



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

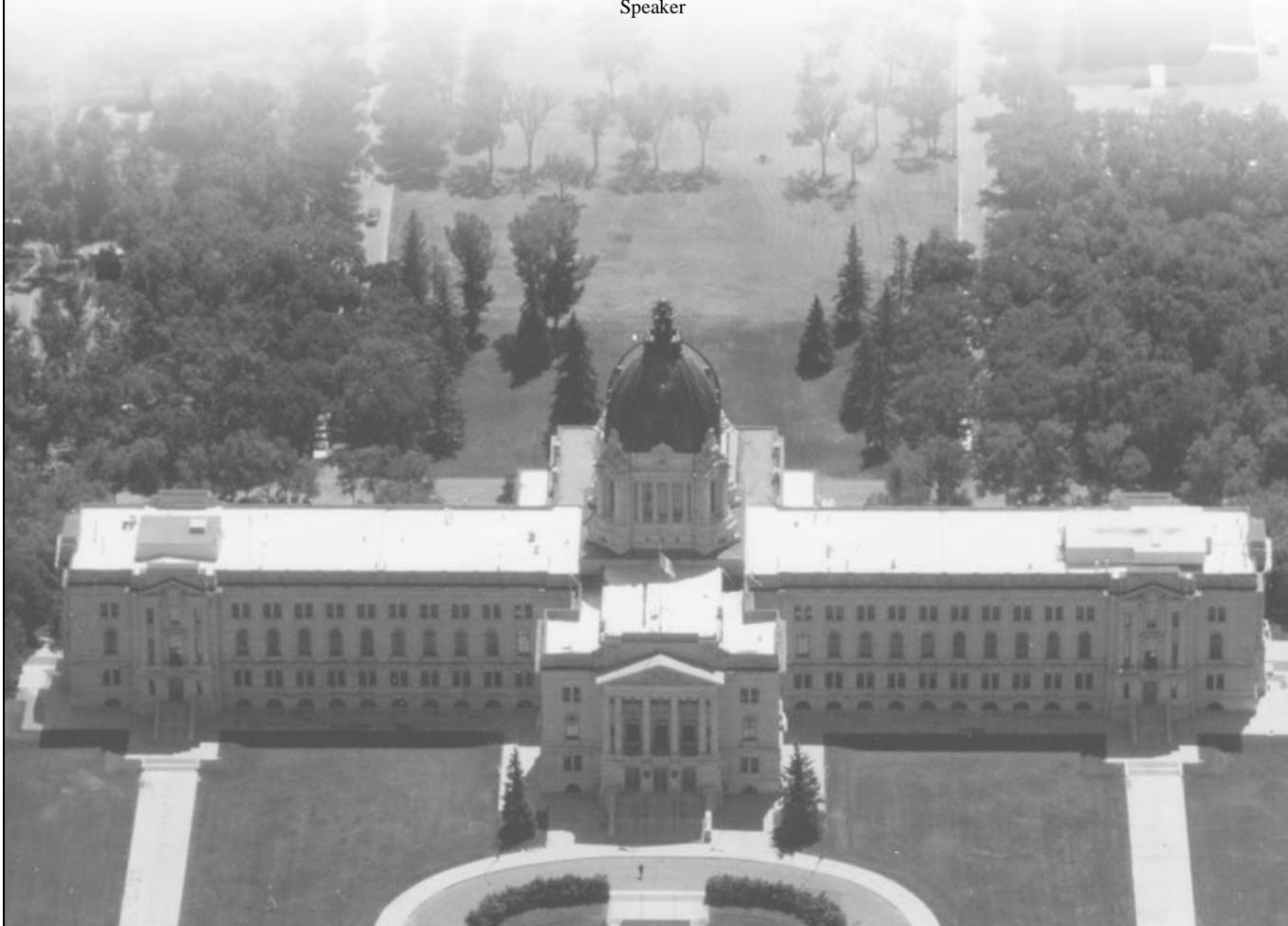
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

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authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd Session — 29th Legislature

Lieutenant Governor — His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, S.O.M., M.S.M.

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes

Premier — Hon. Scott Moe

Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)

Bradshaw, Hon. Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)

Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)

Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

Cockrill, Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)

Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

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Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)

Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)

Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)

Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)

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Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)

Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)

Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)

Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (SP)

Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

McLeod, Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)

McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

Meili, Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

Meyers, Derek — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)

Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)

Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)

Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP)

Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

Stewart, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Independent (Ind.) — 1

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Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for leave to make a statement regarding the National Day of Mourning for workers killed, injured, or having suffered illnesses in the workplace.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

COMMEMORATIVE STATEMENTS

National Day of Mourning

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in recognition of the National Day of Mourning for workers killed, injured, or who have suffered illness due to workplace-related hazards. On behalf of the government, I offer our deepest condolences.

Our thoughts, Mr. Speaker, are with the families, friends, and colleagues who are mourning the tragic loss of a loved one. We are also thinking of those who have experienced workplace injuries or illnesses. Every illness or injury, every life lost, forever changes the lives of families, friends, communities, and colleagues.

In recognition of the day, the flags of the legislature will fly at half-mast, as they will at many other buildings throughout the province and across Canada. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the legislature, as well as people throughout the province, find their own way to recognize the Day of Mourning. That can be done by observing a moment of silence, lighting a candle, or attending a vigil.

The most important thing each of us can do honour those we have lost, and those who continue to be impacted by an illness or injury, is to renew our personal commitment to safety and to take action. Mr. Speaker, we can all take steps to protect ourselves and one another at work, at home, and in our communities. Health and safety should be top of mind no matter where we are or what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, our province remains committed to Mission: Zero, and we maintain the only acceptable number of injuries, illness, and fatalities is none.

In 2021 the Workers' Compensation Board accepted 31 claims for workplace-related deaths in our province. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members rise while I read the names of those who have lost their lives.

In 2021 the following workers lost their lives to workplace injury

or illness:

Delbert Hannah	Kerry Veld
James Kendrick	Gloria Ulmer
William Hubbard	Judson Ringer
Carrie Therrien	Ferdinand Justik
Chad Scott	Chaminda Keerthige
Usman Dawood	Ken Wiens
William Clarke	Charles Shimsha
John Cannon	Richard Painchaud

Mr. Speaker, I will now ask the member opposite to assist in reading the names.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: —

Ken Lee	Jesse Robinson
Brian Longmire	Robert Hawker
Henry Czuchro	Lawrence Feil
Karen Paton	Gurjeet Singh
Gavin Zima	Larry Pangborn
David Rosentreter	David Duffy
Jay Pierson	Gerald Boyd
Wade Dieno	

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not included in this list are those individuals who have lost their lives working on Saskatchewan farms and ranches this year. Mr. Speaker, I would now ask that we observe a moment of silence to commemorate the Day of Mourning and to honour the 31 lives that have been lost.

[The Assembly observed a moment of silence.]

The Speaker: — Thank you, members. Please take your seat.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The Premier has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the members of this Assembly, my colleagues, for granting leave for four introductions here today. I'll begin with the first two, and I'd like to extend a warm welcome to those two special guests.

One actually isn't here today, but I do want to speak about and make note of, Mr. Speaker. But first is Wendy Milne and her husband, Rob Milne, who have joined us here today. I also want to acknowledge, who was unable to join us, was Sylvie O'Callaghan.

Mr. Speaker, Sylvie and Wendy are two of the fantastic employees that have worked in the Premier's Correspondence Unit or PCU as it is often called. And I want to thank both Wendy and Sylvie for their decades of service to the people of Saskatchewan, and I want to offer them congratulations on their retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Sylvie has served 14 years as the assistant to the director. Her writing ability and her eye for detail while serving under Premiers Devine, Wall, and most recently myself is certainly appreciated.

And, Mr. Speaker, Wendy who has joined us here today has served the people of this province for 32 years now. She served as a systems director. She administered a comprehensive database which tracked all correspondence that has been received by the Office of the Premier. Throughout her career, she has served under five premiers, beginning with Premier Devine and then on to Premier Romanow, Premier Calvert, Premier Wall, and most recently myself. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd just say that her service to the people of Saskatchewan has been nothing short of exemplary.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, on these first two guests, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I would ask all members of this House to join me in thanking both Sylvie and Wendy for a job extremely well done and wish them the very best in their retirement.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I have two other introductions. The first is a child of some childhood friends of mine, Mr. Speaker. I grew up with this individual's parents. We went to grade school together. I often say I shepherded them, both of them, through grade school, actually university as well. And they were later married. And their eldest child is Hannah Miller with us today. Hannah is a newly graduated nurse, an RN [registered nurse], Mr. Speaker, and she's working at Hope's Home in Prince Albert and has moved to Prince Albert and is loving the community and her job very much.

Hannah has been a lifelong friend of the individual sitting to her right, Mr. Speaker, who is my daughter, Taryn Moe, also returning to the province after her six years of training, Mr. Speaker, to work as a speech pathologist with the Saskatchewan Health Authority in the community of Prince Albert. So welcome home, Taryn. And to both of you, welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Request leave for an extended introduction, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this honourable Assembly some very special guests that have joined us today in your gallery. Please welcome His Excellency Bořek Lizec, ambassador of the Czech Republic, Mr. Rudolph Sternadel, honorary consul designate of the Czech Republic in Saskatchewan. This is the ambassador's first visit to our province since his appointment in September 2019. And, Mr. Speaker, he will get to see a bit of it while visiting both Regina and Saskatoon, and we offer the usual apologies for our backward spring weather.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Lizec is a career diplomat who has served his country in various positions within the Czech Republic and in the United States at the consulate general in Chicago and the permanent mission to the United Nations in New York.

Mr. Speaker, Canada is home to the second-largest Czech diaspora after the United States, and more than 100,000 Canadians are of full or partial Czech descent. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the first Czech immigrants who came to Canada in 1884 settled in Kolin, Saskatchewan, a community that they named.

Mr. Speaker, both of our countries share values related to security, free trade, and the promotion of democracy. We've worked well together on many bilateral and multilateral assignments, most notably the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, we also work well together as trading partners, with our province supplying the majority of the lentils and swine imported by the Czech Republic. In 2021 our imports from Czech Republic included iron, steel wire, voltage bars and panels, and bars and rods.

Since 2017 the University of Saskatchewan has been partnering with their colleagues at Masaryk University, Palacký University, the Crop Research Institute and the Institute of Animal Science on the publication of joint research in the areas of soil and plant science, dairy, and animal science. And, Mr. Speaker, we are optimistic that our trade relationship will grow further under the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, CETA.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, with the Czech Republic being the country with the highest beer consumption per capita in the world and Saskatchewan being a major producer of malting barley, there is potential for a delightful and collegial trading partnership.

And what goes better with beer, Mr. Speaker, than hockey? The people of Saskatchewan and the people of Czech Republic share a love of hockey, and we're proud to say that our very own Regina-born Brett Flemming who was drafted by the Washington Capitals in 2009 played in the Czech Republic from 2016 to 2019.

