

FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

# Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

# DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

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NO. 38A TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020, 13:30

### 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

<u>Clerks-at-the-Table</u> 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

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[Prayers]

#### STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

#### **Priority of Debate**

**The Speaker**: — I'm prepared to make a statement on a notice to move a priority debate motion at this time because of its impact on today's proceedings.

This morning at 10:51 a.m. the member from Saskatoon Nutana provided me with notice to move a priority debate motion in accordance with rule 28. I immediately notified the Premier and Leader of the Opposition of this notice.

The priority of debate motion proposed by the member from Saskatoon Nutana requests that the government introduce legislation to end the lockout between Federated Co-operatives Limited and Unifor Local 594 and that it impose binding arbitration to settle the labour dispute.

As outlined in rule 28(5), it is my role as Speaker to decide if the matter is proper to be discussed and whether it should have urgent consideration. The rule also states:

The Speaker also shall have regard to the probability of the matter being brought before the Assembly within reasonable time by other means.

The member presents the Speaker with a dilemma. The matter is proper to be discussed by this Assembly, but as we know, the Assembly adopted a sessional order only yesterday which is very prescriptive about the arrangement of business for the next three weeks. That sessional order, which considerably narrows the opportunity for debate on a motion of this nature, is based on an agreement made by the two House leaders. One day later, the Speaker is asked to overrule, as it were, that agreement and the sessional order to allow a priority of debate motion.

The sessional order has eliminated nearly all the regular means for the opposition to bring the proposed motion to the floor of the Assembly. However it does provide a solution to the dilemma by providing an option to bring the matter before the Assembly this Friday.

Section 2 of the sessional order states that the order of business on Friday, June 19th, shall be in accordance with rule 14(3)(b), which gives priority on the order paper to private members' business. The sessional order also altered the rotation for the designation of priority items so that the opposition was given the first choice of business under rule 24(4). Consequently, a notice of motion submitted by the opposition would be ranked first in order of priority on the order paper under private members' motions, thus providing an opportunity for the member's motion to be debated at that time.

If the opposition member wishes to submit a notice of motion by 2:30 p.m. today, the motion could be debated on Friday, provided the opposition does not designate another matter already on the order paper for priority consideration. Pursuant to rule 24(4), this

would ensure that the motion being proposed, which they believe is of urgent public importance, will be considered immediately following the 75-minute debate on Friday. Accordingly the opposition has the ability to bring this matter forward in a reasonable period of time.

Additionally at any time and without prior notice, the member may ask for the Assembly's unanimous consent to move their motion as a matter of urgent and pressing necessity in accordance with rule 61. If the Legislative Assembly deems the matter to be sufficiently urgent to set aside its other business, the matter will be debated immediately. This provides another opportunity for the member to bring a motion before the Assembly.

It is my determination that the member does not have other means to bring this matter before the Assembly within a reasonable time. Therefore I deny the application for the matter to proceed as a priority of debate motion.

### **ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Provincial Budget**

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In March, the Minister of Finance tried to introduce a budget that was completely out of date with the fiscal reality at the time, tried to tell us that everything was fine, that nothing needed to change. She's had three months since to come up with a recovery plan that puts people first. Instead we see the cut-and-paste job of a budget that we received yesterday, with almost nothing changed from that budget that was finished in February.

The one exception is we see some infrastructure dollars. And we support that, Mr. Speaker. I think it's very important to get people back to work. But with the Sask Party's record and no commitment to a Sask-first approach that makes sure those jobs go to Saskatchewan companies and workers, this isn't a plan for the economy of Saskatchewan. It's a plan once again for us to stimulate the economy of Alberta or Texas or France, Mr. Speaker.

Beyond that, on the issues that matter most to Saskatchewan families, to our children, to parents, to seniors, there's no change at all, Mr. Speaker. Has the Premier not been paying attention? Does he really think nothing has changed? Is he happy with this cut-and-paste job of a budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for his question with respect to the budget that was introduced yesterday by our Minister of Finance. And I'd be happy to say and very proud to say that I will be supporting that budget. We have worked very hard to ensure that the structural challenges that we had here in the province of Saskatchewan have been corrected by the hard work of Saskatchewan people over the course of the last number of years, Mr. Speaker.

