



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

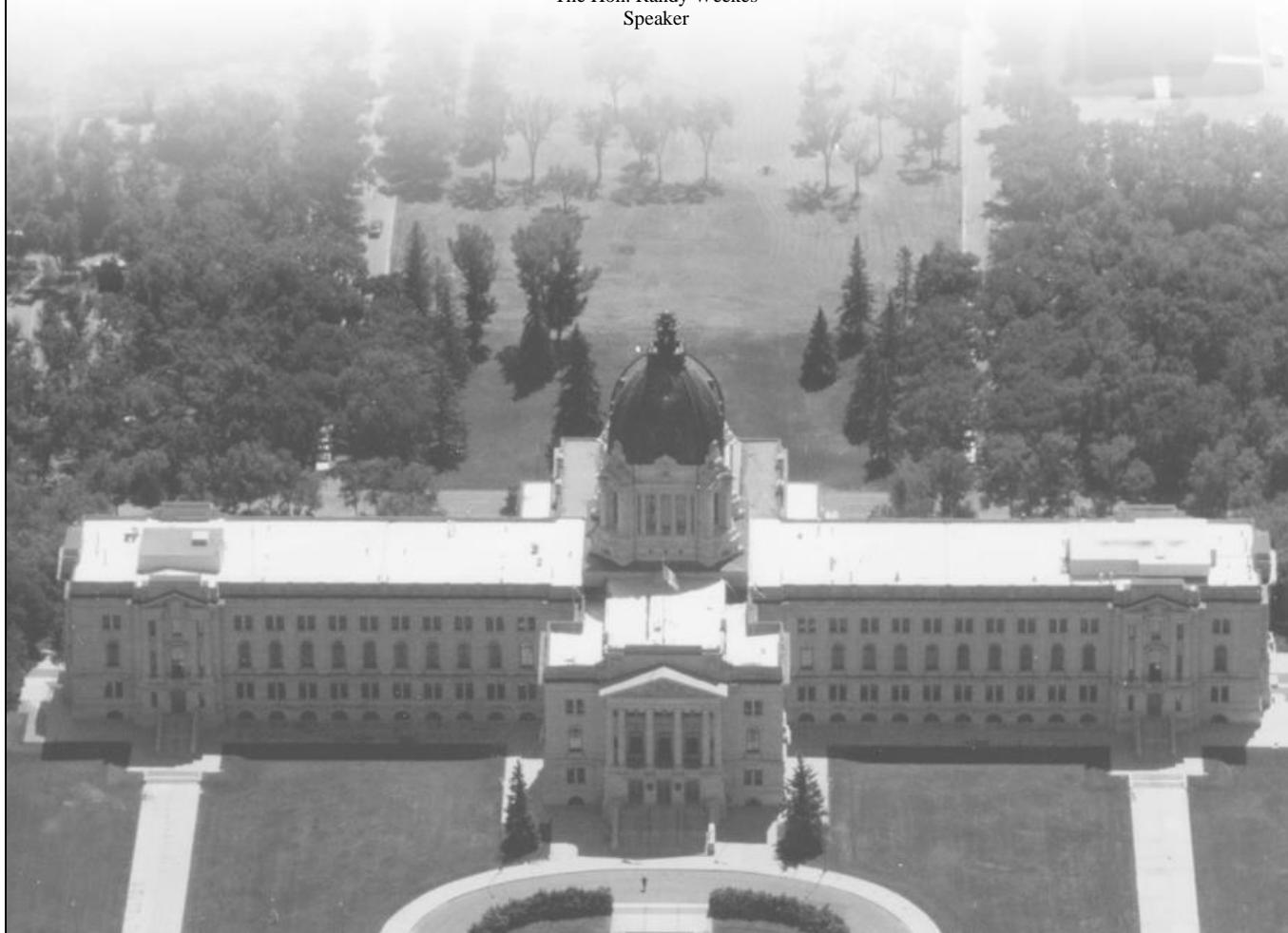
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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

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Bonk , Steven — Moosomin (SP)	Makowsky , Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
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Duncan , Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Nippi-Albright , Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
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Hindley , Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Vermette , Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Jenson , Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)	Weekes , Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Kaeding , Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	Wilson , Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
Keisig , Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	Wotherspoon , Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Kirsch , Delbert — Batoche (SP)	Wyant , Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young , Aleana — Regina University (NDP)
Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	Young , Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lemaigre , Jim — Athabasca (SP)	

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

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

Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — Yesterday on May 4th, 2022, the Government House Leader rose on a point of order alleging that during question period the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misquoted the Minister of Health. I committed to reviewing the record. The minister's remark was not recorded in *Hansard*, and I could not hear it when I reviewed the audio and video. Therefore for lack of a reliable record, it is impossible for me to rule on this point of order.

As a final note, I would like to call attention to our Code of Ethical Conduct, where it says, "... we owe loyalty to shared principles, respect for differences, and fairness in political dealings." I would remind all members to govern themselves accordingly.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a true honour and a pleasure for me to rise today and welcome nine grade 4 students from Rose Valley. They are accompanied by their teacher, Lana Dyok, and parent chaperones Melissa Rustad, Cody Forman, and Maegan Linklater. And I will be meeting with this group after question period and taking their well-prepared questions, I'm sure. So I ask my colleagues to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, sitting in your gallery, I'd like to introduce two very special guests to the Saskatchewan legislature. First I'd like to introduce Andrii Mishtal. He's a brand new person to Saskatchewan. He arrived one week ago today from the Ukraine. Andrii is from western Ukraine, and he is a land surveyor by trade, also works as a city administrator. And by just strange and fortunate events, he is here in Saskatchewan now. Just the way things worked out for him, and we couldn't be happier that he's here.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

And seated next to him is Kevin Kay. Now we have done a lot of work in our part of the world on bringing in refugees from Ukraine and trying to do everything we can to help them. And that doesn't happen without people like Kevin Kay. Kevin and the Wawota refugee welcoming group have just done an amazing amount of work to welcome and prepare and help as many refugees as they can to come to Saskatchewan. So I'd like to welcome both of these people to the Saskatchewan legislature.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to join once again this week in our gallery, president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, Lori Johb. Lori is coming here today along with a number of attendees from the CLC [Canadian Labour Congress] and SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] Spring School, which is an annual educational event and week-long school that promotes labour rights, educates workers on issues that are important to their working lives.

And so we'll be joined by a number of attendees from that school today, as well as a number of working-class people, workers from our province who will be here to observe the vote on paid sick leave. And so I'd like to say it's always important for, you know, workers to be able to come to their legislature and to observe how their government functions and make sure and hold the government to account in promoting and advancing their issues and advancing workers' rights in our province.

So I welcome our guests here again from . . . we'll have from the CLC, from the SFL, and also working-class people from across the province, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these people to their legislature today. It is one of our fundamental freedoms that they are able to come express their opinions. We welcome those opinions. Not only do we welcome, but these are opinions that we need to hear and want to hear from them. And would like to ask all members to join in welcoming them to their legislature today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to acknowledge Willy Billette in the gallery on a day of remembrance. It's with a heavy heart sometimes people come to our legislation. And with today's remembrance, he is here with his granddaughter, and it's not an easy day for him. And I think it's important that we acknowledge and show respect for his journey, on his healing journey with what has been impacted on his family. And on behalf of all of us, welcome to your Legislative Building.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — I ask extended leave.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you to the Assembly and to the Speaker for allowing me. There's many leaders, community members,

many families who have suffered so much loss. This day we recognize so many missing and murdered citizens, family members, loved ones, daughters, moms, sisters, cousins.

I want to welcome everyone to the Assembly. It is with honour that I get to do this, but for me it's been a challenge when I think about some of the families that I have supported. And I know that we have many chiefs, you know, vice-chiefs, many leaders that are here for a good cause, and I know my colleague from Saskatoon Centre will do justice, has been fighting hard. And as a First Nations strong woman she speaks in this Assembly very loud and clear for First Nations and Métis people. So I want to give her honour for that and will continue to support her all I can.

I want to take time to reflect a little bit on a family that's here in the gallery, a family that is my family, that've accepted . . . We are like family. And it's been tough. In 2017 I got to attend a marriage of a beautiful young lady. That young lady had four children. Willy and Gladys. Willy is here. He's here with Joan, her sister. Sheena was such a beautiful person. Our hearts were just devastated the day we found out. Willy and Gladys. Gladys couldn't be here because she's home with three of the kids that Sheena had. She had four of them. Hallie's here, as her oldest child.

It's been tough. Just know your pain, what you've gone through, the loss of your beautiful daughter and the tragedy. Willy, you have spoken; you have fought hard; your family has. Those have supported you. I just want to honour you. We will never forget her. It was a beautiful day when she got married. I'll never forget it, how proud you were. Just know that we're here, and today I hope we can honour all missing and murdered women and men.