Mr. Speaker, for all these reasons and more, I welcome Ambassador Lizec and Mr. Sternadel here today. We are honoured to have them with us, and I ask all members of this

honourable Assembly to join me in welcoming our distinguished guests to Saskatchewan's legislature and to our province. Dobrý den.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I'd like to join with the Premier in thanking Wendy and Sylvie for their service to the people of Saskatchewan. I can only imagine, with the volume of correspondence that has come across your desk, how much you have been a witness to the joys and sorrows, the concerns and celebration of the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you for your service, and we wish you the best in your retirement.

I'd also like to join in welcoming Hannah and Taryn to their legislature. And wishing them the best as they both embark on careers in the health services, so important and so needed right now. Thank you for being here today and for the work that you do.

And I want to join the minister in welcoming Ambassador Lizec with a warm dobrý den and vítáme vás. Welcome to the Saskatchewan legislature to you and to Mr. Sternadel and your team. It's obviously an extremely important connection between ourselves and the Czech Republic.

I was just reflecting a little bit, one of my best friends, Paul Rowe, is from Moose Jaw, but he married a girl, Lenka Seniglova from Brno, a figure skater. And you know, Paul used to beat me at chess all the time and I was happy he finally found his Czech mate. Sorry, guys. Always have to bring one of the dad jokes at least, at least every week.

But as we talk about, as the minister so clearly stated, the connections in culture, the connections in trade, they are so important at any time but especially at a time like this when we're seeing conflict in Europe, when it's so important that we make it clear that we have friendships and that we want to build on those friendships, rather than see greater division. So thank you, děkuji. I hope you have a very good visit. I ask all members to join me in welcoming all of these folks to the legislature today.

[10:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce a group of students from Moose Jaw in the west gallery today. We have 17 grade 12 students from Peacock Collegiate. Give us a wave there.

They are accompanied by their teacher, Carrie Kiefer, and chaperone Roxanna Gadd-Frey. I am very much looking forward to meeting with that group and fielding their tough questions after question period today. And I would like all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I'd like to recognize and welcome a group of entrepreneurs and leaders from this province seated in your gallery.

Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are Jolene and Eddy de Vries, who own and operate, I believe, two fitness facilities in Esterhazy and in Yorkton and hopefully in Moosomin soon, who've made the journey here today. And along with them is Aubrey Shpaiuk, who operates Main Street Strength & Conditioning in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan and does such good work with her clients and with her partners in the health care sector in regards to helping people in Saskatchewan stay healthy and get healthy.

Seated next to her is Jake Sinclair, who also owns and operates an Anytime Fitness facility here in the Queen City, Mr. Speaker. And right there on the end is Jon Shiplack, coincidentally a friend of my family but here in his capacity as incoming Chair of the Kinesiology Association of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

These five individuals do so much work, not just in regards to the economic activity they and their businesses and their staff generate and the services that they provide to their communities, but such good work in preventing additional burdens on our health care system here in Saskatchewan. They're committed to keeping Saskatchewan people healthy in mind and in body, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming them here to this, their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Culture.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join with the member opposite and welcome these fine young entrepreneurs to the Legislative Assembly. You make a real difference to our province, and thank you so much. I know we had the opportunity to meet with the organization WESK [Women Entrepreneurs Saskatchewan] the other day. We will be again meeting with them this evening. And so we do appreciate everything you do to make Saskatchewan a better place to live. Thank you so much.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my absolute

pleasure to introduce three individuals seated in your gallery. We have, from left to right, Teresa Innis, who is the manager of essential services at the Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre and acting director filling in for Michael Parker, Mr. Speaker. Beside her is Emile Gariepy. He is the paramedic manager and oversees the overdose prevention site at the Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre, Mr. Speaker. And then last but certainly not least, seated beside him is Kayla DeMong, who recently became executive director of Prairie Harm Reduction in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

We know that Prairie Harm Reduction of course needs no introduction. They began the first safe consumption site in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and they provide absolutely essential wraparound supports in Saskatoon's core. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, they have perhaps done the most in this entire province to shine a light on the need for evidence-based approaches to addiction, to harm reduction, Mr. Speaker.

They are absolutely beloved in the community. They have an absolutely incredible merch line that I would like to plug here, Mr. Speaker. I'm a proud owner of many of their beach towels and clothing items. And of course this is the fundraising they do because they don't get enough government support, Mr. Speaker, so they have to turn to this kind of fundraiser. And they've been incredibly innovative, supporting local artists as part of that initiative, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre, they've begun the first consumption site here in Regina, but safe consumption is really a small part of what they do. Much like Prairie Harm Reduction, they provide wraparound services, housing, health teams. You know, Prairie Harm Reduction has psych nurses on staff; Nēwo-Yōtina has paramedics.

This is all part of a holistic approach to addiction, so it's not just about having folks come in to be supported and to be safe while they're using. It's about connecting them to a better life, connecting them to supports and services and meeting them where they're at.

So I'm just so happy to welcome them here to this, their legislature, and I'd ask all members to join me in acknowledging the absolutely essential work that they're doing in our communities, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join the member opposite in introducing and welcoming the guests from the Regina Friendship Centre and Prairie Harm Reduction and to thank them for being here today to view the proceedings in the Chamber, and also to thank them for the good work that they do in both of the cities of Saskatoon and Regina, supporting people and those struggling with addictions. So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming the guests to their Assembly today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the minister and my colleague on this side of the House to welcome our guests from Saskatoon harm reduction. And I'd like to

welcome those from the Regina Friendship Centre for the great work you do. And I don't think I could articulate as . . . great work and the thanks that you deserve and your team deserve, that my colleague has expressed. So I want to welcome you to your legislature. Please continue to fight and work on behalf of people who need the services that you provide. Thank you so much. Welcome to your Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Meyers: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And in the west gallery I want to welcome 48 students from Henry Janzen School. Now this marks my very-first-ever school visit as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], so thank you very much for making my day. They're joined here by Jolene Smith, Carrie Yasinowski, and interpreter Leanna Peppler. And I just want to say to the young person that is hearing impaired up there, you're probably the luckiest person in this room today. You don't have to listen to some of the bickering going on.

But it also says here that they are grade 10 students. Now Henry Janzen doesn't go to grade 10, but because of the fine education they're receiving from their teachers and the fine students that they are, Mr. Speaker, I bet you that they're two years ahead already, living in Walsh Acres. So thank you very much for coming, and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today, as I have most days throughout this session, to petition on behalf of concerned residents in northeast Saskatchewan and east central Saskatchewan and really all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the deplorable conditions of Highway 9.

Mr. Speaker. I know the conditions are described as dangerous and putting lives on the line every day for those that are utilizing this vital artery in this very important part of the province. It's critical to workers and to farms and to businesses and to residents and communities, and of course to those that are connecting with us as tourists and others through this beautiful part of the province. We have folks that are here in the Assembly today that drove that road, that highway today and described just the horribly inadequate condition that it's in and the risk that it poses anyone that's on it.

The petition reads as follows:

We, in the petition that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately address the inadequate condition of Highway 9 by working with and listening to the concerns of municipalities, residents, and industry.

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Hudson Bay and Weekes. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this morning to present a petition again calling on the Sask Party government to provide adequate funding to our children's classrooms. Of course, we've been presenting these petitions for years, Mr. Speaker, because the underfunding of our children's classrooms has gone on for years. I know this year there was some hope in the most recent provincial budget that we would see that rectified, given the need and the impact of the pandemic on our children's classrooms. Unfortunately the funding provided amounted to a cut, and we will continue to see more cutbacks as boards submit their budgets over the coming months, Mr. Speaker.

Those who signed the petition want us to know that after years of underfunding, school divisions have nowhere left to cut that will not impact and continue to impact student learning. And the Sask Party's failure to invest in our classrooms is having serious consequences today, Mr. Speaker, and will continue, unfortunately, into the future unless this is rectified.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to immediately fix the crisis in our classrooms by providing stable and adequate funding for public education in Saskatchewan.

Those who have signed the petition today reside in Regina. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today once again to present our petition calling for pay equity legislation in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we've presented this petition many times before over the last year and a half, and so I'll read a few of the points and speak a bit about why this is so important and why we keep getting up and talking about this issue.

The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan is one of only four provinces that does not have pay equity legislation; that Saskatchewan has one of the highest gender wage gaps in Canada at nearly \$5 an hour, the difference between what women in this province make on average compared to what men make; and that the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has recommended proactive and comprehensive pay equity legislation over 25 years ago, which has still not been pursued to date by the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this legislation will have a significant impact on so many working women in our province. I call on the government to listen to the people who have signed this petition, the hundreds of people who have signed this petition across Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to introduce pay equity legislation.

Mr. Speaker, today the petition has been signed by constituents of mine from Saskatoon University. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

International Day of Mourning

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, every year since 1985, the members of this Assembly have marked April 28th as the International Day of Mourning for workers injured or killed on the job. It's an important time to remember those workers who have lost their lives, but also a time to remind us as legislators to do everything in our power to make Saskatchewan a province where there are no longer any work-related deaths or injuries.

A private member's bill in the House of Commons made April 28th the official Day of Mourning across Canada in 1991. This will mark the 31st year that, as a nation, we have stood with workers across the world.

We know that here in Saskatchewan there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to make sure all our workers make it home safe at the end of each shift. Year over year, families continue to lose loved ones to workplace injuries, Mr. Speaker, and the numbers are even more alarming for young workers and inexperienced workers. It is for all families that have lost a loved one to workplace injury, and all those who have been hurt on the job or had a near miss, that makes it clear that we have so much more to do to reduce workplace injuries in every part of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing International Day of Mourning and to keep making progress to bring an end to work-related injuries and deaths in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Women Entrepreneurs Saskatchewan

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have many great groups that come through these halls and spend time educating us about their initiatives. I would like to give special mention to one of those that attended on Tuesday: Women Entrepreneurs Saskatchewan, or WESK. It was great to hear from this part of the business sector.

[10:30]

Mr. Speaker, my home community continues to see women excel in the business sector. We have female doctors, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers, and dozens of other small businesses owned and operated by women of all ages, including my better half.

You'll often hear that it takes ambition, drive, and a real winning idea to get ahead in business. But, Mr. Speaker, what you will also hear is that you need support and guidance from other like-minded professionals, and that is what WESK provides female entrepreneurs from all corners of Saskatchewan. WESK works to support and elevate women-owned businesses across the province. They host galas, award ceremonies, and committees that help provide important supports to women seeking to create a business here in the province.

Mr. Speaker, we are incredibly proud of what WESK does, and their support for businesses in this province. Getting more people involved in this economy is what is going to keep Saskatchewan thriving into the future. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to personally thank WESK for the work they do and to let them know that we are very excited for more female-owned businesses here in the province. Thank you.

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

Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to recognize an organization in my constituency. The Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre is an incredible organization doing important work serving the very most vulnerable in the core of Regina. They support predominantly urban Indigenous people and families, providing services and programming that facilitate wholistic health, Mr. Speaker. They are one of a few organizations that don't ban anyone, no matter how that person presents. They welcome them with open hearts, understanding, support, and compassion. And they do this work with zero support from the province, having to rely on a patchwork of grants, donations, and city funding despite addressing some of the deepest challenges in our community.

The Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre board is entirely Indigenous-led and incorporates these perspectives in everything they do. They serve hundreds of unique clients and have worked hard to expand their services to include weekends, again without support from the province. Their facilities are so limited, and yet they achieve so much. They staff this facility with paramedics, reducing the strain on our front-line services. Usually an overdose will prompt fire, police, ambulance. With trained paramedics on staff, they can respond, address the situation, monitor the individual, and often send them on their way.

Since September they have seen 27 overdoses during opening hours and not one death, Mr. Speaker. With proper funding, think what more they could accomplish. Their work makes our communities safer. It saves money and it saves lives. I'd ask all members to join me in acknowledging their good work.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Moose Jaw Business Excellence Awards

Mr. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night for the first time in three years, more than 400 people gathered to celebrate excellence in the Moose Jaw business community. The 20th annual MJBEX [Moose Jaw Business Excellence] gala was a

sold-out affair at the Heritage Inn Hotel. Fifteen different awards were given out to various local organizations and companies. Twin View Livestock was named Business of the Year and was also the recipient of the Agricultural & Agri-Business Excellence Award.

The winners in each of the other categories included memoryKPR for Business Innovation; Carly Jaye Art for Community Involvement; Leeville Construction in the Environmental Steward category. Wakamow Valley Authority won the Impact Award. Cranberry Collective Boutique took home the trophy for Job Creation. Nebulus Entertainment won the Marketing Award. The New Business Award, which I was honoured to present, went to Modern Mattress. Gina Jewelry International received the Newcomer Entrepreneur Award. Seaborn Insurance was honoured with the Pillar of the Community Award. Bootleg Barbers was recognized for excellence in customer service; MooseMovers was named Young Entrepreneur of the year. The People's Choice Award went to Rosie's on River Street, and Angela Sereda was named Moose Jaw's Business Leader of the Year.

I ask my fellow members to join me in congratulating all the nominees and the winners for their excellence and for their contributions to the Moose Jaw business community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Arm River.

Treaty Boundary Signs Support Education and Reconciliation

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you've ever taken a drive down the No. 11 Highway between Regina and Saskatoon, you'll know that it's lined with many roadside signs. Arguably, Mr. Speaker, the most significant sign along this much-travelled stretch of road is preparing to take its place.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan, in partnership with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, are working together to mark the boundary between Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territory. The treaty boundary signage will be located along Highway 11 between Regina and Saskatoon in the heart of the Arm River constituency in the Bladworth-Davidson area. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan will be the first province in Canadian history to officially mark treaty boundaries along major highways.

Mr. Speaker, the boundary signage is an additional resource to support treaty education and reconciliation in this province. Mr. Speaker, these treaty boundary signs will build on our government's previous work with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner to ensure treaty education is mandatory for all Saskatchewan students.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways will be coordinating the production and installation of these signs, with a public unveiling and ceremony planned for later in 2022. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing this very important project for our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Darke Hall Reopening

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about the reopening of Darke Hall here in Regina. Darke Hall first opened in 1929 with a cost of approximately \$125,000. Benefactor F.N. Darke's vision to build a temple to the arts and a centre for cultural activity has become prized for its acoustically sound and visually stunning interior.

Planning and fundraising for this latest restoration, at a cost of around 19 million, began as part of the U of R [University of Regina] College Avenue campus renewal project in 2011. Many of the building's original features remain intact, and both the glasswork and floor has been restored and all building systems have been upgraded. The University of Regina officially reopened Darke Hall on Thursday, April 21st of this year.

Upon the reopening, I attended a tour of the new hall with development officer Darla McWilliams as our guide. Mr. Speaker, for me many memories, very good memories from decades past were brought back. I have personally organized several cultural programs held at Darke Hall, and I'm so excited to see it reopening. At the conclusion of the tour I had the pleasure of speaking with Darke Hall manager and curator, Dawn Bergstrom.

I would like to take this time to recognize all involved in the revitalization and reopening of Darke Hall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Saskatchewan Economy Is Back on Track

Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It feels like every week a member on this side of the House gets to rise and talk about more good economic news for our province. Mr. Speaker, this week is no exception.

Stats Canada recently released retail trade numbers for the month of February, and compared to January 2022, the value of retail trade in Saskatchewan increased by 2.4 per cent, the third-highest increase among the provinces and well above the national average of just 0.1 per cent. Compared to February 2021, the increase was even more significant — 13 per cent, highest among the provinces, and again well above the national average of 7.4 per cent. And this is just the latest good economic news, Mr. Speaker.

A few weeks ago we saw that Saskatchewan was leading the nation in both wholesale trade and manufacturing sales, both month to month and year over year for the month of February 2022. The labour force survey for March 2022 showed that Saskatchewan has the second-lowest unemployment rate in the country at 5 per cent, and 27,700 jobs were added compared to March 2021, a 5 per cent increase which was the second highest among the provinces.

There are other numbers I could mention, Mr. Speaker, but I think it's clear, at least to members on this side of this House, that Saskatchewan's economy is back on track. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Suicide Prevention Strategy

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saturday marks the one-year anniversary of this House unanimously passing Bill 601, *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act*, and I imagine everyone in this House remembers that day. It was a special moment, one I'd never seen before — a unanimous vote, a standing ovation for the member from Cumberland, members crossing the aisle to shake his hand in praise for his advocacy, praise for the bill from the minister. And the law, very clear: six months to consult and plenty of time to come up with that real suicide prevention strategy.

But now we learn that all of those fine sentiments were a hoax, a sham. None of that work has been done because this government never planned to do the work. To the Premier: did you know, when you stood up and voted on that bill that day, did you know that your government had no intention of following through on protecting Saskatchewan families?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And this is an opportunity for me to once again thank the member for Cumberland for his tireless efforts, not only with respect to the bill, but with respect to the cause that is important and far beyond politics, politics of this floor or this province, Mr. Speaker. The important conversation and topic of suicide, which has impacted suicide, mental health, all too often addictions — I think it's had, in fairness, an impact on virtually every family in this Assembly and quite likely every family in this province, Mr. Speaker.

The bill that was supported unanimously in this House, introduced by the member from Cumberland last year, Mr. Speaker, most certainly is a bill that I have looked at closely myself. I know many members on this side of the House have looked at to ensure that this government is delivering on each of the items that are in that bill, Mr. Speaker.

And I would just say that with respect to the strategy, Mr. Speaker, a year previous to that bill, the Pillars for Life strategy was introduced by this government, funded by this government, again funded in this most recent budget, Mr. Speaker. And the bill and the Pillars for Life strategy, Mr. Speaker, work in conjunction with one another. And that was indicated by the minister in his third reading speech, Mr. Speaker. They are not exclusive or one replaces the other; they work in conjunction, Mr. Speaker. The Pillars for Life is the strategy. It is recognized by the Mental Health Commission of Canada as a strategy, a positive strategy in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And what the bill does — and again I thank the member for Cumberland for introducing it and I thank all members for supporting it — is it ensures that that strategy transcends any government that might sit on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, I think indicating that this conversation is far beyond politics, Mr. Speaker. This is hard work that . . . Much has been done. Much more has to be done in the future, Mr. Speaker, regardless of

which party might sit on this side of the House.

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

Mr. Meili: — Not one consultation. Not one new action. The law has simply not been followed, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Cumberland has been standing day after day honouring the losses of the Ratt family, the Cook, Roberts, Ball families, and many more. And the minister has sanctimoniously stood and pretended that this government was not deliberately betraying the unanimous wishes of this House. Because that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what this is: a betrayal, a straight-up betrayal of every member in this House and of every family struggling with the after-effects and the risk of suicide. That's what this is, Mr. Speaker.

And the Premier's been so offended by his "I don't care" comments on climate change being used to highlight the other ways in which he doesn't care. But with a disgraceful display such as this, what else could families conclude? What else could they believe when they see those folks who are mourning loved ones? What other conclusion could they come to, except that when it comes to suicide, that when it comes to mental health, especially in Indigenous communities, this Premier and this government simply don't care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, let me just first say that I won't be addressing any of the comments in the aforementioned question. And I'm disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition would splice comments to politicize a conversation, Mr. Speaker, and initiatives that are important to all Saskatchewan residents.

Mr. Speaker, the conversation and the action that this government is taking with respect to suicide has an impact on virtually . . . if not every family across this province, Mr. Speaker. The work that is being conducted through, yes, the Pillars for Life strategy, Mr. Speaker, is informing the ultimate action of the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions did travel — I travelled as well with him — to the community of Pinehouse where we looked at, where the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions looked at, the Muskwa Lake project, Mr. Speaker, which does have a research portion to that project in the wellness camp that is providing treatment services to people in that region of our province, Mr. Speaker.

That was an initiative that was informed by the Pillars for Life or an action item due to the Pillars for Life strategy that the government was involved in funding, Mr. Speaker. It's one example of many, Mr. Speaker. And that Pillars for Life strategy then is enshrined in legislation, due to the efforts and initiatives of the member from Cumberland.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The plan that this Premier calls a strategy is clearly not one and never has been. Experts told this government that this plan was "so vague as to

be meaningless."

That's why, long after that plan was introduced, Tristen Durocher and the Walking with Our Angels group made the trek — 635 kilometres to the legislative grounds — to protest this government's deliberate decision to not pass the first two versions of the member from Cumberland's bill. Tristen fasted for 44 days just outside this building and the Premier's only response was to take him to court. The only message was, get off my lawn, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

And now we learn that this Premier had no intention of being true to this legislation, no intention of being true to his word. These are not the actions of a man who cares. He knows this plan is inadequate. He knows this strategy is needed. Will the Premier make this right? Will he change course? Will he commit today to actually doing the work that was passed in that legislation? And this time will he do it without his fingers crossed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Again, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to address the politicization of this issue, this most important issue to so many people across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I looked closely at the bill. I have it here in front of me. A number of initiatives: for example, working with non-governmental organizations, relative entities, with . . . Mr. Speaker, and I would point to the work that was done that resulted in a letter of commitment with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations], with the federal government and the provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier the Muskwa Lake project that was taking part not only in treatment in their wellness camp there but also taking part in further research and evidence-based practices, Mr. Speaker, the Roots of Hope program. Also evidence-based research was utilized in the formation of that program, research that was conducted by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, Mr. Speaker. And the Mental Health Commission of Canada actually did write a letter on May the 22nd of '20, too, after the introduction of our Pillars for Life strategy, Mr. Speaker. And I would quote from it:

On behalf of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, I wish to congratulate you and your government on the recently released suicide prevention plan titled *Pillars for Life: The Saskatchewan Suicide Prevention Plan*. At the outset, MHCC is pleased to see that the Ministry of Health has taken a concerted effort to increase suicide prevention capacity at the local level across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that initiative is now enshrined in legislation, again thanks to the member from Cumberland.