What we're facing this particular year, yes, is a pandemic deficit, Mr. Speaker. But we will not quit investing in the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, in the communities where those people live, Mr. Speaker, and most importantly in the economy of this province so that these individuals, Mr. Speaker, are able to continue with the careers that they have. Or in the case that they haven't been able to go to work the last couple of months, we're going to give them every opportunity to get back to work and get back to work in the very near future, Mr. Speaker.

In this particular budget, a budget that is a first step in recovery in the province of Saskatchewan, the recovery of our economy and ultimately the continued growth of our economy, we're very proud to introduce the largest health care budget in the history of the province, Mr. Speaker, up \$288 million, up 5 per cent since last year, Mr. Speaker. Very proud of the \$435 million invested in mental health care and addictions in this province, Mr. Speaker, and especially proud of the \$3.36 billion that are going to be invested in education on behalf of our next generation, our future, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know that Saskatchewan was already in a recession going into COVID-19. We were already seeing people stretched and struggling. The Premier says this is a pandemic deficit. Well where's the pandemic budget? Where's a budget that will actually meet the needs of the day? We don't see it.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Finance minister talked about a return to balance and she said, "Is it going to be easy? No, it's not going to be easy." We know what not easy means when it comes to the Sask Party's playbook. We know that means cuts. We know that means Crown sell-offs. We've seen this movie before. We know when she talks about it not being easy, it's not going to be easy on Saskatchewan families.

If she plans, if the Premier plans to get us back to a balance in three to four years, that's going to be cuts, that's going to be sell-offs, or it's going to be both. With a no-change budget this year and no transparency on what's to come, will the Premier come clean with his plans to make life harder for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe**: — Mr. Speaker, again I thank the member opposite for the question, the question with respect to the budget that was introduced yesterday, Mr. Speaker, as I said, a very substantial step forward in the recovery of the economy here in the province of Saskatchewan.

I think this is an opportune time for us to draw one of the distinct differences between the two parties here, Mr. Speaker. There's a party that believes in the recovery and the strength and the ultimate growth of the economy here in the province of Saskatchewan despite coming through a pandemic, Mr. Speaker, and a party that quite frankly didn't even need a pandemic to start shutting down services and businesses here in the province. That is a distinct difference in the record between these two parties.

Mr. Speaker, what the people of this province can look forward

to in this budget and in the days ahead, Mr. Speaker, is a 5 per cent increase in health care funding; substantial increase in mental health care funding in particular, a conversation that is important to each and every one of us in this province, Mr. Speaker; an increase in education, the largest education budget in the history of the province; an increase in social services; a \$2 billion booster shot, Mr. Speaker, to our infrastructure initiatives here in the province, bringing our total up to seven and a half billion dollars over the next two years.

You want to get people to work in this province in the construction industry, Mr. Speaker, you invest in it with public and private investment, Mr. Speaker. That's what this government is doing, Mr. Speaker, and that's what the people of Saskatchewan can count on in the future.

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

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This from a government that hiked the PST [provincial sales tax], added it to construction labour, killing that industry, Mr. Speaker. This is from a government who, over and over again, sends every major project to out-of-province companies who bring in out-of-province workers instead of putting our own folks to work, Mr. Speaker, a government with no plan for a recovery that puts people first, Mr. Speaker, no plan for long-term care, no plan for child care, no plan for schools, Mr. Speaker.

The Finance minister has said this isn't going to be easy on the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and we believe it with this government in charge. If this Premier is planning to bring back a balance in three years without cuts or Crown sell-offs, I'd like to see his math, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan deserve to see his math. Is this Premier going to present that plan before the election, or is he going to expect people to just go on faith, faith that they're not going to come around and do the cuts we know are planned?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Let's start with a Re-Open Saskatchewan plan, Mr. Speaker. Let's then move on to a budget that was introduced yesterday. That is a first step in recovering the economy here in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, let's go back a number of months to a strategic view of the economic fortunes of this province, full with targets on where we can get to by the year 2030: the Saskatchewan growth plan. Mr. Speaker, there's a number of plans that we can look to as to what this government is going to do in the years ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I went through a number of the investments, Mr. Speaker, in health care, in mental health and addictions, in education and social services, the unprecedented investment in infrastructure over the course of the next two years. And yes, that is going to mean new hospitals in our communities, Mr. Speaker. It's going to mean new schools in our communities, Mr. Speaker. It's going to mean investment in our existing hospitals. We're not going to close them down. We're going to make sure that our infrastructure is in a good shape, Mr. Speaker, in good condition, so that we can serve the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I hear the member from Cumberland, who's going to have a decision to make here come budget day, Mr. Speaker,

because part of the health care investment is going into a long-term care home, not only in the community of Grenfell but the one in La Ronge.