I just want to say, your advocacy, you've done so much. And I watched you in tears and sorrow, and how hard you have advocated, how hard you've asked for justice. And you give us honour when you ask for justice for your daughter, for your loved one. And we will support you all we can. Just know that.

I know there's many that will join us today, and many families who have suffered so much. But I have to speak from my heart to you, to know that in my heart and my family, we pray lots for you and your family for recovery and healing. And just know we have a special love and a special bond we will always have, not only as my neighbour but as my family.

So with that, I want to welcome you to your Assembly, and all the guests that are here honouring what we are about to hear today and what we are about to work to achieve. I just want to say it is an honour to have all you in the Assembly. Thank you so much for allowing me.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Justice minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these guests to their legislature. They made the journey to the legislature to celebrate and recognition of Red Dress Day, Mr. Speaker.

This is an important and a solemn day to remember and raise awareness for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, Mr. Speaker. The government shares that. So I want to

thank them for making their journey to the legislature, Mr. Speaker, and for all the work that they're doing on this very, very important issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to get up again today to present our petition calling for a paid sick leave legislation in Saskatchewan, especially on today, which will be an important day in this province around paid sick leave.

The undersigned residents of the province would like to bring to our attention the following: that a healthy workforce is good for the economy; that lives could be saved if workers could afford to stay home when they're sick; that no one should have to make the choice between going to work sick or risking the roof over their head by staying home.

Workers, doctors, and public health officials have all called for paid sick leave in Saskatchewan repeatedly, Mr. Speaker. The official opposition has now twice introduced paid sick leave legislation since the onset of the pandemic, calling for a minimum of 10 permanent paid sick days each year and 14 days during a public health crisis. I hope that we will see a good result here today, Mr. Speaker.

I will 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 and pass paid sick leave legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I'll note the signatories today reside in Shellbrook. I do so present.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention: we only have 10 per cent of Crown land left; the government has been auctioning off Crown land and leases to the highest bidder; and they haven't meaningfully consulted with impacted communities. This government must immediately stop selling off Crown land and leases and fix their broken duty-to-consult process. They're breaching the treaty relationship and restricting access to traditional hunting, fishing, trapping, and medicine picking.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately stop the sell-off of Crown land, and work with First Nation and Métis communities to develop a new duty-to-consult framework.

The folks who signed this petition reside in Onion Lake. I do so

present.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

[10:15]

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — I ask for 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. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. To you, through you, and through all members, I would like to welcome Indigenous female leaders from all corners of this province. These female First Nations chiefs, councillors, matriarchs, families impacted by missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, two-plus individuals, and supporters are here today to bring awareness into this House about Red Dress Day.

We have a delegation from the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations]; Vice-Chief Aly Bear; FSIN Saskatchewan First Nations Women's Commission; File Hills Qu'Appelle member Nations; Saskatoon and Prince Albert families of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and two-plus individuals; family information liaison officers and representatives from the path to reconciliation; participants and facilitators from the Canadian Labour Congress, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour for Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, Marquis, Prince Albert, Regina, Tisdale, and Martensville.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be reading a member's statement asking this government to support the FSIN's Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls.

While I'm on my feet, I would also like to extend a warm welcome to my sister-in-law and a very special little girl she is raising, Lillian McDonald Bluecloud. Little Lillian came here with her class from Rose Valley. Little Lillian, I am one of your kohkoms. I grew up in your community, and I knew your Great-Grandma Lillian.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming all these folks into their legislature. miigwech.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. Wow. I might as well just stay standing all day.

miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to share with you a

summary of FSIN's Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls. The Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls acknowledges the disproportionate levels of violence against Indigenous women in Saskatchewan.

The findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls provides recommendations to end all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls in its 231 Calls for Justice. Most notably, they call upon all levels of government to adopt principles of change, including a focus on substantial equality and human and Indigenous rights; a decolonization approach; and Indigenous-led solutions, recognizing distinctions, cultural safety, and adoption of a trauma-informed approach.

FSIN is asking the Government of Saskatchewan to adopt and uphold the Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls as a demonstration of commitment to end systemic racism and violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and the 2S [two-spirit] communities in Saskatchewan. I will also be tabling this declaration today.

So with that I am honoured to see many Indigenous women here in this gallery. To be here, it's important. miigwech.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Red Dress Day

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Red Dress Day is being commemorated here in Saskatchewan and across the country as a national day of awareness for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited people.

Mr. Speaker, the first Red Dress Day in 2010 was inspired by a public art installation led by Métis artist, Jaime Black, called the REDress Project. Red dresses were hung empty in a variety of locations to bring attention to this important issue. Since its beginnings as part of the REDress Project, Red Dress Day has grown into a national movement that is observed annually.

Mr. Speaker, today is an opportunity to show our support to these families, remind them that their loved ones are not forgotten, honour those whom we have lost, and raise awareness about gender-based violence. This government condemns the ongoing harm and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people. This government has taken numerous steps to improve responses to missing persons, reduce human trafficking, and provide supports to at-risk individuals.

To help raise awareness, Mr. Speaker, everyone is encouraged to wear red and to take time to learn more about Red Dress Day and the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Let us take a moment to remember those who are missing and those who are lost. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

International Bereaved Mother's Day

Ms. A. Young: — "If I had a flower for every time I thought of

you, I could walk in my own garden forever."

Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize International Bereaved Mother's Day. Every year on the first Sunday in May, this day honours mothers who have lost a child. It is also a day to recognize women who cannot be mothers due to infertility or health reasons or who have lost a child to miscarriage or stillbirth.

Mother's Day can be one of the hardest days. Many suffer greatly on this day because they have lost a child or a mother. The loss of any loved one is gutting, but to lose a child is the worst thing anyone can go through in their life. It's a loss that's touched my family, Mr. Speaker, and I know it has too many in this room and far, far too many in the galleries today. There are many tragedies.

Today we see too many heart-wrenching losses due to mental health, children lost to addiction, to overdose. People mourning. People who are angry. Many missing their babies, their babies gone missing and murdered. The tears shed for another person are not a sign of weakness; they are a sign of a pure heart.

I ask all members to take a moment and recognize the bereaved mothers and grieving families here in Saskatchewan and around the world. Let us do all we can to protect children, young and old, that we do have and save mothers from having to grieve their babies.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Sakitawak Development Corporation Wins Award of Excellence

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sakitawak Development Corporation has been selected as the winner of the Indigenous Community Owned Business Award of Excellence for 2022 by National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association.

Mr. Speaker, Sakitawak Development is based in the community of Ile-a-la-Crosse, and through its business employs over 50 people in the North. SDC [Sakitawak Development Corporation] was nominated by the Clarence Campeau Development Fund for their work in making substantial investments in northern Saskatchewan. With this award, the recipient will receive \$5,000 and all-expense-paid trip to Ottawa to attend the Indigenous Prosperity Forum.

The SDC's list of priorities include many of my own priorities as representative for Athabasca, like representing the North as a good place for investment. Mr. Speaker, providing good, high-quality jobs, so young skilled workers don't end up leaving their communities for opportunities outside of northern Saskatchewan is critical for growth. It's highly important that organizations like Sakitawak exist to make strong investments in communities so those jobs can exist, Mr. Speaker. So I'm very excited to see what investments Sakitawak will make next, and what opportunities they will bring to the North.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and my fellow members in congratulating Sakitawak Development Corporation on this prestigious award. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-

Touchwood.

Pilot Project to Improve Access to Mental Health Supports for Children

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lisa Plank, my local nurse practitioner from Balcarres, recently moved on to an SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] pilot program that is helping to close the gap for children in southeast Saskatchewan who are in need of access to mental health services. Mr. Speaker, this program ensures that kids who are dealing with issues such as anxiety, depression, and ADHD [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder] receive the care and attention they need in a timely manner.

Since its December launch, Mr. Speaker, over 60 children have benefited. And through the program, rural children can begin treatment much quicker than they could previously. The goal is to expand this pilot program all across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe many people in this Chamber are aware of the toxicity of social media. However today we are seeing increased mental health issues in adolescents. Our youth are actively engaged in technology more than ever. This government is aware of the dangers that our youth face, and we care and want to see all young people healthy and thriving. This program will work in conjunction with our Take a Break campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me in commending Lisa Plank and all Saskatchewan Health Authority employees in contributing to this great project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Swift Current.

Recognizing Swift Current Community Youth Initiative

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Swift Current Community Youth Initiative has been provincially recognized by the Sask Parks and Rec Association for providing youth programming and support in a safe, welcoming environment. The Community Achievement Award recognizes groups for a substantial co-operative community effort with a large volunteer component.

Mr. Speaker, the Community Youth Initiative, which is also known locally as the Center, was nominated for its positive and transforming influence in the lives of youth within Swift Current. It's been operating as a non-profit since November of 2010. The Community Youth Initiative employs five full-time staff and a part-time youth counsellor in addition to roughly 25 volunteers who provide guitar lessons, meal programs, tutoring, and other afterschool programming for youth in Swift Current and area.

