



No. 39

VOTES and PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Petitions of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan were presented and laid upon the Table by the following members: Weekes, Vermette, Beck, and Sproule.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The minister, in each case, having acquainted the Assembly that His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of the bills, recommends them to the consideration of the Assembly, the following bills were introduced, read the first time, and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting:

Bill No. 209 — The Saskatchewan Chemical Fertilizer Incentive Act

(Hon. Mr. Harrison)

Bill No. 210 — The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2020

(Hon. Ms. Harpauer)

Bill No. 211 — The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2020

(Hon. Ms. Harpauer)

Bill No. 212 — The Police Amendment Act, 2020

(Hon. Mr. Morgan)

The following bill was introduced, read the first time, and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting:

Bill No. 621 — The Workers' Compensation (COVID-19) Amendment Act

(Mr. Forbes)

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CROWN AND CENTRAL AGENCIES

The following bill was reported without amendment and consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bills having been waived, by leave of the Assembly, it was read the third time and passed:

Bill No. 180 — The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations – Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER (Question of Privilege)

Today, at 10:56 a.m., I received a letter from the government House leader (Hon. Mr. Harrison) in which he raised a question of privilege asserting that the Member from Saskatoon Nutana (Ms. Sproule) was attempting to influence the Speaker's decision on a priority of debate motion request by publicly releasing the letter of that request prior to the Speaker addressing the matter in the Assembly.

I have reviewed the case and will now rule on the case brought forward by the government House leader.

The first matter I will address is the release of the priority of debate request to the public via social media yesterday, June 16, 2020. The request was received at my office at 10:51 a.m. It was subsequently put in the public domain at approximately 11:43 a.m., well before the start of the daily sitting on June 16. The case is an internal matter for the consideration of the Speaker, and its public release is highly improper both as a matter of order and as an interference in the Speaker's consideration of the matter.

The member's public release of this letter is analogous to what is stated on page 265 in the 24th edition of Erskine May, "... it would be a contempt, when Members are acting in a judicial or quasi-judicial capacity... to attempt, by letters, anonymous or other, to influence them in the discharge of their duties."

Erskine May more directly states, "Conduct not amounting to a direct attempt improperly to influence Members in the discharge of their duties *but* having a tendency to impair their independence in the future performance of their duty may be treated as a contempt." It is my conclusion that the release of the letter into the public domain was meant to pressure the Speaker into making a decision favourable to the member.

Moreover, the member's letter was phrased in such a way as to imply that part of the Speaker's decision is based on the merit of a public policy decision. The member is well aware that the Speaker's view of a public policy matter is irrelevant and is never a factor in a decision. The member is fully aware that the Speaker bases decisions on the provisions of the rule and not whether he shares the public policy view of the member. This, in conjunction with the release of letter to the public, injected the Speaker into a public policy debate which is inappropriate.

I find that the actions of the opposition House leader amounted to an attempt to influence, by public pressure, the Speaker's decision to rule on the priority of debate request. The actions also amounted to an attempt to improperly influence the Speaker in making a decision based on the importance of the public policy issue rather than the terms of the standing order.

For these reasons I find that the government House leader has established a prima facie case for the matter to be considered as a question of privilege by the Assembly.

Moved by the Hon. Mr. Harrison:

That the actions of the Member for Saskatoon Nutana on June 16, 2020 constitutes a breach of privilege of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan by attempting to influence a ruling of the Speaker; and further

That the Member for Saskatoon Nutana remove all offending social media posts and apologize to the Speaker and Assembly for her actions.

A debate arising and the question being put, it was agreed to.

The Member from Saskatoon Nutana apologized and agreed to remove the social media posts.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Harrison:

Ordered, That this Assembly do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 2:39 p.m. until Thursday at 1:30 p.m.

Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker

NOTICE OF WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The following questions were given notice on day no. 37 and are to be answered by day no. 42:

Question no. 110 (Ms. Sproule):

To the Minister of Environment, how many tickets were issued for angling without a license in the southern zone on May 4, 2019?

Question no. 111 (Ms. Sproule):

To the Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, according to WCB (Workers' Compensation Board) claims data, (a) how many days in total has the health sector (code G22) lost in each of the last five years due to injury claims, (b) how many days in total have been lost this year due to COVID-19 related injuries, (c) how many injury claims in total have been filed this year due to COVID-19, (d) how many injury claims in total have been resulted in days lost this year due to COVID-19, (e) how many workplace deaths in total have occurred this year due to COVID-19, (f) how many days has the health sector (code G22) lost this year due to COVID-19 related injuries, (g) how many days has the retail sector (codes C32/33/41) lost this year due to COVID-19 related injuries, (h) how many days has the construction sector (codes B11/12/13) lost this year due to COVID-19 related injuries, (i) how many days has the transportation sector (code T42) lost this year due to COVID-19 related injuries, and (j) how many days has the community and social services sector (codes S21) lost this year due to COVID-19 related injuries?

NOTICE OF PRIORITY ITEMS

No. 1 (Opposition)

ADJOURNED DEBATES

On the proposed motion of Mr. Vermette:

That Bill No. 618 — The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act, 2019 be now read a second time.

(Ms. Chartier)
To be voted

No. 2 (Government)

Not submitted — Item of business determined pursuant to rule 24(4).