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

#### **Resumption of In-Classroom Education**

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, the Premier once again not telling us what's really going on. There's no transparency on the numbers to come, no transparency on the real steps this government will take to try to balance the budget on the backs of Saskatchewan people once again. We've seen this movie before and Saskatchewan people don't need to see it again.

We know that we've got people going back to school in the fall, Mr. Speaker, and we're happy about that. As a parent I'm really thrilled that my kid's going to be back in school. But, Mr. Speaker, we know that this has been a challenging time. Students have been learning at a distance since mid-March. Teachers have had to go through so much to make that work, had to take such heroic efforts to really make that even possible, Mr. Speaker. And now that we're talking about having them return to school, we need to know that that's going to be done safely, that they're going to have the resources to be able to do this.

Mr. Speaker, there's no change at all. There's no change at all in this budget. We've had three months for the Finance minister and the Education minister to come up with a plan for how they were going to do this safely, how they were going to resource this province. When asked about this today, the Minister of Finance said, well the saving grace is that this virus is not particularly harsh on children. That was supposed to be reassuring in some way to parents sending their kids back to schools that they don't know if it's going to be safe, Mr. Speaker? That's supposed to be reassuring, Mr. Speaker?

### [13:45]

How will the Premier honestly tell the people of Saskatchewan that there's no change and that they can be just completely confident with no new resources, everything's going to be fine in school in September?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, thank you again to the member opposite for the question. With respect to the first question around transparency, Mr. Speaker, we introduced a budget here yesterday that will have the full legislative review, Mr. Speaker, and we'll have the full purview of the people of the province. And I would put forward that, in the interest of transparency, this is the first jurisdiction in Canada to do so post dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are putting forward our health care response, we are putting forward reopening our health care system, and yes, we are putting forward the full financial picture, Mr. Speaker, of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. No other province or territory is doing that at this point in time. The federal government is not doing that, Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact. They're not going into the House, with the help of the federal NDP [New Democratic Party] who have traded an ideological decision for the lack of transparency and a lack of a federal budget. A disgrace really to all Canadians, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to education, and again the largest education budget in the province, you're going to see a number of infrastructure projects that'll come along. There is a plan that is coming together, Mr. Speaker, a plan that is involving all of our stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that our children can not only get back into the classroom this fall but ensure that they get back into our classrooms safely.

And, Mr. Speaker, the only way we are even able to have that conversation is by the hard work, the effort, and the sacrifice of the people of this province. We are not lucky with the numbers that we have with our COVID-19 infections, Mr. Speaker. That has come about by hard work, by effort, by sacrifice of Saskatchewan people, and for that I say thank you.

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

### Support for Child Care

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question, of course, was about a plan and sufficient resources to address the needs in schools this fall. That wasn't addressed at all, just like it wasn't addressed in the budget. No change from March, as though things were just the same as they always were. And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of so many areas where there's been no change when we know that's not what we need right now.

There will be no real recovery without real investment, and that includes a real investment in child care. The return on investment and economic growth in child care is massive, Mr. Speaker. It also makes all the difference for families, especially women, who have been completely forgotten in this government's plan, for them to be able to get back to work, Mr. Speaker.

The pandemic has made it clear. Saskatchewan will not get back to work properly without investments in child care. Saskatchewan already has the worst access to licensed spaces, already has very expensive child care, and there's been zero change in this budget since February 28th.