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

Support for Harm Reduction, Mental Health, and Addictions

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are in the midst

of an overdose crisis in Saskatchewan, one that is touching every corner of this province. We lost a record 464 people to overdose in this province in 2021, up a shocking third from the year previous. These are 100 per cent preventable deaths.

We know one of the most effective ways to save lives is to provide a safe space for those struggling with addiction while connecting them to wraparound services. Earlier this week, the minister responsible could not provide a single reason why this government won't fund safe consumption sites. With a bit of time, can the minister now tell us, give us one good reason why not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say that all members in this Assembly take this issue very seriously in our communities across this province and constituencies right across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Our government continues to make record investments into the area of addictions, and that includes not only prevention and treatment but also harm reduction initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

With this year's budget commitment, we have now invested \$92 million specifically into mental health and addictions initiatives since 2018, Mr. Speaker. In this particular budget, that funding goes into a number of different areas, whether it's new addictions treatment spaces as announced first in the Throne Speech, to add an additional 150 treatment spaces across this province over the next three years. We have an initial commitment of \$2.1 million for those, Mr. Speaker. More funding for detox spaces, additional funding for programs such as the take-home naloxone program, and other supports for harm reduction initiatives across this province as we try to provide those initiatives, Mr. Speaker, to as many people as we can as broadly as we can across Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the question was about safe consumption, and once again the minister could not provide a reason because there is no good reason.

Mr. Speaker, enough with the spin. We're joined today by the very non-profits that are doing the heavy lifting in the government's absence. Prairie Harm Reduction and the Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre have been working tirelessly within our communities to support those struggling with addiction and to save lives. Their service delivery models are recognized in models across the country, and yet this minister can't get it together to fund them.

So to the minister: these folks are in the room. They are asking for your help. Will you commit today to funding their safe consumption sites and their overdose prevention sites, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the representatives from both of the organizations, from Prairie Harm Reduction and also from the friendship centre here in Regina, for the good work that they do at the grassroots level, Mr. Speaker. That work is appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to acknowledge that this government does fund harm reduction. We provide roughly, in this year's budget, \$3.8 million towards harm reduction initiatives. We do provide some funding to Prairie Harm Reduction, Mr. Speaker, and have for a number of years. The friendship centre of Regina is currently operating as an overdose prevention site, with a federal exemption until September of this year, Mr. Speaker. Both of these organizations we also support with a number of harm reduction supplies, whether it's the drug-checking strips that were recently launched this past year, Mr. Speaker, or take-home naloxone kits.

Mr. Speaker, we're looking at investing into other areas as well. Members will know that we're in the process of procuring a number of mass spectrometers, the drug-checking machines, as well, but also support organizations such as Prairie Harm Reduction and the friendship centre at Regina as we do take this issue very seriously. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the minister had an opportunity to show that he cared in this budget, to show that he valued human life. It's deeply disturbing that this government won't support these programs when they not only save taxpayer dollars but they save lives.

Every sector dealing with this crisis is in agreement, from the first responders who are first on the scene of an overdose to the health care providers who came to this legislature earlier this week. How is it that this government thinks that they're all wrong?

So to the minister: will you commit today to meeting with these harm reduction stakeholders who have travelled here to their legislature to discuss their urgent need for funding today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And yes, I will meet with the representatives for both organizations after question period this morning.

Mr. Speaker, what I would say is we are trying to do our best, as I said earlier, to provide supports to people across this province regardless of where they live. And we want to make sure that we're also trying to meet people where they are at. That's why we currently have 30 fixed and three mobile harm reduction sites across this province.

We're investing money into community wellness buses that will be operational a little bit later this year, Mr. Speaker. And we've invested into new harm reduction vans, both in the city of Regina but also in Prince Albert; invested in initiatives such as the rapid access to addictions medicine clinics in four different

communities in this province, Mr. Speaker.

We are committed to trying to meet people where they're at and to help them through harm reduction initiatives as part of our goal to help get people towards treatment and recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Sales Tax on Fitness Facilities

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A simple question for the minister: does this government recognize the health and mental health benefits of exercise and physical fitness? Yes or no?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course we do. There's lots of people that are active within our communities, whether those be people walking around enjoying our beautiful parks, hopefully when summer ever arrives in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. But not only that. We also enjoy our winter activities. There's lots of activities that we can be doing to keep up our physical and also our mental health, Mr. Speaker. We do support physical health, and we'll continue to support that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's great. Nearly 7,000 people, who have signed a petition online calling for this government to scrap the PST [provincial sales tax] on the fitness industry, agree with the minister. The minister knows that for every dollar spent in fitness and nutrition up front, it saves \$6 in health care down the line.

So, Mr. Speaker, if this government recognizes the health benefits of exercise and physical fitness, why have they kneecapped an industry struggling to get back on its feet? What is the rationale for slapping a 6 per cent sales tax on it? Why make exercise and fitness, a preventative measure that keeps people well and saves our health system millions, less accessible?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite is well aware, we only have three streams of revenue in this province, and that is through taxation, transfers from the federal government, and resource revenue. In the past, budgets have been far too reliant on resource revenue, and that revenue goes up and down quite dramatically in the last decade.

Mr. Speaker, we all agree, even though they voted against this budget, but we all agree that we need to substantively increase resources in health care, and somehow that needs to be paid for. Decisions on increasing taxation is never easy, Mr. Speaker. What we did was we applied tax where GST [goods and services tax] was in on admissions and memberships, Mr. Speaker. It's not an easy decision. It won't be implemented till later this year, which allows more months for recovery, Mr. Speaker. But that

was the basis of the decision.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Forty per cent of businesses in this industry here in Saskatchewan have closed their doors in the last couple years, and this is not slowing down. In the words of one of our guests:

Businesses are dealing with increasing food costs. Fuel costs are going up. Housing costs are going up. And it seems like just another thing that the government is burning citizens with.

Forty per cent of businesses, Mr. Speaker, and no sign that it's slowing down. These are lives. These are livelihoods. This is economic activity, physical and mental health. Mr. Speaker, will this government today commit to reversing this latest tax burden on an industry just getting back on its feet?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, it's very interesting these very businesses that the member says that she supports and worries about are the businesses that they wanted to shut down for more months than they were shut down previously, which was extremely damaging to these businesses.

What these businesses need is an environment that encourages growth and investment. And we believe that we are providing that, Mr. Speaker, and it shows with now close to \$14 billion worth of private sector investment commitment coming to this province. That is what these businesses need. They need workers coming to this province. They need those workers to have well-paying jobs. They need population growth that will mean more people going into gyms, more people going into restaurants, more people going into retail stores. The small businesses in this province need growth, Mr. Speaker. They need workers, and we are going to have that in spades as all of these commitments come to fruition.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's remarkable and yet it's all too familiar to see this minister stand up and tell small-business owners what they should be thinking, instead of talking to the people who are here in the gallery. And if she had, if she'd consulted, she might have heard that this was a bad idea. But just this week, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance herself said, "The consultation would be fairly easy to do . . ." And yet they didn't.

But if this government had consulted, they would know that forcing clients to leave and forcing more small businesses to close their doors was not on for this industry and is not on for people in Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, to the minister: will you commit today to meeting with these people who have travelled hours to be here to stand up for their industry? And will you commit to scrapping this fitness industry tax?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Well it's nice to know that the member opposite didn't cut and paste this one when she wants to quote me this time, but rather she just cut it short so that she could get the narrative she wants. Well if she wants to maybe explain her own words, where she said, "Taxes aren't leading to income . . . [security]." And then later — and I'm not cutting and pasting this — but later went on, "So, instead of giving me an \$850 tax cut, I'd rather contribute another \$850 . . ." in taxes. Does she still stand by that today?

The Speaker: — I'd just like to remind the members we're getting . . . both sides are getting close to saying things that's unparliamentary. You know, there's points of order and there's been a lot of discussion, so just be careful about your language. I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Surveillance in Legislative Building

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It appears Bill 70 protects the state more than the citizens. Have any government members, employees, or caucus staff ever employed mobile devices in government offices, offices of elected officials, or in the Legislative Assembly offices, or other devices to conduct surveillance?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is most certainly not to my knowledge; I believe not to anyone's knowledge on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

And this is, you know, an interesting question as I have talked to my fellow colleagues, the two members from Prince Albert as well as surrounding area, with respect to some of the activity that we're getting in our constituency offices is coming out of the constituency of Sask Rivers, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of these folks are saying they didn't actually vote for an independent member in this legislature, and they don't feel that they're being represented.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's time for the member from Sask Rivers to do in fairness what the member for Athabasca did when he quit his party, Mr. Speaker, was to resign, run in a by-election, ask the people in their constituency for their support once again so that they have the right to sit in this legislature on their behalf.

[11:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — What would be the ministerial or staff consequences for individuals knowingly conducting surveillance in the Legislative Assembly, deploying a hidden camera in an MLA's office in the building? Did the then Saskatchewan Party chief of staff and current special advisor to the Premier report to his caucus that he had hidden a camera in the former MLA for Weyburn-Big Muddy's office here in the Legislative Building? How could Bill 70 deal with this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I believe that the member is referencing

something that happened before she was elected, quite frankly. And so maybe I'm one of the few that has some corporate memory here. There was specific reasons that we won't go into the details on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but I am very interested in her answer to the Premier's question.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — What would be the consequences for individuals knowingly conducting surveillance in the Legislative Assembly without the knowledge of the Sergeant-at-Arms? It has happened in the building. How is the government going to deal with this with Bill 70? Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question, I've just been informed with someone with the corporate knowledge that this actually occurred upon the request of the MLA that the individual is referencing, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know the consequences. I don't know the history behind this, Mr. Speaker. But what I do know, what I do know is there are a number of constituents in the constituency of Sask Rivers that would like the opportunity to vote in a by-election, either for that member or one of the members of the other party, Mr. Speaker. We hear about it. Area MLAs hear about it.

And I think the real question on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker: is the member from Saskatchewan Rivers going to do the honourable thing like the member from Cumberland did . . . no, pardon me, the previous member for Athabasca? When he resigned from his party, Mr. Speaker, he resigned his seat. He ran in a by-election, Mr. Speaker, and he gave the constituents that he wanted to represent the opportunity to voice whether or not they wanted that individual here.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask again, what would the consequences for individuals knowingly conducting surveillance in the Legislative Assembly without the knowledge of the Sergeant-at-Arms? What are the consequences and how is the government going to deal with it related to Bill 70? Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the member of the Legislative Assembly themselves put that equipment in their office, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what the consequences would be on that member, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask my question again, Mr. Speaker. Is the member from Saskatchewan Rivers going to give her constituents the opportunity for a voice to have who they want to represent them in this Assembly?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of some signed affidavits from the former MLAs regarding the private surveillance on the twenty-fourth Legislative Assembly. And I would like to table them, please. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — As I said, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure there was a question in that last statement. But the people from Saskatchewan Rivers have a question, Mr. Speaker. And that question is, when is the by-election that they can vote in going to happen?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — State your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During question period, the Leader of the Opposition made a number of statements that were problematic. Contrary to rule no. 47(2) with regard to unparliamentary language, he accused the Premier of engaging in a hoax or sham. Mr. Speaker, the inference that's drawn from that is simply something that's unacceptable, and I would ask for a ruling from you, Mr. Speaker, that he withdraw and apologize with regard to that remark.