They're led by their executive director, Mr. Speaker, Nathan Wiebe, who's just a great guy. He's an absolute gem of a man and a true community leader and very passionate about what he does. In the media Nathan said, and I quote:

There's a quote we live by here at the Center. It's that "people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." That's a really great explanation of how we recruit volunteers, how we explain who we are to

people. And we're here to just be a light in our community.

Mr. Speaker, the Swift Current Community Youth Initiative relies on this core group of volunteers to manage and provide these vital services. During the pandemic, a lot of youth felt isolated, leading to worrying mental health trends. But even with those challenges, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that groups like the Community Youth Initiative can continue to do what they love — serving the youth of Swift Current. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Welcoming Ukrainian Refugee to Wawota

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to share with you the story of Andrii Mishtal and what that story says about the welcome Ukrainian refugees are receiving in southeast Saskatchewan. Andrii is the first Ukrainian refugee to arrive in our part of the province. He is being hosted in Wawota by a committee of volunteers who helped him find a job, housing for himself and his family, and everything they need for a new life in Canada.

Last Thursday, Andrii landed in Saskatoon after a marathon flight from Istanbul. On Friday, Kevin Kay from the Wawota welcome committee, along with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, helped him get some of his paperwork done in Saskatoon. On Saturday, he and Kevin Kay drove to Wawota, dropped off his suitcase, and headed to Moosomin where the local Ukrainian community held a massive fundraiser.

Roman Chernykh, Olga McCarthy, and the entire Ukrainian community should be proud as hundreds of people were there at the Conexus MCC Centre [Moosomin Conexus Convention Centre] when Andrii arrived. It was a wonderful fundraiser with Ukrainian food and a performance by the Poltava dancers. Andrii received a standing ovation.

I was there, Mr. Speaker, and I couldn't imagine a more heartfelt and genuine welcome to Saskatchewan. I am so proud to see how this individual has been welcomed to our area. Today, exactly a week after arriving in Canada, Andrii has been given the honour of being introduced into the Saskatchewan legislature. Mr. Speaker, I'm so proud of the people of southeast Saskatchewan who've opened their hearts and their homes to Andrii and will do the same for many, many more. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Search for Missing Child

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In Red Earth Cree Nation, five-year-old Frank Young is still tragically missing. Our hearts are with the community going through such a difficult, heartbreak experience.

When the member for Cumberland and I visited Red Earth this past weekend, we witnessed an incredible coming together: supports from all over Saskatchewan, from as far south as Cowessess, from as far east as Manitoba. Chief Fabian Head did,

however, express real disappointment that no one from the government had come to visit the community and see the reality of the challenges they face.

[10:30]

He had spoken by phone with the Minister of Public Safety and invited her and, through her, the Premier, to come and visit the community. It seems neither of them have accepted the invitation, as sadly he has still heard nothing back from anyone in this government.

No one's reached out to go see him, not even since we raised this in the House on Monday — not even a phone call to him or to the family of the missing boy from the Premier or his own MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. What message does this choice to not show up send to Frank's family and to Red Earth Cree Nation?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that the Minister of Public Safety has reached out to the family and has spoken with Chief Fabian Head, Mr. Speaker, and that the officials are working hard on what is a very tragic situation in a missing family member, a missing community member. A son, Mr. Speaker. A brother, Mr. Speaker.

And just let me once again welcome all of those that have joined us here today in support of missing people in our province, in our community, Mr. Speaker. This particular situation is very worthy of a conversation on the floor of this legislature, as is the broader initiatives, Mr. Speaker, as to what this government can do, how this government can work with community members, individuals, work with those that have joined us here today, work with the FSIN to really take action to stop this, Mr. Speaker, as we move ahead into the weeks and months ahead.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes showing you care means showing up. The Premier had time to dress up as a helicopter pilot . . . The Premier had time to dress up as a helicopter pilot on the weekend. He's jetting off to Dubai months after his jobs minister went there as his travel scout.

Now I hope these trade missions bear fruit. I truly do. But this is the Premier who refused to visit overcrowded ICUs [intensive care unit], refused to go see the reality in our emergency rooms, and has given no indication, after over two weeks of the disappearance of Frank Young, that he'll be going to see a Saskatchewan First Nations community in crisis.

He's making it appear as though he thinks this is someone else's problem. But the people of this province should be his first priority, Mr. Speaker, especially in their hour of need. When will he show up for them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier . . . I just want to remind all our guests not to take part in the debate and that means no talking, yelling, or clapping at all, please. I ask you to respect that. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, myself and other members of this government are touring various areas of the province, Mr. Speaker. They represent various areas of the province as well. That includes towns, villages. It includes our Indigenous communities as well. I myself represent five Indigenous communities, Mr. Speaker, 12 villages, 17 RMs [rural municipality], five towns, Mr. Speaker.

And let me just say, with respect to the government's action, I think today is a good day, Mr. Speaker, as we have so many here that have joined us in this Assembly to advocate on behalf of the conversation, Mr. Speaker, with respect to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. And I think today is a good day for us to have that discussion on the floor of this Assembly.

I understand with the member's statement that was provided by the member from Saskatoon Centre with respect to the FSIN document, the Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls, Mr. Speaker, we've looked closely at that declaration, at the five articles that are included there. And I think they're articles that the government is broadly supportive of working with the FSIN towards, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why, immediately following question period, the Minister of Justice is going to be asking leave — and we would ask for support in that leave — to have a debate, a conversation, and to have what we hope would be unanimous support, Mr. Speaker, in the government working closely with the FSIN and supporting the FSIN in what we can do together in achieving, Mr. Speaker, or working towards the goals in the five articles that are in the declaration.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again sometimes showing you care means showing up. To the Premier: it is a simple question. This is a request from Red Earth Cree Nation. When will the Premier be going to visit the family and showing his concern in this time of crisis?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'll be reaching out in short order here, Mr. Speaker, to the chief of Red Earth Cree Nation, Mr. Speaker, like I do to a number of communities, Indigenous and otherwise, across the province. The Minister of Health is going to be touring many rural areas throughout the summer once we conclude this session.

Mr. Speaker, what I would also ask on the topic of this very important conversation and action that we believe should be taken by all members in this Assembly and specifically by the government working with the FSIN towards the five articles in the declaration, Mr. Speaker, we would ask for the opposition's support in granting leave and supporting and participating in the debate and supporting the government in working with the FSIN, specific to working towards these five articles.

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

Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The legacies of

colonialism, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and ongoing systemic discrimination manifest in First Nations and Métis people being disproportionately represented in poverty, in illness, as victims of violence. Indigenous women are particularly impacted by these inequities. Métis and First Nations families grieve the loss of missing mothers, daughters, grandmothers, aunties, cousins, friends, relations.

We're joined today by First Nations leaders and the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Our guests today aren't looking for words. They're looking for change, looking for action to address the ongoing victimization of Indigenous women and girls. We know not enough, not nearly enough has been done. What real action will we see from this government? What will the Premier commit to changing today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we've read with great interest the Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls that has been put together by the FSIN, mentioned by the member from Saskatoon University.

Mr. Speaker, when you read through and you look at the five articles of declaration . . . The action that we are going to take today is, immediately following question period, the minister is going to ask for leave to move a motion so we can have this debate. And I hope that everyone would remain to listen to this very important debate about how the government can move forward with the FSIN here in the province, in support of the FSIN in achieving progress towards these five articles, Mr. Speaker, that are put forward in this declaration.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. Well I certainly hope the Premier . . . To you, Premier: hopefully you don't broadly support this then walk away from it as you did the suicide bill.

Today is an opportunity to join the families and survivors as we mourn and honour missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2S+ [two-spirit plus] people. As we reflect and grieve, we must continue to work on addressing this tragedy that has claimed too many here in our province.

The galleries are full of leaders calling for action, families calling for answers. They know so much more needs to be done. Will the minister join me in recognizing that we need to continue to stop failing these women, stop failing these families, and commit to doing more than just nice words?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Speaker.

I'm proud that this was the government that was the first provincial government to support the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Mr. Speaker. A number of us have attended a number of events over

the years, Mr. Speaker, to show our commitment to ensuring the safety of all people in Saskatchewan, including First Nations and Métis people, Mr. Speaker.

We continue to engage with First Nations communities. We continue to engage with the federal government with respect to this very important issue, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan should make no mistake about this government's commitment to deal with a very, very serious issue, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to do that in consultation with our First Nations partners, Mr. Speaker, with the federal government, and with all the people of Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Again I want to say I certainly hope that this government does not backtrack on its commitment to these people in this gallery and to the people of the province.