Has the Premier not been paying attention? Did he not notice how big of an issue child care right now is? How is he telling families that there's no need to invest in child care in response to the pandemic?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant**: — Mr. Speaker, this government has taken great pains over the last number of years since we've had the privilege of forming government to enhance child care spaces in this province, Mr. Speaker. We understand the importance of providing good child care, child education, good support for parents, Mr. Speaker. In terms of child care, Mr. Speaker, we've been enhancing the number of child care spaces over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker. Just two years ago, with the help of the federal government, Mr. Speaker, a significant enhancement in the number of child care spaces in this province.

And I can tell the member opposite that we've had recent conversations with the federal minister, Mr. Speaker, about that

continued support for enhancing more child care in the province of Saskatchewan and indeed across the country. Those conversations continue, Mr. Speaker. We're very much expecting the federal government to live up to their commitment to further fund and advance the child care incentive that's provided to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And for the member to suggest that this province and this government is ignoring the needs of parents when it comes to child care, it's just wrong, Mr. Speaker. The numbers speak for themselves when it comes to the number of spaces that have increased in this province.

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

### **Funding for Health Care**

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Worst access to child care in the entire country; that's the record of this government. And in this budget no change in education, no change in child care.

And no change in the health budget either from what was proposed in February 28th, what was already inadequate for a health system that's been redlined for too long, overburdened and understaffed, Mr. Speaker. Last night we learned from the minister that \$118 million that is supposedly dedicated to COVID response is simply money being shifted from other parts of the health system, Mr. Speaker, from things like postponing surgeries, for example. And then we get to today's budget where this budget has no new funding for public health, no real new funding to make sure we're ready for a second wave, Mr. Speaker.

The same inadequate \$20 million to address surgical wait times that was proposed back in February when we know there's now 1,500 more people on those wait-lists, Mr. Speaker. How are we supposed to count on this government to get us timely access to quality care, to address the second wave, when they've done nothing in three months to recognize the existing inadequacy of their funding in health care, nothing to step up and respond to the needs of the day?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in that long, rambling question, I guess the point is how are we funding COVID. Mr. Speaker, as we explained last night in committee that the Leader of the Opposition was referencing, unfortunately because we had to shut down a number of services during the COVID pandemic, Mr. Speaker, there were costs that weren't incurred that would normally be incurred. Obviously we redirected those funds to other areas in health care including COVID, Mr. Speaker. If there's any overages in the Ministry of Health that we won't absorb internally, the Minister of Finance, on her feet yesterday, indicated that there's a \$200 million COVID contingency fund. Mr. Speaker. I think it clearly speaks for itself.

But while I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition could clarify something for me. Mr. Speaker, yesterday during questioning about the CEO [chief executive officer] tours in long-term care, when he was demanding an independent investigation, and I spoke about the Ombudsman and the prerogative she has to investigate if she sees fit, he criticized that, Mr. Speaker. He said, "Shovelling it off to an ombudsman . . ." And that's a quote.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago, the NDP caucus released a news release that said the Saskatchewan NDP is calling for the province to request an independent investigation by the Ombudsman. I'll happily table the NDP news release, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Support for Long-Term Care Facilities and Seniors

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course the minister chose not to finish that quote: without resourcing and dedicating the resources necessary to have that independent investigation. If you'll . . . He can read the record. Mr. Speaker, that's what we need. We need that independent investigation. I love that the minister wants to talk about that now. So very quickly, does that mean the minister is okay with an independent investigation into long-term care? Let's get it done.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter**: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday he had that quote and he heckled from the seat that the Ombudsman wasn't the appropriate way to go, even after their news release called for it. Mr. Speaker, I very clearly said we're going to count on CEO tours. We're going to count on the biennial surveys of residents and their families, Mr. Speaker. We count on Accreditation Canada.

There's all sorts of checks and balances in the long-term care system in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're going to rely on. And as I said yesterday, if that's where the member is, back with the rest of his caucus, today calling on the Ombudsman to do it, if the Ombudsman decides to do it, we'll certainly co-operate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister could have saved us some time and said no, he's not interested in an independent investigation, because that's exactly what he just told us.

Mr. Speaker, the problems in long-term care are serious and they've been identified in so many ways, and yet in this budget there's nothing for seniors. Mr. Speaker, in this budget, there's no new funding for COVID, no new funding for more staff to address the chronic understaffing that's been identified even in the non-independent investigation. In fact the only time the word "senior" appears in the budget is when it mentions the retirement home in Meadow Lake, Mr. Speaker.