He also later on during question period directed the Premier to go ahead with certain actions "without [having] his fingers crossed," clearly an inference that he is anticipating . . . or wanting the Premier to be truthful or to not tell a lie . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker, something totally unacceptable, certainly contrary to what the rules of parliamentary procedure are in this House. And, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition should withdraw and apologize with regard to the remarks made in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a point of order. During question period, Mr. Speaker, the Premier accused the Leader of the Opposition of splicing his remarks, which did not occur. This is inaccurate and an accusation of dishonesty and is clearly unparliamentary. We ask that the Premier withdraw and apologize. And in relation to the minister's point of order, I ask that you review the record. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — With respect to my remarks, I would withdraw and apologize.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to those remarks, I also withdraw and apologize.

The Speaker: — Thank you very much.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report that it has considered certain estimates and to present its third report. I move:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Human Services be now concurred in.

Thank you.

The Speaker: — The motion by the Chair of the Standing Committee on House Services reads:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mental Health and Addictions in Saskatchewan

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to obviously be moving a motion before I conclude my comments on this Bill 601 that was very important to many families.

You know, thinking about a crisis we have going on, and I know our northern mayors, our First Nations leaders, our Métis leaders, boards of education, many of our municipal leaders — whether they're in the South, the North, all over this good province — have expressed concern about when it comes to mental health, addictions, and suicide.

And today we have a chance to maybe do some good work, and we'll see where it goes. And I'm still having hope. And you know, I've been asking people for prayers, and I'll get into a little bit about that later. But I want to thank, as I said, our mayors, our chiefs, band councillors, councillors, our Métis Nation leaders, residents, families who have come to the Assembly. Many of them have come here to voice their concern about a suicide bill, about a plan, a strategy, a bill that we passed unanimously in this House, Bill 601, April 30th of 2021. And I was hoping . . .

And I know the families, and I've talked to a lot of them and they've come here. I've seen members on the other side when we passed that bill. I believe them to be genuine. I watched some, like myself, very emotional, tears. And today, you know, I've had families asking me, "Where are we, Doyle, on this bill that was so important? What is the plan? What is the government doing with it? How come nobody has heard anything about this?"

I've had mothers, fathers, family members, leaders who have lost someone saying, "Nothing." Like, it's almost like nothing's happened, and they're wondering why. And if it's the law . . . It's a bill we passed unanimously, I truly believe with good intentions. I pressured individuals. I talked to backbenchers. I talked to ministers, just making comments back and forth, saying this is the right thing to do.

We have a crisis in our province when it comes to mental health and addictions. Our young people are dying at an alarming rate, and I can't for the life of me understand why we're having to go through a 75-minute debate on an issue that we all felt was unanimously supported.

And I think about Tristen Durocher, a young Métis man — very, very proud man — walked 635 kilometres to Regina to get the government to support a bill that was voted against twice previously. And it was. It was. And I watched Walking with Our Angels support him, come here. And I watched the gallery, and you look at the lawn and the photo gallery that was there, of families that have lost loved ones who shared those pictures, saying . . . And I watched people grieving around the tipi, people doing healing.

And that part of it was so good. It was the right thing to do. I watched prayers. I watched people having conversations. Government, the Premier, the minister acknowledging the good work that was done. Not by Doyle, but by the people that had lost loved ones. We did something good.

And I'm so confused. I am so confused. Families are confused. They don't understand. Why are we having to do this? Like, why can't we say, look, we agreed unanimously to do this. We would work together. What do we have to do? Get more families? We have more people passing away. We have more people that loved ones are burying back home because of suicide. Why can't we have the strategy? That's what we said. We truly thought, I thought the minister was going to reach out. Nobody has contacted me to say, let's have a conversation about this.

The minister talks about, I know one of our band councillors from the Sucker River, La Ronge Indian Band, came to the Assembly raising his issue about mental health and suicides. And yes, the minister, he did come up north and I thank him for that. He came and did a tour of the wellness centre with me. And he was treated with . . . very respectful. And they wanted him to know the issues that they're facing in their communities and the challenges, and we . . . He was genuine as a leadership. He wanted us to work with government, and he identified some of the issues, and I know we had talks with the minister.

[11:15]

So a budget comes out. I was hoping to see more commitment, more commitments to mental health and addictions. He was

hoping to see more supports. I know the chief of La Ronge Indian Band did a tour as well of the wellness centre. I joined the minister; we did that. It was good. They're going to need supports for ongoing funding and they're going to need it for operating the building. Yes, it's a beautiful building. They will have a grand opening. It is going to do some crucial work when it comes to addictions, mental health.

And I thank all our front-line workers. There's so many of them there that do . . . they're burning out. And I want to thank them, because whether it's my grandchildren, whether it's the people that I represent in the Cumberland riding, or anyone who reaches out for mental health . . . I've had to deal with mental health issues, and I've reached out for help. There's nothing wrong with it, saying, you know what? I'm struggling. I'm having challenges and I need a little help. And my Creator helps me once in a while when I say, hey, I need your help. I'm struggling.

I've asked people in this Assembly, and I will continue to ask people to pray and give us guidance. I have talked to backbenchers, and I will continue to do that. I will talk to ministers — anybody who'll listen — to say, this is the right thing to do. We should not be having to do this on a 75-minute debate about an issue that's so crucial, that so many families have touched. The Premier says it's touched all of us, in question period today. He's right; it has. It's touched everyone. So why are we having to do this?

We had a bill that came into law. On Saturday it'll be one year. The government had an obligation. Why should we have to write a letter, FOI [freedom of information], pay any dollars as opposition members for information and can't seem to be getting it, and waiting patiently for it? Who did you consult with? How many families that were impacted did you talk to? How many leaders? First Nations, Métis leaders, municipal leaders, school divisions? How many front-line workers? How many families who have lost so much have you consulted with?

I've asked, and I have not had anyone tell me, yes, they've been approached. Now the minister talks about the Pillars for Life, and they're using that, saying that was before the walk; that was before we unanimously passed the Bill 601 April 30th of 2021, that we in this Assembly passed, saying we have a serious crisis. Families are asking. Why do families have to have . . . feel like there's barriers to get services for their children? Adults getting help for themselves if they feel there's barriers. Why is that? How come we don't have the answers? How come the minister cannot answer? How come the government cannot say, look, we're going to do this, we're going to sit down, we're going to find out exactly . . .

There's things we can do. And I have said this. I will work with the government. I will work with the minister. I will do all I can on behalf of the families that have asked me not to give up. And I say to them again . . . I have talked with a few of them just recently, and they want to come again. And some of them are pretty upset and they're hurt, and they're wondering what's going on. What's the problem? And I don't know what it is. Is there something wrong? Did I offend somebody? Did I do something wrong? Because if I did, I will apologize and I will say, work with me. Work with the opposition. We can do things together for the Saskatchewan people who deserve our trust and our support as a government.

Sixty-one of us are honoured to be elected here, and I take that with such honour. You have no idea how hard I take that and how serious I feel about that. It's not easy. We have jobs to do. And I know the heckling, and I understand it. I've said that before; I'm just as bad. And I've tried hard to quit, trying to . . . You know, there's days where I get worked up, but I want you to know I will work with you on the behalf of the people I represent, on behalf . . . Families have asked me, Doyle, please don't give up, don't . . .

So I'm going to ask the backbenchers. I'm going to ask the ministers in the front. Have a look at this. Why can't we work together? We have truly a crisis in our province. We are losing so many lives, so many First Nations. I think about my grandchildren. As I've said to you, many are First Nation and belong to different bands, and I watch their mental health. Things are deteriorating. People are losing hope when we could be helping.

I don't have the answers. I've said this before. When you supported the bill unanimously, I said this. I don't have the answers. But if we consult and we talk amongst one another — what the bill said, a plan, the law — you had 180 days to consult. You had the opportunity to come together and make a plan, and I was hoping that would happen.

You know, like I say, I'm going to continue. If it's a petition we need, if it's more leaders coming here, I'm going to reach out to First Nation chiefs and councils. I'm going to reach out to municipal leaders. And I'm not just going to reach out in the North; I'm going to reach out to them in the South, in our bigger centres. I'm going to reach out to 74 First Nations. I'm going to reach out to the tribal councils. I'm going to reach out to the Saskatchewan Federation of Indian Nations.

I'm going to reach out to whoever I can, families. And I'm going to ask them, please, please residents of our good province, we say we're so proud, I'm going to ask people to come forward. Get a hold of your MLAs, whether they're in government or opposition. Reach out to them. You know, I understand that the government, you have a large, large majority. I see that and I respect that. I hear it lots, and I take it well on the chin when you guys say, hey, that's why it's us over here.

I'm not here asking for me. I'm here on behalf of the people that have lost loved ones. I'm here asking, let's do the right thing. Look in your hearts. You passed the bill unanimously. What was the intention of that? I know some of you, I know, I listened to you in your speech. And I believed the minister to be genuine at the time. I'm confused, and I know families are confused. And I'm hoping that the government will say, okay, okay, let's go forward.

I'm going to be coming with more. There's got to be more. I'm going to come up with . . . We're talking, and I'm trying to find out a way that we can work with government to see what we can do because we're not doing enough. We're losing too many people still. And the Pillars for Life has been . . . Leaders have said it's not working. I've heard many people say it's not working. Families that I've talked to say, what's this Pillars for Life? They don't even know what it is. Many northern people, many people have no clue what the Pillars for Life is. You may say that yes, that's a part of it. And I can give credit, okay, that

it's a partial, but there's so much more that needs to be done.

We need a government to say, yes, it is a crisis. It's like when, and I've said this before, where there's resources out there, when we have floods, fires, we respond. Right now you have a crisis. You can respond with resources. And when you don't need those resources with mental health and addictions to deal with suicide, you can move those resources.

Let's help the people. Let's do the right things. I can sit here, and all I can ask is, on behalf of the families, to continue, to please hear what the families are saying. Why should they have to come here day after day, or why should we have to do this? I'm going to be concluding my remarks here, and I want to move a motion. And I'm hoping we can work together. And I know my colleagues will have more to say.

With this, Mr. Speaker, I will move the following:

That the Assembly recognizes the crisis of mental health and addictions in Saskatchewan and calls upon the government to take urgent action to address gaps in services leading to the loss of life and the damaging impacts to provincial health care, education, and the justice system as well as the economy as a whole.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Cumberland:

That the Assembly recognizes the crisis of mental health and addictions in Saskatchewan and calls upon the government to take urgent action to address gaps in services leading to loss of life and damaging impacts on provincial health care, education, and justice systems as well as the economy as a whole.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And thank you to the member from Cumberland House.