You know, we have to acknowledge that violence in all forms continue every single day. Today is Red Dress Day. Every day is Red Dress Day for Indigenous women. And we need Saskatchewan and all levels of government to commit to ending systemic racism and violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2S communities in Saskatchewan, including Métis women, including Métis families. Will the government do more than just adopt in principle the declaration and do more?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Justice Minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've said and this government has been very clear that racism has no place in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, no person in this province — no woman, no man, Mr. Speaker, no child — should have to face the stigma of racism or violence.

And that's why this government has made significant commitments, not just in this budget, Mr. Speaker, but in previous budgets to address this very serious issue, Mr. Speaker. We're committed to working with our partners, Mr. Speaker. We're committed to working with our First Nations partners, Mr. Speaker, with the federal government on the inquiry and response to the inquiry and the recommendations that are contained in there, Mr. Speaker.

We'll continue to do that, Mr. Speaker, because we understand and we know. We've heard the stories, and we've experienced them too, Mr. Speaker, that this is a difficult issue to deal with. But we're committed to dealing with it on behalf of all the people of this province.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — It's easy for this government to say they're committed to ending racism. But do you know what? Try experiencing it every day like myself and many women and Indigenous people in this province.

Violence against women is unacceptable and it has to end. And we know Indigenous women are three to five times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women. Indigenous

women are more likely to fear for their lives and are more likely to face extreme violence including the form that claims lives far too soon.

Our guests here today travelled great distances to be here today on Red Dress Day. Again, will this government do more than lip service and actually do better for these Indigenous people in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Justice minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I've said on a number of occasions, including today, Mr. Speaker, that violence against any person in this province is completely unacceptable.

In this budget alone, Mr. Speaker, we've committed over \$24.9 million in funding to protect victims of, survivors of, interpersonal and sexual violence, Mr. Speaker. Our family intervention program that we've just expanded into a number of communities after it was successfully initiated in Kindersley, Mr. Speaker — we now have programs available in Moose Jaw, Estevan, Weyburn, Carlyle, and Nipawin. Our victim advocate case review program, Mr. Speaker, has been very successful. We'll continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

We'll continue to look for opportunities to reduce and eliminate violence against women, Mr. Speaker, against children, and against all people in this province. This government has shown its commitment over the years that we've had the privilege of forming government, and we're going to continue to do that.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — You know, we all hear — and it's nice to hear, good to hear — that the government wants to adopt this declaration. My question is, when is it going to be adopted? Are you going to wait till the dust settles and mainstream public has forgot about it, and then backtrack like you did the suicide bill?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Justice minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, we've made this very, very clear and the Premier has spoken to this in terms of the declaration that has been brought forward. We'll have the opportunity to have a full and fulsome debate on that matter later on after question period, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to reiterate the government's commitment, the government's commitment, Mr. Speaker, to deal with issues of violence, to deal with issues of racism, Mr. Speaker. It's been clear in the programs and the budgets that have been brought forward by this government in terms of how committed we are to dealing with those, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

We have to continue to work with our partners. We have to continue to work with First Nations partners, non-governmental organizations to ensure that we do what we can to reduce and eliminate violence and racism in this province, Mr. Speaker. We've spoken at length about the government's commitment to do just that and we'll continue.

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

Support for Second-Stage Housing and Survivors of Violence

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan shelters and transition houses turn women, disproportionately Indigenous women, away each and every single day. This puts Indigenous women and girls at risk. Full stop. We hear a lot of talk of reconciliation and a lot of willingness to debate, but no meaningful investment into solutions. Mr. Speaker, nearly every other province in Canada provides operational funding for second-stage shelters except Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, shelters keep women safe and children safe. Why on earth would this government not provide funding to something so essential to keeping people safe?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to speak to this particular issue. As the member knows, we fund 12 provincially funded transition houses, \$8.7 million on an annual basis. And I said in one of my last answers, \$24.9 million, to fund programs around interpersonal violence and survivors of interpersonal and sexual violence, Mr. Speaker. A number of other initiatives are brought forward, Mr. Speaker. Second-stage housing is one part of that, Mr. Speaker.

We'll continue to talk to our partners, to continue to talk to non-governmental agencies and other partners, Mr. Speaker, to see how we can best further support victims of interpersonal violence and sexual violence, Mr. Speaker. We've committed to doing that.

I've just met earlier this week, Mr. Speaker, representatives from one of those organizations and indicated my commitment to continue to advocate to ensure that we provide sufficient services and opportunities for people that are fleeing domestic violence and sexual violence.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, still not one operational dollar going to second-stage shelters, an important key to the puzzle to solving interpersonal violence in this province. Mr. Speaker, does the minister seriously think that second-stage shelters should have to rely on charity to be able to do this very important, life-saving work? Will the minister give us one single good reason why his government, one sitting on record revenues, can't seem to provide funding to these life-saving supports?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I've indicated in a number of questions what this government's commitment is on interpersonal violence and sexual violence, Mr. Speaker. Second-stage housing is one piece of that, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to evaluate that in the context of the other programs and the significant funding that this government provides to this very important issue, Mr. Speaker.

I've indicated that we're certainly open to have continued conversations with those providers, Mr. Speaker, to see how we can better support victims of interpersonal violence, Mr. Speaker. I've made that personal commitment in a meeting earlier this week with the Minister of Social Services, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to have those conversations.

But we understand how important the issue is, how important it is to provide services and support to people that are fleeing interpersonal violence. The people of Saskatchewan can count on this government's commitment to continue to work to ensure that victims of interpersonal violence are properly supported in this province.

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

Paid Sick Leave and Supports for Employees

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, workers keep being forced to work sick. It's dangerous for them, for their colleagues, and for the public. Not because they want to, but because they have to. With no paid sick days in Saskatchewan and the lowest minimum wage, workers simply don't have a choice. We need to be making it as easy as we can for workers to stay home when they are unwell.

Mr. Speaker, it's encouraging to hear that there's going to be an important emergency debate on murdered and missing Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people. With the labour leaders and workers here as witnesses, will the government also agree to postpone today's 75-minute debate to allow a vote on Bill 606 for paid sick leave?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the members opposite are well aware, there is a process in place for private members' day to be undertaken, and that process will be followed.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the pandemic began, a majority of provinces have introduced a permanent or temporary paid sick leave program — BC [British Columbia], Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, PEI [Prince Edward Island], and Quebec, as well as all federally regulated workplaces. Saskatchewan is now once again an outlier, but we don't have to be. Saskatchewan workers deserve as much support as Canadians in other parts of our country. Our hospitals are bursting at the seams and COVID is rampant in our communities.

This is one small thing the government could do to limit transmission and help protect people. It is also the decent thing to do. Will Saskatchewan join other provinces, do the right thing, and give all workers paid sick days?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Labour Relations.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like

to thank the member opposite for the question. Throughout the pandemic, we took steps to make it easier for workers to take time off from work when they were sick by ensuring that there were no barriers to accessing programs like the Canada recovery sickness benefits, which provided workers a sum of up to \$500 per week.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, workers in our province can access workers' compensation benefits equal to 90 per cent of their average net earnings if they contracted the illness through the workplace, be that COVID or any other illness. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan already offers job protection to employees with short-term or serious illnesses, including sick leave, 12 days; leave for serious illnesses, additional 12 weeks for personal illnesses or illnesses of a family member; or leave for a work-related injury, the job is held for up to 26 weeks.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the businesses in our province are struggling as they come out of COVID and, Mr. Speaker, we understand that and we understand the regulatory burdens. We want to make sure that we have an appropriate balance for both workers and for businesses.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, this minister keeps getting up and quoting what we have in this province, which we all know is insufficient. He keeps saying that we have 12 sick days, but we know that those are unpaid. That's not helpful and that's not what we need.

Mr. Speaker, paid sick leave isn't just about COVID-19. It reduces communicable disease and the heavy strain on our health care system. It gives workers the time to wait four hours in our overflowing emergency departments — another issue. It allows workers needing diagnostics, treatment, and surgery the flexibility they need to take care of themselves. It helps workers with stress, mental illness, and even suicidal ideation, all while ensuring families can continue paying their bills and keeping a roof over their heads.

Paid sick leave saves families, it saves lives, and it saves money. Will the government support this common-sense solution today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Labour Relations.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're aware that right now small businesses across Canada are struggling as we recover from the pandemic. Many of them are facing regulatory burdens, labour shortages, and financial difficulties.

The government was pleased to announce a market adjustment to minimum wage earlier this week to assist low-income wage earners with the challenges that are relating to the rising costs of living. It should be noted, however, that such a change increases labour costs to businesses, Mr. Speaker. And that was something that we did not do just for ill workers. We did that for all lower income workers.

So, Mr. Speaker, we think it's a significant benefit. It is borne by the employers in our province. We think it is a reasonable and fair thing to do. And, Mr. Speaker, right now in our province we

want to foster and encourage an environment that encourages economic recovery and growth. We don't think we want to impose a substantial liability on employers at this point in time.