SEIU [Service Employees International Union] members are outside today. SEIU members are outside today on the steps of the legislature talking about what they've been raising for months now. They wrote a letter in December. Before COVID-19, they wrote a letter to the Premier raising the alarm about the serious concerns of understaffing in long-term care, and they have yet to receive a response. They've been without a contract for over three years, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday the Premier thanked the front-line workers, thanked health care workers. They are absolutely deserving of our thanks and praise, but they're also deserving of decent wages, decent working conditions, and a contract, Mr. Speaker. Where is this Premier when it comes to long-term care? Why was there nothing for seniors in this budget? And will the Premier commit to meeting with these front-line workers, hearing about the real concerns they're raising about the care of seniors in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter**: — Mr. Speaker, again there was a lot of points in that, and I'll try and touch on most of them as I recall. On the points of underfunding, we have over 700 more full-time equivalents in long-term care than we did when we were given the privilege of forming government.

Mr. Speaker, as far as I think he referred to them as being underpaid, that needs to be settled at the collective bargaining table. That's the appropriate place for it. We would encourage leadership of SEIU-West to go back to the table. SAHO [Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations] has a direction from this government to certainly meet and work their way through the collective bargaining process.

Mr. Speaker, we take seniors' issues very seriously. Just today there was an announcement of two new long-term care facilities in the province. There's 13 so far and more to come.

Mr. Speaker, again back to the SEIU-West issue, it's been my experience when we've had loved ones in a long-term care facility, level of care has been exceptional. I thank the front-line workers for that. The last biennial survey, I think it was in the neighbourhood of 85 per cent of respondents agreed that the care was very good. And again, Mr. Speaker, absolutely they need to be paid appropriately and that needs to be determined at the collective bargaining table.

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

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've seen the stories coming out of independent investigations in other provinces, the horror stories about what's happening in long-term care. Time and again we learn that here in Saskatchewan, as in those other parts of the country, when front-line workers raise their concerns, they're ignored. They're pushed away, Mr. Speaker.

Make no mistake. Saskatchewan is following Ontario's playbook and there's serious consequences. The only difference is that this government isn't even willing to look and find out what's really going on. If there's any area that deserves a serious and committed response, deserves action during a pandemic, it's the care of our seniors, Mr. Speaker. This has shown just how vulnerable seniors are across the country.

How can this Premier stand up and tell families, tell seniors that everything is just fine in long-term care in this province when we know that is not the case? **The Speaker**: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

**Hon. Mr. Kaeding**: — Mr. Speaker, care for our long-term care residents is extremely important to this government, as seen by even the announcement today, where we've announced two new long-term care facilities in this province: one in La Ronge, one in Grenfell. Mr. Speaker, we're making significant investments even in the maintenance and repair in a number of these facilities. I believe we announced 52 different facilities, 82 different projects, Mr. Speaker, that are going to have monies forwarded into repair and maintenance of long-term care facilities.

Mr. Speaker, this government has supported seniors in this province. Just in this budget alone, we're looking at incremental spending in the Alzheimer Society of over a million dollars, Mr. Speaker. We're looking at incremental spending of a million dollars around purposeful rounding in long-term care, which is providing tremendous service to our long-term care residents. Mr. Speaker, \$300,000 of new funding is going to address mental health issues that are affecting seniors in our communities. This government is very committed to care of the long-term care residents in this province.

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

**Mr. Meili**: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's own CEO tour report gives damning insight into front-line staffing, something that still today this government is refusing to acknowledge. But in Biggar there is "not enough staff to meet residents' needs." In Prince Albert there is "not enough staff to meet residents' needs." And in Duck Lake, Warman, Strasbourg, Lampman, Saskatoon, Leoville, Macklin, and Rosetown, Mr. Speaker, it's the same. There's not enough staff to meet residents' needs. It's there in black and white. Will the Premier finally admit that there's not enough staff to meet residents' needs in long-term care in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Kaeding**: — Mr. Speaker, since 2007 we've increased front-line staff by over 700. That's an 11 per cent increase in our front-line people, as well as we've increased our funding to operations of long-term care by just over 45 per cent. We're now at \$760 million annually to provide support to our long-term care residents, Mr. Speaker.