I take a little bit of exception even to this motion being brought up, with the things that this government and the people on this side of the government want to achieve. I certainly take exception to the comments as of late from the members of the opposition, the NDP [New Democratic Party]. And the particular comments are that we don't care. And it makes me sad, and it's offensive. We care. We care.

Another comment that has been brought up many times — and the member from Regina Rosemont had pointed this out to me in a couple of private members' days ago — and that's out of touch. And, Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. The one thing we take great pride in is conversing with our communities, conversing with people in and around our constituencies. Sometimes it's by emails, sometimes phone calls, and I really prefer the in-person meetings. So to say that we're out of touch. I even moved into my constituency, which I had tried to find a place for many years, because it's very important to be in that core. I grew up in that core. And I definitely take

exception to that. We do care, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We do care on this side of the House.

As always, I am humbled and honoured to rise in this House and speak about something that really needs to be spoken of: mental health and suicide. And I'm going to speak a little bit about my personal struggle.

Just out of high school, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I attended Bible school. You see, I had always loved kids. I loved working with kids. I never had kids of my own until later in life, and so it was my nephews, nieces, and kids in the neighbourhood, by fixing bikes or whatever it is, just being there for them, helping them fix their sleigh or whatever it was. Kids have been very important to me in my life.

Going to Bible school, my plan was to be a youth pastor. And I learned a lot in that year of Bible school, and it was really good for me. And I also realized that that was not maybe the path for me. However, working with kids and working with people in general was something that I came by honestly. My mom and dad — and I've spoke about this in the House many times — but my mom and dad took people into our house all the time. In fact, we had many families in our house over the years.

Going back to Bible school, one of my best friends, Darren Wilk — him and his wife run a marriage counselling company out of Vancouver — and he had attended the Bible school in Winnipeg that I had attended the year before and had met a couple of young men. He had went to a school and asked to find out who the worst, rough, tough guys were in the school so he could get to know them. Totally a man after my own heart, Mr. Speaker. And he met Todd and Dwayne. Todd Anderson and I became very close, as one of the requests of my friend Darren was to be there for Todd. You see, Todd's best friend had taken his life. And Todd was really struggling, and that was my first experience up close. And Todd and I became very good friends.

As I was looking at what I was going to say, I was extremely busy yesterday with some family things to deal with, and I never had time to write a speech. And I thought, I don't need to write a speech because this is so passionate to me. It just goes back to a statement I'm going to make a few times here: we care. We do care.

[11:30]

I phoned a number of individuals that had went through suicide — whether their family, loss of a child, friend — and I talked to them and made sure that they were okay that I could speak about this in the House today. See, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all go through this. It doesn't matter where you come from. Wealthy, poor, high status, low status, good upbringing, bad upbringing, it doesn't matter. We all face mental health challenges.

In 1995 I thought it was easier to take my own life than to face what I had to face. See, I was going through a divorce and my parents were very religious. And I was scared that they would disown me, and I thought it would be easier to just end it. And I don't know . . . I think it's God, Mr. Speaker. My daughter was six months old and I had made a very good plan. I didn't have to leave a suicide note; nobody would know. I was driving my car at an extremely high rate of speed, and I had picked out a pole

and my daughter's face came into the windshield. It forever changed my life, Mr. Speaker. You see, I thought then I knew how to help people, and I really didn't.

This government has supported a number of great initiatives. Is there more to be done? Absolutely. One of these initiatives was mental health first aid. And I went into that training thinking, thinking I knew everything about mental health and working with people. And I learned something very critical, and it's a question we need to ask people, we need to ask colleagues, we need to ask friends, our children, our grandchildren. And that is a very direct question, whether anyone's considered of hurting themselves or even considered suicide or thought about it.

About two years ago, Mr. Speaker, my daughter attempted her life. My daughter, I'm so proud of Morgan. She is speaking out on social media. She has done so well. She got into health and fitness, and it's just changed her life. And Morgan is what inspired me to speak of this today, and I know this needs to be talked about more.

So in answer to the comments again, we do care. We absolutely care. I am very fortunate to have my daughter still alive today, and she is way stronger than I am. Lots of great things in Pillars for Life, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad we, very happily we passed a bill on suicide prevention, Mr. Speaker, and it really solidifies a lot of the programs in Pillars for Life.

I wondered how I was going to possibly put this into 10 minutes, and I'm missing so much of what I wanted to talk about. My point really is that it doesn't matter where we come from. Suicide does not cater to any specific group, any specific person. And we really need to ask these questions of each other, of our colleagues, of our friends. And there is much more to do.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not done talking about this to kids, adults in my communities. And I've been reaching out to schools in my community. And now that COVID is at a time where we can finally get into the schools, I'm going to be able to do that. So thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is always an honour to rise in this place. But on topics like this, and in support of the critically important work of my colleague and my friend, the member from Cumberland, we should all take a moment to recognize the weight and the impact of the decisions that we have, the decisions that we make in this Assembly.

Usually we disagree, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's fine. In fact it's expected. And often the debates can get heated and that could be good too. But there are moments when we need to just stop and recognize our shared humanity. And I want to do that for the member from Riversdale, for those who hear what he has just said and want to express their empathy, who feel their own sense of loss, their own experience ignited and triggered, and just acknowledge that that is a very difficult thing to share, but also very valuable that we talk about our own experiences and how we're connected to this issue.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there's too many people in this

province who have intimate knowledge of what it is like to worry about a loved one, to struggle themselves, and to attend the funeral of someone who they loved and was taken too soon because of suicide or addiction.

Sometimes this place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even gets a bit theatrical. That may or may not be a good thing, but on issues like this we should be able to set all of those things aside, those hard feelings, our preconceived notions about each other. We should set that aside, and not in some indirect way, because the decisions we make here matter. They matter to the people here, the people listening at home, Mr. Speaker, and the people in this province.

And you know, we can canvass just the scope of the issue that we see in front of us in the problems right now. The recent report of the child advocate notes that over the last 10 years we've lost over 200 — almost 250 — young people in this province to suicide. That's the whole population of the town that I grew up in, Mr. Speaker. Kids gone too soon.

At the recent SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] conference, the issue of mental health and addictions came up time and time again, noting as my colleague from Regina Elphinstone did earlier today, that already we've seen 172 confirmed overdose deaths in the province and a further 205 suspected cases not been confirmed, noting that 2020 will have doubled the number of drug overdose deaths from the previous years, Mr. Speaker. This is a crisis.

So surely we can all agree, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that something has to be done, that we have to act. And as the member from Cumberland said, we thought that we had achieved that. Three times the bill was brought forward, twice rejected. We had the moment where we all stood up, and I will believe that people meant earnestly that they wanted to do something. We agreed that something had to be done, and something — perhaps it was implied, but I thought that there was agreement — more than what was being done at the time.

So how disappointing and frustrating for my colleague, for those parents at home, to note, as we saw in the article yesterday, no consultations had been done. Parents hadn't been talked to. Communities hadn't been talked to. And the plan that was already in place before we all stood up was the plan.

They ignored the advice of the FSIN, the child advocate, pleas from SUMA, SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], my colleague who's gone to too many — too many — funerals of people, young people who aren't even out of elementary school, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We thought we had agreement here.

Now I did see the members opposite listen, nodding along, and voting to turn things around, but it's a full year later. The mayors of our cities are calling out, our towns, our rural leaders. And death by suicide is increasing across the province. The most recent child advocate report noted that since the beginning of the pandemic, 38 per cent of children in this province report that their mental health has gotten worse. Almost half of the children in this province have considered suicide in the last year, and almost 10 per cent of them have attempted.

This cannot be about individual actions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it cannot be about good words and good feelings in this Assembly. We are 61 of the most privileged people in this province, privileged because we have the respect and the responsibility of those who we represent to bring their concerns here, but privileged because we have the opportunity to not only take individual action but to create strategies that can actually improve these horrible statistics for people right across our province. Because when we listen to public policy experts, when we listen to community experts, when we have an actual plan that we're all accountable to . . . As my colleague says, hold us all accountable. None of us have all of the answers, but the answers can be found. When we do that, we can change what happens for families.

In the early 2000s, Quebec undertook a mental health strategy for youth. In 10 years they reduced their youth suicide rate by 50 per cent. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that means that of those 230 children that have died in our province, every one a tragedy, half of them could still be here. We'd hope to get to all of them, Mr. Speaker. What we do here matters, and of course individual actions are important, Mr. Speaker.

I spent 20 years as a social worker. The reason I got into politics is because I thought I was a pretty good social worker and I could help folks. But I realized at some point, unless we change the policies, that we're contributing to why we were seeing so many people hurting. Domestic violence, youth who were struggling, unless we change the policy, I could never be enough. All of the social workers that I knew could never be enough. Individual actions could never be enough because policy matters.

Where we invest matters. We have \$17 billion that we spend in this province, Mr. Speaker. We needed to spend more in this province on prevention and addressing mental health wait times. We needed a plan, a plan informed by experts and community members, because if we get that right, we can reduce suicides by 50 per cent and then hopefully 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and lives will be saved.

Caring is important, Mr. Speaker, but caring and \$3.50 will get you on the bus. And I don't mean to be crass about it. We need a plan, and that's what we agreed to in this place a year ago. That is what we're calling for today, an actual plan, because it's what's needed, it's what is right, and it's what each of us in this Assembly agreed to.

It's hard to go against the powers that be, but this is the time if there ever was a time. Do it quietly. You don't have to do it publicly. Speak up, please. Let's get back to this. Make sure there's a plan. Let's save lives for Saskatchewan people. Thank you.

[11:45]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Meyers: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And you know, I want to thank the members who have spoke on this already — the member from Cumberland, the member from Lakeview, and the member from Riversdale — for sharing what I think is a very important message. It's one that needs to be continued about,

talked about.

And you know, I want to echo the Premier's comments from earlier today in thanking the member from Cumberland for his work on the bill, for his dedicated perseverance to the people of this province. And you know, I obviously see it through a little bit of a narrow lens when it comes to the mental health of young people in this province. And I know that's where the goodness of his heart is.

I do want to send condolences to the families of those that have lost family members from suicide, from addictions, from overdoses, and you know, for those that are out there struggling still. Thoughts are definitely with them, and the work in this building continues to work to help them.

Nothing's easy. Talking about mental health, addictions, suicide, it's not something you grew up around on the farm in Midale. It wasn't something that you talked about at the dinner table. It was something that you witnessed when there would be, you know, extra beer cans around or, you know, maybe that Mickey of Wiser somewhere. And that's how it was dealt with. And that's how it was dealt with for far too long, to be quite honest, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Even working in the newsroom, you know, not even a decade ago, it was taboo to report on suicides. And I never understood that, you know. There in the news we're quite willing to put on the front page of the paper, you know, somebody's name who has shot up a school or has, you know, gone out and done the most heinous of crimes. But yet somebody who's been struggling with mental health, who saw no other way out and completed suicide, we wouldn't report on it. I didn't always understand why we can't talk about that, you know, why it is . . . It's important. These words are important.