Mr. Speaker, we're watching what the federal government is doing. We're watching what's taking place in other jurisdictions. In particular we would encourage the federal government to look at enhanced employment insurance benefits that might help these workers, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Suicide Prevention Strategy

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, this is the 16th day this spring I rise on behalf of Saskatchewan families, today the Dyck family, who have lost a loved one to suicide. So many leaders, organizations, mayors, chiefs, Métis leaders, municipal leaders have all been ringing the alarm bells of a crisis going on in our province with suicide. I'm hoping and again will continue to do all I can on behalf of the families and leaders who have asked that. When will we see a real plan to save Saskatchewan lives?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I extend my condolences to the Dyck family and every family in this province that's been traumatized by a suicide in their families.

Mr. Speaker, in May of 2020 we released the Pillars for Life suicide prevention plan. Work continues on that plan. There will be an update coming forward very soon on the most recent initiatives and accomplishments through that plan, Mr. Speaker.

We are trying to provide supports through a number of different initiatives across this province — urban, rural, North, South, Mr. Speaker. We fund the programs such as the Roots of Hope project up in northern Saskatchewan in La Ronge, Meadow Lake, and Buffalo Narrows; provided some funding to organizations such as the Muskwa Lake Wellness Camp at Pinehouse; and, Mr. Speaker, partnered with organizations such as the Saskatoon Tribal Council on mental health and addictions initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

And we're going to continue to engage with people across this province regardless of where they live, as we all work together to address the challenge of suicide facing each of our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

Standing Committee on House Services

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, I've been instructed by the Standing Committee on House Services to present its seventh report. I move:

That the seventh report of the Standing Committee on House

Services now be concurred in.

I move that the seventh report . . . I already said that.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Deputy Chair:

That the seventh 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. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to seek leave to move a motion under rule 61.

The Speaker: — Will the minister briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the motion is in regard to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The motion reads:

That this Assembly support the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations in regard to the articles of the Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls:

Article 1

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indigenous Nations and its governing and organizational structures will take responsibility and action to address the disproportionate victimization of Indigenous women and girls.

Article 2

In matters of governance and politics, Indigenous women have the right to participate at all levels of governance, including the Nation, tribal council, provincial and national levels, free from discrimination, physical, verbal, spiritual, or emotional abuse and harassment and with respect to both individual autonomy and democratic principles.

Article 3

Indigenous women and girls have the right to partake in ceremonial practices, access safe and accessible child care, education, health, recreation, resource stewardship, economic development, land protection, and livelihood activities with full consideration to their important roles and responsibilities as life-givers of our Nations, free from

disparagement, racism, sexual innuendo, harassment, or assault and with reasonable expectations of physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional safety.

Article 4

Indigenous women and girls have the right to physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual protection, and it's incumbent on all persons to ensure the safety of women and girls.

Article 5

Indigenous women and girls have the right to access independent and culturally relevant and safe processes to investigate and meaningfully address any and all complaints of gender-based violence. Indigenous women and girls who experience gender-based violence have the right to redress and accountability from those responsible.

[11:00]

And, Mr. Speaker, that's the text of the motion.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has requested leave to move without notice a motion of urgent and pressing necessity under rule 61. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The member may proceed. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to rise and talk about an issue that's very important. Mr. Speaker, we've had a number of questions in question period today and a number of people that are in the gallery representing here to celebrate Red Dress Day, Mr. Speaker, a day that's here to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, Mr. Speaker.

I think it's important to remember, Mr. Speaker, that while we remember these individuals today, we need to be remembering them each and every day of the year, Mr. Speaker, and that's why the government has made the significant commitments that it has over the last number of years both in budget and in policy and development of legislation, Mr. Speaker, to help protect women and girls, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak for a moment about the National Inquiry. Mr. Speaker, I was very proud of this government to be the first provincial government in Canada to support the National Inquiry. Of course, Mr. Speaker, for the inquiry to have any significance or any importance, it required the co-operation and the participation of all provinces. And all provinces did participate, Mr. Speaker, and as a result of that, development of a report and a number of recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan supported the release of the national action plan on June 3rd, 2021. Every province and territory was asked to provide a two-page contribution, and the national action plan included a section about Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We were very pleased to be

able to provide that response, Mr. Speaker. Additionally, and we're very proud of this, we developed a longer Saskatchewan response, which can be accessed on the government website. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure members opposite have read that response.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue and we're going to be contributing to an updated report that's going to be released early next month, Mr. Speaker. We continue to engage with Indigenous people so we can better understand how to address this urgent and tragic issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We continue to work with our provincial partners across the country, Mr. Speaker, to see what best practices they are implementing and sharing what we're doing in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, to deal with this very, very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, more specifically on September 8, 2021, the Minister Responsible for First Nations and the Minister Responsible for Parks, Culture and Sport and myself hosted a Zoom event which focused on safety of Indigenous women and girls and gender-diverse people and on the relationship building through economic reconciliation.

And, Mr. Speaker, a number of people on this side of the House have spoken about the importance of reconciliation both with respect to this issue and a number of other issues facing First Nations and Métis people across this province, Mr. Speaker. We think it's a key element in helping to move forward, to reduce and ultimately eliminate the issue with respect to individuals who go missing and who get murdered in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as part of that relationship and that economic reconciliation, the event included an elder, a female Indigenous moderator, and female Indigenous and non-Indigenous presenters, Mr. Speaker. We found it to be a very healthy and a very important step that we could take, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward with dealing with this issue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the province of Saskatchewan and the government has a provincial working group which includes officials from the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. And I want to thank the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety for all her support and all the work that she does in helping support the work that's done in the Ministry of Justice to deal with the issue. She plays a very, very important role. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Government Relations as well plays a very significant role. Education, Advanced Education, Health, and Social Services — we all work together, Mr. Speaker, to look to see how we can better address this, how we can work on developing more programs, enhancing the programs that we do have to deal with the issue, Mr. Speaker.

The group of provincial officials worked to support the National Inquiry through its term, Mr. Speaker, and continues to do that work on behalf of our ministries. The ministries are continuing to consider how best to respond to the Calls for Justice and the final report's themes within their respective mandates, Mr. Speaker. We could certainly talk at length with respect to how those ministries are responding, Mr. Speaker, and I think that all the ministers, through their officials, have made it quite clear publicly how they're dealing and supporting the work of the National Inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

More specifically to the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Speaker, significant work has been done to enhance the response in missing persons cases and to support families of missing persons. For example, the National Inquiry called for all provinces and territories to enact missing persons legislation. Saskatchewan was the first province to proclaim legislation in 2009, which it ultimately amended in 2018.

Those amendments, Mr. Speaker, provide more comprehensive search powers for law enforcement officers who are investigating missing persons cases. It includes provisions for law enforcement to obtain search orders; in certain circumstances, assess a broader range of records; access information about a person who might be in the company of a missing person who is a minor or a vulnerable adult; and make emergency demands for records where certain criteria are met, Mr. Speaker. Certainly extraordinary powers that have been added to that legislation to help enhance the investigatory powers of those institutions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Justice also coordinates the services and support for families of missing persons, including Indigenous women and girls, through our Saskatchewan missing persons partnership. And that partnership was mentioned in the National Inquiry, Mr. Speaker. The partnership is composed of individual organizations, police, community-based agencies, and provincial ministries. It works to prevent people from going missing, coordinates policies to enhance the response when people do go missing, and collaborates with agencies that provide services and support for families of missing persons, Mr. Speaker.

The partnership has organized Missing Persons Week annually since 2013. Regrettably due to COVID-19, those events have occurred virtually over the last two years, Mr. Speaker. We're certainly hoping that they will return to in-person functions over the next year, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in 2022 Missing Persons Week has just occurred with the theme Caring for Families One Day at a Time. We had the great privilege of being able to speak to that on the floor of this Assembly. The ministry has also dedicated a web page to provide tools to families who have had people that have gone missing, Mr. Speaker. And we encourage anyone, not just family members, but friends of those that go missing to access that information on the government web page, Mr. Speaker. It does provide more tools to people to help them work through that, but certainly the partnership and the family intervention liaison unit, Mr. Speaker, is very, very helpful when it comes to providing that support.

And, Mr. Speaker, just speaking about the family information liaison unit, I know that they were responsible for ensuring a number of guests attended in the Assembly today. I want to thank them, not just for coordinating that work, Mr. Speaker, but for all the work that they do in providing support through that unit, Mr. Speaker.

That unit, and I know members opposite are aware, they provide trauma-informed and culturally appropriate services and supports. They're provided so families can access information about their missing or murdered family members from agencies such as Social Services, the coroner's office, prosecutions, and

police.