I think we've seen by our surveys that we've had that over 85 per cent of our residents are satisfied with the care that they receive in the long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker; 83 per cent of their family members also agree with that. We're committed to ensuring that our long-term care residents have the services that they need to ensure a quality of life in their facilities, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

**Mr. Meili**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Re-announcements of facilities that still don't have a plan for whether they'll be public or private builds, publicly or privately operated, announcements

that may disappear after another election, Mr. Speaker. This is going to be very little consolation for folks who are in our existing health care services, in long-term care right now. This is very little consolation for the people in Weyburn who don't have enough to eat, for the folks who are waiting hours for a call bell to be answered, Mr. Speaker.

We've heard from workers. We've heard from heartbroken family members and from the government's own CEO tour report that this government is letting seniors down, refusing to acknowledge that there's a short-staffing problem, refusing to take any action. The people who built this province deserve so much better.

The Premier's budget includes nothing for increased home care supports, nothing at all, Mr. Speaker. Does the Premier agree with me that now at this moment, when seniors' care is so clearly of such crucial importance and at such high risk and vulnerability, does the Premier agree with me that now is the time to put people first and make the investments needed to build the best home care in Canada right here in Saskatchewan and make sure that Saskatchewan seniors get the dignified care they need and deserve?

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

**Hon. Mr. Kaeding**: — Mr. Speaker, today we made a further commitment to our long-term care residents in this province. We're building two brand new care homes, Grenfell and La Ronge, Mr. Speaker. A few years ago this government committed to building 13 long-term care facilities in this province. Those commitments are made. They're just being completed now in Meadow Lake. How about in Watrous? Maybe in Radville, Kelvington, Tisdale? Mr. Speaker, we have a long list of long-term care committed, we promised, and we have completed that promise, Mr. Speaker.

And there's more to come, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of other commitments that we have made, Mr. Speaker, we've made just based on the CEO tour: a lot of facilities that need upgrades, that need flooring replaced, need roofs replaced, need HVAC [heating, ventilation, and air conditioning] and air conditioning, Mr. Speaker. We committed significant funds to the replacement of those and there is more to do for our seniors in this province.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker**: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

# Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Lawrence**: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 187, *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2019*, a bilingual bill, without amendment.

**The Speaker**: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and the bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker**: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 187 and the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

**The Speaker**: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

### Bill No. 187 — The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur l'administration des successions

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — I move the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker**: — It's been moved by the minister that Bill No. 187 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker**: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

# Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Lawrence**: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 189, *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2019* without amendment.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker**: — Are we interested in proceeding here? Anybody? Members opposite? Anybody? When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and the bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker**: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 189 and

that the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

**The Speaker**: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

#### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 189 — The Coroners Amendment Act, 2019

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — I move the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker**: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 189 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker**: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

# Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Lawrence**: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 195, *The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019* without amendment.

**The Speaker**: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and the bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker**: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 195 and that the bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

**The Speaker**: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 195 — The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I move the bill be now read the third time

and passed under its title.

**The Speaker**: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 195 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker**: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

# Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Lawrence**: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 196, *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019* without amendment.

**The Speaker**: — When shall the bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and the bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker**: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in the Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 196 and that the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

**The Speaker**: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker**: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 196 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

**Clerk**: — Third reading of this bill.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker**: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Lawrence**: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No 194, *The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2019* with amendment.

**The Speaker**: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Ms. Carr**: — I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and that this bill and its amendments be now read the third time.

**The Speaker**: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 194 and that the bill and its amendments be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

**The Speaker**: — When shall the amendments be read a first time?

### FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

### Bill No. 194 — The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2019

**Hon. Ms. Carr**: — I move that the amendments be now read a first and second time.

**The Speaker**: — It has been moved by the minister that the amendments be now read a first and second time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt that motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First and second reading of the amendments.

**The Speaker**: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

### Bill No. 194 — The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2019

**Hon. Ms. Carr**: — I move that the bill now be read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker**: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 194 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

**The Speaker**: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

**Clerk**: — Third reading of this bill.

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison**: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committees, both this afternoon and this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker**: — It has been moved that the Assembly adjourn. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:11.]

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