You know, and this is . . . I think we're all in agreement. This is a serious issue. I think all 61 members in here take it very seriously. You know, I've had numerous conversations with the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. So you know, when I hear, well there's no talking to the families, well believe me; he's talking to the families. I speak with the families. The Grabarczyk family, a young Ethan Grabarczyk took his life in the summer of 2020. I have conversations with that family all the time about their struggles, about the question why.

You know, our family's journey. April 1st, our April Fool's baby, Teigha Faith Meyers, born. Her middle name is Faith because she actually was stillborn. They actually had to bag her and resuscitate her. Her mother's placenta had decayed and she was in duress, and you know, that little girl was lucky to make it out of the delivery room let alone out of the hospital.

But there she was, a bright kid, a star athlete. She had okay grades. I'm not going to sit here and not joke about that. She could have probably applied herself a little harder. You know, she had all that could be afforded to a kid her age. I think she was at Disney maybe four times. She had been to Germany. She had seen World Cups of soccer. She had seen the best players in the world.

And when it all goes wrong, the question is, why? You know, how could that kid, how could it be so bad that kid . . . Well

because it's more of a fight. It's not what's on the external. So on September 20th, 2020, Teigha had had enough and she lost her battle to suicide.

But it's something that we have to talk about. It's something that we have to talk about and it is something that we have to action. We have to start treating this, not taboo, but this is like cancer. Nobody asks to have mental illness. Nobody asked to be pushed into that corner so far and so deep.

And I think back to the sessions we had with the grief counsellor — a wonderful lady, Susan — and she said, you know, when somebody's in that spot, it's like they're in a big cup. And they can hear everybody around them, and they know they're there and they can hear all this. But all they can see when they look up out of that cup is darkness. And they can't climb the sides of that wall, and they can't make it out. But you need to keep talking and you need to keep supporting, and you need to keep trying to throw a line in there.

And I know much is made about, you know, Pillars for Life and it's not even two years old. This is not a quick fix. This is something I think that probably every single member on either side of this House, if we said, if we could put all \$17 billion in this budget towards mental health and not have one more suicide, I think we'd be hard pressed not to try and pass that. But that's not the way it works. It doesn't work in two years. This isn't something you can put a band-aid and it's going to heal. This is a lifelong journey.

I've got three young kids, and you know, it's a very different time. And I hearken back to even my childhood. And I just had a wonderful chance to speak to a number of the students from Henry Janzen downstairs, and I took questions. And the first question, bright young lady puts up her hand, and I said, "what would you do if you had one day as Premier of this province?" And they all got big eyed, and I was waiting for some quite interesting responses like we'd never have to go to school again or it would be summer all year 'round. Her comment was, "I'd change the curriculum, the education curriculum." And I said yeah, so would've I. I would have had phys ed for six classes a day. But no, her answer . . . I said, well why? And she said, "I think we need to update it to teach more about social media, more about our social activities, more about mental health."

And I said, well, you are really lucky. You're really lucky right now. Because we have an Education minister who's committed to this. We have an Education minister who has three young children himself, who wants to understand this, who wants to do better for this province. And I said, you know what? It's not going to happen today or tomorrow. This is a lifelong learning journey. And it was really interesting to see.

And I had the chance to — this year, just recently, this month actually — go to another school. I was at LeBoldus. And that's where Teigha went to school and won a city championship, I might add, in soccer. Very proud of that. But we have there . . . we help donate to what's called an awareness bench there. And this is in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association, Regina branch. And this awareness bench, it's there, and it has a billboard behind it with, you know, lots of notes and positive messages that the students populate every month. And it also has some phone numbers and some supports.

And so when we were there dedicating it, and it would have been Teigha's 19th birthday. We were there on April 1st. And I had a chance to talk to some of the mental health workers in the school. You know, another one of those initiatives where we're training somebody to have mental health first training in every school. And we were talking about a number of things. And they said, man, they were so excited for the urgent care centres coming here. They said to have a dedicated stream, a path where people can go is so important.

Is it the be all and end all? Is this going to cure everything? It's not. It's not. But it's another step. We need to keep taking those steps. And you know, today I'd . . . A lot of my colleagues come up and say, you know, this is going to be difficult. And I said it's going to be difficult, but it's going to be a great day for us in this Assembly to continue this conversation. We can't stop this conversation because this is not going away. Mental health, mental illness, addictions, suicides, we're not going to eradicate them. But that doesn't mean we cannot continue to work. Pillars for Life is just two years old. It is a moving document that is going to continue to work and change and adapt for the people of this province.

And you know, I actually struggled to even bring this up, but much has been made of it and I don't want to . . . It was said in question period today, the Premier and this government simply don't care. Well it's just untrue. It's untrue. You know, when you listen to the stories, when you listen to the member from Riversdale, he cares. When you listen to the member from Cumberland, he cares. Everybody in this House cares. Caring is just part of it. We need to action it, and we need to continue to battle and fight. But to stand over there and be a leader in this province and say that these people don't care, it's just untrue and it's disappointing.

So to the people of this province, those that are struggling, those that are mourning, we need to continue to do better on both sides of the House, but we do care. To those who are mourning a loved one, we care. To those who are battling addictions, we care. We have walked in those shoes, and we are doing and we will continue to do what is best for you. The work isn't done. It's just starting, but know that there are people that do care and are going to continue to do it.

So I wanted to leave everybody with this, and I think it's a testament to Teigha and to all those out there, you know, that lost their battle, but comes from Psalm 23, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me." And as we walk through this, Teigha's there with me and with all of us, every step of the way. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to speak to this motion. It really is. And I'm going to focus my comments on the overdose prevention and harm reduction piece of it.

But I want to speak for a moment on the suicide prevention aspect of these issues, Mr. Speaker. And I too want to join in thanking the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, the member for Walsh

Acres, the member for Cumberland in speaking to their very real and intimate experiences with these very serious issues, Mr. Speaker.

And I just want to say that it is not despite these stories, it is because of these stories that we on this side are so heartbroken today to learn that nothing else is in the works beyond the Pillars for Life program, Mr. Speaker. We feel misled, not despite those stories but because of them. And the reason that so many members of this legislature can stand up and talk about how addiction and mental health has touched their lives is because it is touching every corner of our province and it is getting worse, Mr. Speaker. And that is a fact.

And when we look at the Pillars for Life, Mr. Speaker — and I feel the need to speak plainly and honestly — we have Jack Hicks, an expert in suicide prevention, who says, "It is so vague as to be meaningless." He lacks confidence that it will save lives. So it is our duty on this side to keep pushing. They are not doing enough, Mr. Speaker, on this front.

Returning to the language of the motion which calls on this Assembly to recognize the crisis of mental health and addictions in Saskatchewan and to take urgent action to address gaps and services leading to loss of life, I want to touch on another source of tragic loss of life in our province. And that is the preventable death of far too many individuals struggling with addiction due to overdose, Mr. Speaker.

The overdose crisis is reaching a fever pitch in this province. I'm not sure if folks realize that in 2021, 464 people died by overdose. That is up a shocking third from the year before, and the year before set a new record. So every month, every year we set a new death record. So we need to be looking at what more we can do.

And this side will keep talking about safe consumption because it is such an integral part of harm reduction, Mr. Speaker. And particularly when we look at the organizations that are doing this work in Saskatchewan, like Prairie Harm Reduction in Saskatoon, like the Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre in Regina who joined us today, it's not just about safe consumption. They have housing teams. They have health teams. They have nurses. They have paramedics. They connect people with treatment when they're ready. It's not like someone just comes in, can use drugs safely, and they get a business card to say, you know, go here and you might get some help, because we know that doesn't work. They offer wraparound services right there on site. And it is truly innovative, so innovative in fact that they are nationally and internationally recognized for their service model delivery, Mr. Speaker.

[12:00]

And so when we think about that, it is all the more perplexing and disturbing that this government does not offer Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre a single cent in the good work they do. And for the third year running, Prairie Harm Reduction did not get their funding. And they're devastated, they're devastated by this.

Speaking with those stakeholders today, Mr. Speaker, I learned that there's never been a death by overdose in a safe consumption site in Canada. I know that in Nēwo-Yōtina Friendship Centre, since September they've had 27 overdoses — not one death —

not a single death, Mr. Speaker. These are our loved ones. They deserve a chance. And right now they are facing a death sentence, because when those services are not around, they die. And their lives are not any less worthy of protection and value than anyone else, Mr. Speaker.

We must muster the courage to pursue harm reduction. We have to pull out all the stops. And it's not just about funding these sites, it's about policy changes and it's about educating the public, breaking down those myths and stereotypes around mental health and addiction. We need to do all of it, Mr. Speaker, and we're not. We're not doing enough. And particularly when we're talking about safe consumption sites, when we know that this government has internal memos that says it saves money and lives.

You know, we get attacked by the other side for saying they don't care on that side. But when the evidence is so compelling, when these sites pay for themselves, it's not like they just can't come up with the cash, Mr. Speaker. These sites pay for themselves, and they save people. So what other conclusion can we draw than they don't care?

These are preventable, avoidable deaths, Mr. Speaker. And we don't hear as much about these folks, but they have families. They are loved. They are missed. And so often their death was preventable.

Prairie Harm Reduction, Mr. Speaker, was seeking \$1.3 million. \$1.3 million, as the medical students who were here earlier this week pointed out, is the same amount that a person who contracts HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] costs the public health system. A single — single — contraction of HIV costs the system 1.3 million. This is chump change, Mr. Speaker, in comparison to what these sites offer. It makes absolutely no sense.

And this budget was about getting this province back on track. But how can we get back on track when we're facing down an opioid crisis that is taking more and more lives at an increasingly alarming rate, and we can't even get it together to reward the demonstrated track record of an internationally recognized organization like Prairie Harm Reduction?

This crisis is cutting like a scythe through all of our communities, and it's not just in Saskatoon and Regina. It's not just in our bigger urban centres. We speak to folks across the province. And we know that the North is particularly hard hit but it's all communities, rural and urban. They are all struggling with these issues, Mr. Speaker.

And I've spoken to this before, Mr. Speaker. If it saves lives and if it saves money, why aren't we doing it? And part of me wonders if it's about this obsession on that side with personal responsibility. But do we really think that people can overcome this alone? They need our help. They need your help. They need the Sask Party's help, Mr. Speaker. And that's okay. Because I don't know when we stopped believing it was okay to ask for help.

Families, individuals struggling with addiction can't do this alone, and that is not a moral failing, Mr. Speaker. They can't do it alone. They have fallen down. They need their community to step up. They need the help of experts. They need their

government to support these initiatives. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will say that this government's failing to fund those sites.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Deputy Chair of Committees. In 1993 my brother committed suicide. Trauma manifests itself in all of us differently. At the time we did not understand how experiences like the residential school will leave such a profound impact. Response to trauma resulted in intergenerational abuse of alcohol that was detrimental to the dynamics of my family.