They take a family-centred approach which includes attending walks, searches, burials, memorials, and other events with families; helping families organize events and activities; and linking them to supports to address the long-term trauma and grief that they experience, Mr. Speaker. It's about sharing that grief. It's about providing support to those families, Mr. Speaker. We all have a responsibility in that regard, and I'm very proud of the work that the family intervention liaison unit does to support them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also support the missing persons liaison to facilitate more trusting relationships between police and victims and the community. With funding from Justice Canada, which we're thankful for, the missing persons liaison programs are located in Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon through their police services. They provide specialized victim services that respond to the needs of families. They also provide training, case consultations, workshops, and training materials to other professionals including all police-based victim services programs across the province.

Mr. Speaker, the National Inquiry discussed the need to investigate police misconduct and to support Indigenous survivors and the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, Mr. Speaker. The Public Complaints Commission, which funds the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations special investigations unit to receive complaints of police misconduct . . . Mr. Speaker, the investigation unit also supports Indigenous survivors of violence and the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Mr. Speaker, the province is in the process of establishing a serious incident response team to investigate police involvement in serious incidents. That new responsibility falls on a civilian-led Public Complaints Commission. That investigation provisions include First Nations and Métis community liaisons to assist with coordinating the needs to victims and/or their families in order to provide advice about the community.

Mr. Speaker, the ministry has recently created a new position and hired the director of Indigenous engagement, Tracey Dunnigan. She started with us in March and we're pleased to help us increase our engagement with the communities and families, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan's also engaging with Indigenous people so we can understand how to address this pressing issue. Violence against Indigenous women and girls is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. We've made that clear on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. That's the position of the Government of Saskatchewan. We will continue to do what we can in terms of the existing programs, in terms of advancing new programming opportunities to deal with what is a very, very serious issue, not just in this province, Mr. Speaker, but in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, on September the 8th a number of ministers, including the Minister of Government Relations and the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport, hosted an event to deal with the safety of Indigenous women and girls which, as I

mentioned before, included an elder and a number of First Nations individuals, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we recently established a new director of Indigenous relations position within the ministry. The new director will meet with Indigenous organizations and support Indigenous justice initiatives. Mr. Speaker, we're very pleased to be able to have that individual working within the ministry, not only to support the work of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Speaker, but to support the work of the other ministries that are vitally important as we all work together on this side of the House to deal with what is, without argument, a very, very serious issue in First Nations communities and Métis communities, Mr. Speaker.

We also discussed at length, Mr. Speaker, the elders forum, and that was discussed through the National Inquiry. The elders forum includes male and female First Nations and Métis elders from Indigenous language groups throughout the province, including Cree, Dene, Dakota, and Saulteaux, Mr. Speaker. The ministry meets regularly with those elders, Mr. Speaker. I've had the opportunity to do that. I know the former minister of Justice had also had the opportunity to do that, and I thank him for all the support that he has given the ministry over the years in dealing with this issue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, those kinds of engagements enable us to understand how the justice system impacts Indigenous people, hear the collective voice of First Nations and Métis communities, and consider future directions. Mr. Speaker, examples of those initiatives that have benefited from the advice and guidance of the elders include the redesign of the coroner's office and the Provincial Court jury selection process. In the past few months, Mr. Speaker, the elders have met with the ministry's criminal justice system review unit and shared their wisdom and ideas with the Public Complaints Commission.

With respect to victims of crime, Mr. Speaker, I've spoken at length on the floor of this Assembly about the support that the Government of Saskatchewan has given with respect to that issue. We support 14 police-based victim services programs in Saskatchewan, serving all people in the province. Of those programs, 10 are located at RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] detachments, and four are based through municipal police services. In combination they offer that service now throughout the province.

Mr. Speaker, victims services funds the Indigenous family violence initiative to help Indigenous organizations provide comprehensive and holistic family violence services to Indigenous families. There are six programs in five communities — The Battlefords, Prince Albert has two programs, Regina, Saskatoon, and Yorkton — and the program will respond as needs in other communities are identified.

Mr. Speaker, we also . . . those specialized services. Indigenous resource officers are established in six police-based victim services programs to assist Indigenous victims and their families. Those programs advocate on behalf of Indigenous victims of crime and assist police in developing crime initiatives for Indigenous use, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there's a number of initiatives that this government has taken over the last number of years, and in direct response to a number of the articles that were in the motion. We're very, very proud of the fact that on the provincial Police Commission, we have First Nations representation thanks to the great work that's been done by my seatmate.

On the Provincial Court Commission, we have First Nations representation to ensure that when we're vetting individuals for appointment to the Provincial Court, Mr. Speaker, that First Nations and Métis individuals are properly represented. Five Indigenous judges being appointed to the court by my predecessor, Mr. Speaker, and that's work that we continue to do to ensure that First Nations are properly represented in the organizations that support the delivery of justice services in the province. And, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the courts are among the most important when it comes to ensuring that we're delivering fair and just judicial services within the province.

Mr. Speaker, there's a number of other things that we have done in this province, including on-reserve policing and enhanced policing, community justice and alternative measures, northern victim services, interpersonal violence and abuse programs. There's been a number of other things that we have done in response to these articles, including social media programs, Mr. Speaker, that was launched in Cree and Dene to ensure that people understand how violence is perpetrated against individuals in this province, particularly First Nations and Métis people.

On April 20th we proclaimed *The Protection From Human Trafficking Act*, Mr. Speaker, and that's our government's further commitment with regard to safeguarding victims and survivors of human trafficking, a broad piece of legislation protecting all women in this province. New provisions for law enforcement around search warrants for residences and vehicles, Mr. Speaker, and providing some civil protection for those individuals as well.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned during question period, \$24.9 million that's been provided in this budget for interpersonal violence initiatives, including the support for a number of provincially funded transition houses, 12 in all.

Mr. Speaker, we know there's more work to do. This government has continued to continue to do that work. The one program that we're very proud of is — among many others, Mr. Speaker — our northern transportation initiative, which provides funding to ensure that individuals that are fleeing interpersonal violence in remote communities have immediate access to transportation so that women and their children can get relief from those situations as quickly as possible.

It's been a very successful program, Mr. Speaker. We regret of course that individuals need to take advantage of it, but it's there for them. And then they are able to access the programs that not just the government provides, but a number of community-based organizations, Mr. Speaker. We have the Face the Issue program, we have the 211 line, and we have the victim advocate case review program, which allows files which the police don't pursue to be reviewed to see whether there was any mistakes made in those investigations, to see whether or not all the work was properly done in those particular investigations.

Mr. Speaker, I'll end my time here simply by saying this: this government is opposed. We decry any violence against any individual in this province. I mentioned before, racism has no place in this province. And the work that's been done by the Human Rights Commission, the programming that's been done by this government and the funding of those programs, Mr. Speaker, is vitally important to address the issues that face Indigenous women and girls. This was all recognized in the National Inquiry. We're committed to continuing to work on the recommendations that have come out of that National Inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll end with this: the people of Saskatchewan can trust this government. We're committed to addressing this issue, Mr. Speaker, to working with our partners — not just our Indigenous partners but police services and other organizations — to end violence against individuals in this province, particularly Indigenous women and girls. And the government and the people of Saskatchewan can count on that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. I so move.

The Speaker: — Would the minister please move the motion.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker:

This Assembly supports the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations in regards to the articles of Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls:

Article 1

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations and its governing and organizational structures will take responsibility and action to address the disproportionate victimization of Indigenous women and girls.

Article 2

In matters of governance and politics, Indigenous women have the right to participate at all levels of governance, including the Nation, tribal council, provincial and national levels, free from discrimination, physical, verbal, spiritual, or emotional abuse and harassment, and with respect for both individual autonomy and democratic principles.

Article 3

Indigenous women and girls have the right to partake in ceremonial practices, access to safe and accessible child care, education, health, recreation, resource stewardship, economic development, land protection, and livelihood activities with full consideration to their important roles and responsibilities and life-givers of the Nation, free from disparagement, racism, sexual innuendo, harassment, or assault, and with reasonable expectations of physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional safety.

Article 4

Indigenous women and girls have the right to physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual protection. It's incumbent on all persons to ensure the safety of women and girls.

Article 5

Indigenous women and girls have the right to access independent and culturally relevant and safe processes to investigate and meaningfully address any and all complaints of gender-based violence. Indigenous women and girls who experience gender-based violence have the right to redress and accountability from those responsible.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Will the members take the motion as read? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate . . . On behalf of the official opposition, we appreciate this motion that's being presented. What I do want to say is several things. One of them is that today is Red Dress Day. This whole week was Missing Persons Day. And FSIN has asked the declaration that they presented on Red Dress Day to be adopted by this government.

And what the group here that's here in this gallery here is seeing today, it's wonderful for you to see. And today is a very sombre day, sombre moment here. And members opposite are behaving themselves, with the exception of a few, that they say that this is very important to them, ending violence against Indigenous women. And they're saying that they want to end racism and they're doing lots to help Indigenous people. Well if the members opposite were really serious about actions, they wouldn't be cross-talking amongst themselves. They wouldn't be walking around. They would actually be sitting in their seat and listening to their member present the motion.

