residents and say you're a financial planner or a financial advisor, that you've got the education and accreditation to be serving clients and providing the services that they need.

So I know my colleagues will have more questions and finding out where this came from, as far as if there's been problems that have been identified, you know. And I don't know if the process worked before, how one would . . . if it was just that there wasn't legislation that gave teeth to making sure somebody had the accreditation or the education.

So we'll see exactly in committee why this came forward, but obviously to protect the Saskatchewan residents, as I said earlier, who work hard and want to make sure their retirement dollars and dollars that they have for education, for their grandkids maybe, for their retirement, they want to make sure that those dollars are . . . whoever they're dealing with has accreditation or the education.

So at this point I don't have a lot more to say. I know my colleagues will have more in committee and will ask the questions of the right people at the time in committee. So I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this bill.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 204

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 204 — *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur le jury*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Merci, monsieur le Président. [Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.] It's good to join debate this afternoon on Bill No. 204, *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019*. In its introduction it was great to hear the French language on the part of the Deputy Clerk at the time of its introduction. I'm not sure what face you're making for me there, Mr. Speaker, if it's a . . . Okay, carry on. All right. We'll just have at 'er.

But, Mr. Speaker, this comes forward on the heels of a multi-year review of the jury management system. In terms of the changes on offer, there are changes to the selection and summoning

process. There's an exclusion provided in the legislation around the ability of chiefs and council members of First Nations from service as jurors. This is the same practice that is afforded currently to reeves, mayors, city councillors, Mr. Speaker.

And in terms of what happens with the spouses of reeves, mayors, and city councillors, it in turn opens them up for inclusion in the pool of prospective jurors, recognizing that in certain regions of the province you want to have as many people available to that jury pool selection process as possible and that, you know, we're all our own person — and nice to see that recognized, Mr. Speaker. In terms of excluding individuals who have been sentenced to two or more years and have not been pardoned from service as jurors . . . And there's also an authorization around the electronic empanelling of a jury.

Mr. Speaker, I know for a fact that I have learned colleagues who have much more legal expertise than I and much more experience with the jury process, Mr. Speaker. Me, it's a little more rudimentary than that. I'm not going to refer you to my great interest in various legal proceedings that came forward in such great shows as *The Flintstones* and, you know, I don't know, *Law & Order*.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's been good reading the bill, good reading the minister's second reading speech, good to hear the use of the French language in the introduction of this particular item, and of course the langue française [Translation: French language]. It's very important in these matters as well so that we can all be full citizens under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Mr. Speaker, and enjoy our pursuit of peace, order, and good government, or a good life in this province of ours.

But I'll not belabour it any more than that, Mr. Speaker, other than to add my own sort of sense of surreality in terms of having a few words to say on a matter such as this on a day such as this as well, Mr. Speaker. But with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 204, *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — Move that this House do now adjourn. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:56.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

Moe.....	6901
Meili.....	6902

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Steele.....	6903
-------------	------

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Recognizing Saskatchewan Health Care Workers

Meili.....	6903
------------	------

Safety Measures During Pandemic

McMorris.....	6903
---------------	------

Supports for Local Businesses

Wotherspoon.....	6903
------------------	------

Agricultural Safety Week

Stewart.....	6904
--------------	------

QUESTION PERIOD

Government's Preparedness for and Response to COVID-19

Meili.....	6904
Moe.....	6904

ROYAL ASSENT.....6908

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READING

Bill No. 195 — *The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019*

Sarauer.....	6909
Merriman (referral to Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee).....	6909

Bill No. 196 — *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019*

Sarauer.....	6909
Merriman (referral to Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee).....	6910

Bill No. 197 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2019*

Rancourt.....	6910
---------------	------

Bill No. 198 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2019*

Vermette.....	6910
---------------	------

Bill No. 199 — *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*

Wotherspoon.....	6911
------------------	------

Bill No. 201 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019*

Loi modificative de 2019 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard

Beck.....	6912
-----------	------

Bill No. 203 — *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*

Vermette.....	6912
---------------	------

Bill No. 204 — *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur le jury*

McCall.....	6913
-------------	------

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe

Premier

President of the Executive Council

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor

Minister of Advanced Education

Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr

Minister of Government Relations

Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis
and Northern Affairs

Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Central Services

Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan

Minister of Environment

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre

Minister of Energy and Resources

Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Joe Hargrave

Minister of Crown Investments

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Government Insurance

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company

Hon. Donna Harpauer

Minister of Finance

Hon. Jeremy Harrison

Minister of Trade and Export Development

Minister of Immigration and Career Training

Hon. Warren Kaeding

Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. Gene Makowsky

Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor
and Gaming Authority

Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Hon. David Marit

Minister of Agriculture

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Paul Merriman

Minister of Social Services

Hon. Don Morgan

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan

Workers' Compensation Board

Minister Responsible for The Global

Transportation Hub Authority

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Greg Ottenbreit

Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Water Security Agency

Hon. Jim Reiter

Minister of Health

Hon. Christine Tell

Minister of Corrections and Policing

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Gaming Corporation

Hon. Gordon Wyant

Deputy Premier

Minister of Education

Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds and
Priority Saskatchewan