When you grow up in this environment, it is difficult to recognize holistic health. When you are broken spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally, it's by the grace of a higher power that you begin recognizing that you are broken. It's by that same grace we found the strength to heal as a family. We found courage to put words to how we felt.

Suicide is something that no one ever wants to talk about, and my family was no different. My parents did not want our family legacy to be this constant state of trauma and encouraged us to heal by setting a strong example for us to follow. My family's journey gave me hope. I knew what was possible. Suicide, addictions, mental health are all complex issues that many people face.

Lucy Guetre of Black Point lost two sons to suicide. Unimaginable pain, yet she found the courage and a way to help people. Annually she organizes a walk of remembrance followed by a community gathering. Saskatchewan people from all walks of life, like Lucy Guetre, offer hope.

During my career in public service, I have been given the opportunity to work in suicide prevention in northern Saskatchewan. I drew from my personal experience, along with the guidance of elders and medical professionals. This work took me into the communities. I learned from my own family's experience what it meant when we put words to such a difficult issue. So we offered training and set a foundation for people to have that difficult conversation, taught skills to recognize signs and how to intervene.

When you are faced with constant pain and you're looking for a way to connect, sometimes the courage of asking that person directly, do you want to take your own life, is that connection people are looking for. And that is the skills that I instilled in grandparents, teachers, and professionals in the communities that I visited.

My time in Sandy Bay, that was my first community that I went into to train. I listened to many stories of people being impacted by suicide, addictions, and mental health. When you listened first-hand to the accounts of people's experiences, I understood that they were not looking for me to carry their pain. But what I took away is that everyone, at some point in their lives, wants to be heard even at their most vulnerable time.

During my years of public service, I also had the experience of working in mental health. Trust is established by listening, and you provide the tools so people can cope with life's challenges

— the one-on-one experience. When I devoted myself to public service, whether it was in the capacity of mental health, preventative work, or as a police officer, I learned early on what it means when you sit there and listen and read the body language and how you intervene. And that was modelled over and over in my family by us sitting down and having a conversation about this.

More recently because of the work that we've done and what I understood, my sister sent us all a text at bedtime and she says, good night; I love you. And that was it. Immediately my other sisters and I, we start texting each other. What's going on with her, you know? Because you know, when we are trained to find signs, those are one of the things. So we all kind of exchanged texts. Who was going to be the one that was going to go talk to her?

So my other sister drove over there. It was like 11 o'clock at night, and she comes to the door and she's ready for bed. She's like, what's going on? And we did our little intervention. And about two weeks later we were at my mom's and she says, I love you. And she says, don't worry; I'm not going to do anything to myself.

By no means am I fully healed. And with recent family tragedies dealing with addictions, my healing path is ongoing, but I never lose hope. A very close friend sends me a text and she says, your family has suffered so much loss and yet you continue to help and meet people with a smile.

To everybody that's sitting on this side, our message is clear that we care.

I have spent time listening to people and know some of the history of suicide, mental health, and addictions that have impacted people in northern Saskatchewan. All of us have a responsibility to the people we represent, and this government continues to provide the necessary resources.

I look forward to this summer when I go back to the communities and provide an update to all my progress. My commitment to the Athabasca constituents was that I represent them to the best of my ability. And my recent meeting with the Mental Health and Addictions minister, I look forward to engaging with the northern communities to continue the dialogue, and this is what it will take: a collective approach with all of us being involved so we can deal with this complex issue. And I think if you look at the Pillars for Life, that's exactly what it talks to. You invest. You train. You evaluate.

Pinehouse, Saskatchewan. In the early '70s, *the fifth estate* and the Regina post did a documentary on Pinehouse. And that documentary showed a community that is in a state of disarray because of alcohol abuse. Local ladies said, this cannot be our story. And they formed a committee and they decided that we're going to deal with this.

Thirty years later, coming up to almost close to 40 years, that community is still working on their initiatives. Every Monday morning, they come together and talk about what is happening in their community, how they can respond, a model community of healing that this government continues to support with their land-based healing initiative. I am so proud of Pinehouse.

I've shared this story since I've been a police officer, long before I stood here, that we need to make that connection when we see people that are powerful in addressing their issue. When we keep our people in a constant state of pain, when we rise in this building and speak to the loss, that pain we are trying to get people out of should not be constantly reminded in this building.

[12:15]

We are a building of hope. Our budget shows that. Our commitment shows that. The fact that we're being accused of stuff that is not true, I think that is a detriment to our movement that we are looking after the people of Saskatchewan. If we want to take a collective approach as you have offered, let's sit down and have that language and that dialogue because that is what it's going to take.

And I just wanted to recognize and acknowledge my mother. She's going through so much. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The 65-minute period has expired. The 10-minute period, question and answer period, will begin. I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Grewal: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we care. Mental health, addictions, and suicide are all issues that members on this side of the House take very, very seriously. That's why we see new initiatives and record investment to support those who are struggling.

Respectfully, my question to the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre is, in addition to the existing government investments and supports that are in place, is there a specific program or initiative that you would implement?

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

Ms. Conway: — Absolutely, 100 per cent, yes, Mr. Speaker. I would have given Prairie Harm Reduction \$1.3 million to fund a 24-7 consumption site, which is something that they have been asking now for three years, and it is unforgivable that they have not gotten it.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale voted to pass the Saskatchewan suicide strategy bill. Will you work with members opposite, the families, leaders, health care workers to push your government to do more and follow the legislation that was put forward in Bill 601 that we all said we would work and support?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for the question. Absolutely. This is something I do every day. This is part of my daily work, even before I was elected. I have worked with kids for 34 years now, and it kind of dates me. But that's absolutely something that's very passionate to me, and we will absolutely work together.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Lawrence: — Mr. Speaker, we all . . . I take mental health and addictions very seriously and invite the members opposite to work with us on these important issues. That includes bringing forward some ideas of their own. To the member of Regina Lakeview: do you believe the duty of an opposition is just to oppose everything and propose nothing? Or do you have a specific suggestion for supports to make life better for those of us that are struggling?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, my colleague from Cumberland stood up on three different occasions and put forth a whole bill charting a path to consult with families and experts and both sides of the aisle to address these issues. I am frustrated on his behalf at the question because it's the very reason we're here today.

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

Ms. Conway: — To the member for Athabasca: your party campaigned on a promise that things would finally turn around for the people of the North if they elected a Sask Party candidate. What is your plan to address the urgent crisis of mental health and addiction that plagues the North disproportionately? Will you push for something beyond the Pillars for Life?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you for the question. And I think my commitment to the people of Athabasca is recognizing that this is an issue that needs to be dealt with. And I look forward to going back into the community and having this discussion and engage in a conversation.

I'm not new to this. I've had this discussion with them before. And here we have the tools that we can present and work with that I believe in and something that the constituents are already doing the work in, based on the investment from this government. So I look forward to building on that. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've heard some moving and personal experiences here today, and it's because of those experiences that members on both sides of the House speak with and listen to constituents every day about the challenge of suicide prevention. And I can say that we're open to ideas and suggestions on how to meet this challenge.

So to the member for Regina Lakeview: beyond her colleague's bill, what specific ideas and suggestions does she have to help us meet this challenge?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the importance of addressing the concerns that are specific to communities has to be on that list. It has to be talking to survivors. The solutions in the North are going to be different than they are in the city or in rural centres.

There are all sorts of models out there. I mentioned Quebec recently that had a plan that actually reduced youth suicides by 50 per cent. The UK [United Kingdom] has done some amazing work with libraries. The ideas are there. What we lack is the willingness, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, to sit down and find those solutions together.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, with new funding in this year's budget, our government has now invested over \$92 million in targeted mental health and addictions initiatives since 2018 — \$92 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is to the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Do you support these initiatives? And if you do, why have you and your colleagues repeatedly voted against them?

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, that member knows full well that this government did not support initiatives that had been demonstrated, including by their internal memos, to actually save money. So what we're saying is more needs to be done. This government cannot continue to ignore evidence that shows that safe consumption sites saves money and saves lives. It is not a one-or-the-other approach. It is an all-of-the-above approach. This is a crisis, and people are dying of preventable deaths.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — This question will be to the member from Athabasca. We will be coming with ideas and suggestions from people. Will you work with us, with your government, to make sure that we work on a plan that truly will save northern people and save people throughout the province of Saskatchewan when it comes to mental health and suicides? Will you commit to saying you will work with us and work with your ministers and your cabinet? Will you agree to do that?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you. My commitment over my years of public service for years — and having experienced suicide in my family — my commitment has always been to voice and bring attention and work with those that show commitment to work together. And that is what I present here so we can collectively address suicide. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Ms. C. Young: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know someone who has experienced mental illness and addiction. We do care. Budget 2022-23 continues building on a record investment in

mental health and addictions: 470 million will be invested with 403 million to mental health and 67 million to addictions.

To the member from Regina Lakeview: do you not agree that this is a positive step forward in providing mental health services for the people of our province?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we ought not be judged on whether we care or how much money we put in. We ought to be judged by what the results are. And right now, Mr. Speaker, the results are abysmal.

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

Ms. Conway: — Can the member for Saskatoon Riversdale tell the Assembly why the government decided not to fund Prairie Harm Reduction safe consumption site, or any safe consumption site for that matter?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And there's many, many services we provided. In fact this year, with the additional funding to another one of Prairie Harm Reduction's programs, it, I believe, gets really close to \$1.6 million in funding for that organization alone.

We've also worked on take-home naloxone kits. I believe there's 273 locations of take-home naloxone kits. This is something that we strive to even have in as many places as there are AEDs [automated external defibrillator] in the province.

There is many steps that we have taken, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And yes, there's more work to be done and we are doing that work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Arm River.

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This year's budget enhances the availability . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Time has now expired for the 75-minute debate.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Federal Government's Approach to Gun Crime

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Domotor.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from

Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Given the extremely important and very, very emotional debate that we've had over the last 75 minutes, I will be very, very brief. Mr. Deputy Speaker, on November 25th, 2021, my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford introduced a private member's motion as follows:

That this Assembly condemns the federal government's targeting of law-abiding firearm owners in recent regulatory changes and calls on the federal government to halt any proposed reduction of sentences for serious offences through the criminal code of Canada, as prescribed in Bill C-22 introduced to the House of Commons in 2021.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bill C-22 is *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. It was introduced to go hand in hand with Bill C-21, an Act to amend certain Acts and to make consequential amendments with regards to firearms.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's obvious that these Acts actually sort of speak to some of the issues that we've been talking about earlier today, but I don't think that it's appropriate to get into these matters in any more depth today. So at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on the motion by my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — It has been moved by the member of Kelvington-Wadena that the motion is adjourned. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Does the Assembly agree with the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that this Assembly now do adjourn.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The Government Deputy House Leader moves this Assembly now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adjourn the House?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:30.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Fred Bradshaw
Minister of Highways
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Dustin Duncan
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Hon. Jeremy Harrison
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Minister of Immigration and Career Training
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Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

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