So having said that, you know, it was spoken that there's provincial groups. Sadly what happens when the province gets involved and puts provincial groups together to help Indigenous people, people with lived experience, Indigenous — visible Indigenous — people are not sitting at those tables, you know. And again it's, let's do for those poor, little Indians and put our people in there. And this is very serious. Today is Red Dress Day. This week is Missing Persons Week. Those provincial groups are not representative of families that have missing persons. Those groups are made up of individuals whose loved ones have gotten lost due to Alzheimer's and other ways of them going missing. But women, families that actually have had their families missing are not represented at those tables. That is what I heard last night. I met last night till 10 o'clock with this group.

It's a good show here for you guys to be behaving yourselves, but it's just a show, folks. It's just show because they're nasty in here. I see a few acknowledging that. You know, one of the things that concerns me when this government says, we'll do this, because they feel pressured, is that they often backtrack and dust something off they've developed, or not developed, a few years ago and say, hey, we'll use this.

Actions speak louder than words. This government with its actions has told many Indigenous people — especially women, girls, families that are mourning, that are searching, that are wondering where their loved ones are — they've told us the message that we have received. And that's why there's a large delegation in this House, is that this government has sent the

message to us as Indigenous women, they do not care. This government does not care.

They talk about the investments that they're putting in to help. Well where are we represented? Where are we represented in those? Yes, they have a few selected senior positions, and then the minister was just talking about having a Zoom meeting. Well we know in Indian country, Zoom meetings don't suffice. We actually have to get out there and talk to people. We have to be out there.

Many of these people, these MLAs here that are elected, have First Nations in their communities. And many say, yes, I have First Nations in my community. But where are they when we're searching for our loved ones? Where are they advocating and highlighting our loved ones that are missing? Where are they? They're not, they're not there. We know what's happening with that baby that's been missing. We know what's happened.

So remember, remember that this government does a lot of lip service, but it's we as Indigenous people, it's we as matriarchs. And we have right now, we have eyes rolling right now as I'm speaking. Know that. Know this is the respect that we get as Indigenous women. This is what we get.

So reconciliation, meaningful reconciliation isn't window dressing. We have to walk our talk. We have to demand and ask your MLAs to walk their talk on reconciliation.

I do not want this motion that has been presented to be like the suicide bill that was presented a year ago, where the government all patted themselves on the back and said, what a great job, we're moving this after a third time that it has been defeated, and then only a year later, backtracked and dust off something they had a year, two years ago. We want this government to act.

[11:30]

Today is Red Dress Day. Our women, our children, our grandmothers are missing. So I ask the government, stop with the window dressing. Stop giving lip service. And when we talk about ending racism, we don't tolerate racism, then I say to you, check your departments because in there we are entrenched with systemic racism.

And I want to know in this motion that you have, do you have, will there be clear reporting and measurements here of success? Will you have that in there, or is it just a document you're going to say, yes we approved it, we put it on the website? And remember, Indigenous people, not all Indigenous people have access to internet. Remember that. So you can ask us to go to the government website for resources, but remember there's a large population that has absolutely no access to internet. So revisit the suggestions you're asking Indigenous people to do. Think about that. Get a pulse of the community you represent.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. And again I want to say to the delegation that came out here, it is such an honour to see women. Government, take a look at the women. That's representation. We need representation inside this House. We need more Indigenous women that look like me in this House. miigwech.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all I'd like to acknowledge all those that have been affected by domestic violence. I also want to thank those that are here that are raising the issue today of course on May the 5th, Red Dress Day. Red Dress Day commemorates, every year on May the 5th, the events around murdered and missing women. It was started back in 2010 by a Métis lady, Jaime Black, who started the movement, and it has developed into a national day of recognition and of remembrance and of grief for those murdered and missing Indigenous women.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the Government of Saskatchewan is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all Saskatchewan residents, and we are committed to meaningful and lasting reconciliation with First Nation and Métis communities across our province. Economic reconciliation plays an essential role in addressing the issues of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Saskatchewan recognizes that emotional, mental, physical, and economic security is a major factor in Indigenous women and girls' ability to leave unsafe situations and to protect children from violence and abuse. Supporting Indigenous economic development and job creation is a pillar of the Government of Saskatchewan's Growth Plan 2020 to 2030. This will help Indigenous women to lead this growth and contribute to the society and economic well-being of their communities.

I am pleased that this budget includes a continued investment in First Nations and Métis communities across Saskatchewan. Approximately \$233 million in funding is targeted to First Nations and Métis organizations or individuals. This includes an investment of \$800,000 for community-led initiatives. Mr. Speaker, 400,000 of that is directed specifically at issues raised in the national action plan for murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls. Funding aligns with the Government of Saskatchewan's response to the National Inquiry. Government Relations officials are co-developing the criteria and application process for funding with various Indigenous organizations.

Mr. Speaker, in 2021 the Ministry of Government Relations provided \$400,000 for First Nations and Métis community partnership program grant programs that focused funding on locally developed projects related to issues raised by the National Inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous girls. There's many projects, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I think, there was about 15 different projects and five sponsorships to different communities within the province. Mr. Speaker, \$400,000 goes to these projects that are developed by the community for the community. It isn't government that is suggesting what these projects should be, but we fund the projects that come from the communities.

As I said, there was 15 different projects funded, and they are projects such as Engaging Young Leaders of today. This was put on by the Big Brothers and sisters of Yorkton, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, Good Spirit School Division, and the Yorkton Tribal Council. Leadership skills included social inclusion, mental health and wellness, school activities, technological skills to assist vulnerable youth in making choices to keep them safe and on the path of growth and development.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, this was a project that was developed by the Big Brothers and sisters as well as the Yorkton Tribal Council.

A second project: the Treaty Land Sharing Network, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and the Nature Conservancy, Mr. Speaker. Opportunities for cross-cultural learning and relationship building, enhancing the safety and security of Indigenous women and girls through strengthening connections to culture and identity and to providing opportunity to access traditional medicines, supplies, food sources, and spaces for ceremony.

A third, Mr. Speaker, of these 15 was the Women & Girls Wellness Group, North Sask Victim Services, KidsFirst North, the Saskatchewan Health Authority suicide prevention program, Community Safety Board, and the northern village of La Loche and the RCMP put this application together, and it was funded. And what it did was awareness and teaching regarding murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, such as interpersonal violence, sexual trafficking, substance abuse, healthy relationships, and self-care. Mr. Speaker, La Loche and Clearwater River Dene Nation were the beneficiaries.

Grandmothers' Teachings was the fourth program. The Treaty Education Alliance, Kids Help Phone, and local cultural artists strengthening intergenerational relationships while addressing stressors that increase the risk of interpersonal violence, promoting healthy relationships, and leading through intergenerational learning and empowerment, Mr. Speaker.

As I said, these projects come from the community. These aren't projects that are thought of through Government Relations or First Nations and Métis Relations. We provide the funding. These projects come from the communities, as I said, for the communities.

A fifth one is the Family Wellness and Healing Project, the North West Friendship Centre, Saskatchewan's RCMP crime reduction unit in Meadow Lake. Addressing gaps in interpersonal violence, related programs offered in northern Saskatchewan, and are culturally safe and trauma-informed towards healing trauma; self-awareness, esteem, and life skills; addiction and mental health and other coping skills. And, Mr. Speaker, that's a program that was developed again by those in and around the Meadow Lake area.

Church Renovation and Safe Space Project. The Keesekoose First Nation, Full Gospel Church, and Indigenous Services Canada was the one that put this project forward. It provided for safe spaces for victims of domestic violence to stay and access healing support, improve community health and well-being through mentorship and job skills training, and provide community hub and community members to access counselling, cultural and healing supports, community gathering, mentorship, and recreation activities.

Mr. Speaker, another project here. Men of the North: Pilot Project was put forward by a number of northern communities. This is to ensure that men have access to supports for mental health and addictions, and abuse does not receive the full consideration it likely should. It is imperative that the men and boys become engaged and assist in the healing of past traumas,

of intergenerational abuse, and to create positive change in the well-being of men that can in turn contribute to the decline in interpersonal and domestic violence and the building of safe and healthy communities.

Mr. Speaker, one other one here is . . . I'm just going to maybe go down a couple here. Community engagement project. The Métis Central Western Region 2 Inc. partnered with the Prince Albert police and north central Indigenous community, Mr. Speaker. And it was a program that identified gaps in current service delivery by other service providers, teaching self-defence to Indigenous women and girls; delivering healthy relationship, dating, and keeping-safe educational classes; making referrals to agencies, to facilities; access to counselling and other services. Outreach to human trafficking victims and women and girls at risk, and providing them warm clothes, blankets, and food.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I could go on. There are 15 in the last intake. There's \$400,000 available in this provincial budget that will go to projects that are, again, developed from the communities. These applications come in. They are reviewed by the ministry. And then funding goes out to help in these various communities, dealing with the very issue that we're talking about today, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately, unfortunately nothing can be done for those that are murdered and missing. Cannot bring them back, but we have to do everything that we possibly can to stem that from happening again into the future. And I really believe that the solutions are not on these benches but are in the communities where this is taking place, and providing funding to cover some of the projects that are coming forward, great projects from communities across the province, not all in northern Saskatchewan. Yorkton. I see Lloydminster here is another one, in conjunction with Onion Lake Cree Nation is another one that's submitted a project, Mr. Speaker. And we know that there will be many more coming forward to the government in this budget year, Mr. Speaker, and be certainly glad to talk about those into the future because they do have an impact, Mr. Speaker.

This all, you know, really does generate around education and being, you know, raising recognition today. Our government was really the first one that put in treaty education into the school system, Mr. Speaker. I never had the benefit of going through that when I went to school. Of course that was quite a long time ago. But everybody that goes through our school system now has the benefit of treaty education, which is extremely, extremely important, Mr. Speaker.

We're working hard with the Treaty Commissioner to look at other aspects, to increase the education of treaties. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we'll be the first government in Canada to be putting up signs later on this spring/summer signifying where the divide between Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 is, up around the Davidson area. They'll be going up this summer so when people are driving between Regina and Saskatoon, they'll know whether they're in Treaty 4 or Treaty 6, which was never done before. And we may look at spreading that across the province at other locations, Mr. Speaker, so that it is part of the education process.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the articles that were put forward today, and the Minister of Justice and Attorney General certainly went through these when he named the motion, there is really

nothing in here that a person could disagree with. All five articles are extremely important, and that's why it's certainly good to stand today and show our support for those five articles, Mr. Speaker. Because it does address a very, very serious problem in our province that needs to end, and that is the issue of violence to all people in our province, but in particular on a day like today, we're certainly talking about murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly affirm and support these articles and the motion put forward by the Minister of Justice. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On an occasion like this, we're reminded what we've gone through when we're exposed to a missing family member.

[11:45]

I remember growing up, in 1979 there was a woman that went missing in La Loche. Until today she's being remembered and never been located. Until today, since then we still sit and discuss and remember the day she went missing. And I listen to my family talk about how the police responded, how the investigation happened. The lady that went missing, my oldest sister and her kind of had resemblance. And my sister, two cousins were walking to school, and the police pulled over and asked her all kinds of questions to identify if she was missing. So those are the memories that we share in remembrance. And as First Nation people, as Métis, we have come a long way.

I spoke last week of Pinehouse, and I want to quickly touch on the power of women and what I bring forward. I grew up with a strong mother who provided guidance in the community as she contributed to the community and later on as an elder. And she was sought out; people wanted her opinion. And I saw that. My family saw that. The community saw that.

And then later on, as a police officer engaged in other communities, I heard of Pinehouse. Pinehouse is a community that, you know, it was documented, the state of their community, in a documentary in the '70s. And it was a group of women that said, this cannot be our story. Until today, that community is healing. Their efforts are recognized with the investments we give them. But more so, the power of that group and the foundation they set for their community, and in that foundation the movement of the future for our young is always celebrated in recognition of what we've gone through.

And here is a community that has set an example for many. And it's people like me who advocate, who make that connection, whether you're in southern Saskatchewan, in the territories, of the work that I've done because we see what is possible when we invest, when we take ownership, and what that looks like. So 30 years later, Pinehouse is thriving. Pinehouse is still healing. And so I think about 1979, what we went through. I think about how Pinehouse was documented.

I had a sister that left home early. And it wasn't in today's world of cell phones and internet; it was just by telephone we communicated. And I remember the worry my mom had because we didn't know where my sister was. She had moved to

Saskatoon and we had no clue weeks on end what we were going to hear, and that stress that it caused.

So it's not beyond me and beyond this government that we know what we've gone through. And there are people in this building that acknowledge that, recognize that, and put voice to it on behalf of all women of Saskatchewan, because of what my mother went through, what my aunties went through, what my father went through, and what we went through.

I remember as a little boy we had gone to bed and my parents had gone south. And middle of the night, we heard them come in, and just like anywhere else, you know, a trip to the South meant there was groceries brought and we might have got something bought for us. But I heard a voice in the shuffle, and honestly I thought it was my sister. I bolted out of bed, went upstairs, and she wasn't there.

And you know, that is what a lot of our people live. As a police officer, I responded to a call with family services. And it was a log home, people living off the grid completely. And we enter the home. There was a few little girls there, and we're engaged in communication with the family, you know, of their kids going to school and not going to school, just taking an evaluation.

Something caught my attention. There was a teen magazine, just like what we see, and it was of celebrity teenagers. And something struck me. I thought, this is what these girls are looking up to. Sometimes our reality is not what we're exposed to. And that struck me because I thought, when they're exposed to . . .

You know when we're given an opportunity in this building, we are just . . . Respect was just demanded of us. And if we are going to demand respect and if it's not mutual, that is worth a discussion, but not here. Because today we're talking about some serious issues and we're reflecting and we're remembering and we're honouring. I saw the women come to the building in their ribbon skirts. When we want to talk about reconciliation and how far we've come, that is clear evidence of how far we've come. There was a time where we felt like we could not speak or express ourselves like that, and we have come a long way.

I have strong women in my family. My wife — I heard KidsFirst North — she spearheaded that program in northern Saskatchewan and it's still striving and successful, and people still speak her name of her investment in northern Saskatchewan. I have two sisters that are finishing their master's program on Indigenous language. I have a sister who is educating young Métis, First Nation girls on making ribbon skirts in her classroom.

When I was in grade 6, when we were being taught history, there was a quote in the history book that stuck with me: the Pope finally recognizing Indigenous people as people. So even at that age I understood there was going to be a purpose for all of us, and we have to exercise that purpose to the best of our ability and that expression has to be based on truth, respect, and the language that we use from people hearing us have to be in the position of hope and what vision we give.

Chief Cadmus Delorme, I heard him speak a few times. And he speaks about reconciliation, residential school, as we inherited

that issue. This government, on either side, the First Nations, the Métis, what we're dealing with is something that we inherited. And some of us take it to heart of how we move forward with it. I want my time in this building where I spoke of hope for my people. We have been through pain. We haven't been recognized all the time.

And I get asked, being on this side of government, and just this morning by the independent member, how are you treated on that side? And you know, if you have to ask that, you need to grow a little bit on your development. Because on this side of the government, a First Nation voice is respected, welcomed, and I'm sought out for my experience and what I can give to this province of Saskatchewan.

On behalf of all women, on behalf of everyone that is missing and not coming home, that is what we represent here. If we continuously hear that there is racism, if we continuously hear that this is not being done, what does that do to our people of all walks of life?

At some point, at some point the narrative has to be we've come this far and we're going here. And that is what my voice on this side of government, on behalf of my constituents, we are continuously engaged in communication and something as tough as missing, murdered women and girls of all walks of life.

So I was very proud when I went out to the front of the building and I engaged in conversation with the women there — many leaders, many elders, the children. And I look forward to having an engaged conversation with them as we move forward. And I just want to say that women are honoured, women are respected, and women are remembered.

As we wear our ribbon, our red, it is in honour of that. And don't let anybody tell you that it's not based on respect because when we wear it, it's with acknowledgement that we are respecting women and we are remembering those that are lost. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Now thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in and make some comments. We talk about respect and it is true. I ask Creator to guide me. I ask our elders to guide me. Because sometimes hope, you talk about hope . . . Like it or don't like it, the sad reality is sometimes things get heated up in this Chamber, and I've said that many times. You have your beliefs; I have mine. As a government, you have your policies and what you want to follow and what is a priority, and the members opposite have their priority. And that's . . . and interesting watching this back-and-forth, and we've done it for years.

I've been here many years. I'm a proud Métis man. I have 17 grandkids. Most of them are First Nations. I'm very proud. Everything I do, I do for my grandkids, for the people I represent. We can sit here and say nice things to one another, but I tell you this again, and I tell the people that have come here today. Remember this word. The member from Saskatoon Centre has said it so . . . it's been harsh the way she said it. She speaks her truth. I give her honour because she does. As hard as it is sometimes to speak her truth, she does. I haven't always backed her because I wasn't sure; I was uncomfortable when she spoke. But she spoke from the heart.

And what she feels as a residential survivor, as an educated First Nations woman, very proud. I've learned so much from her and it's been an honour to serve with her. She has not always been treated so nice and respected from members opposite. I'm not going to say all of them. Some. I'll let them look at that, and they can visit that as they talk about respect. We'll let that journey . . . Look to your own self-guidance and see who shows true respect and who does . . . I'm not going to point anyone out. I'm just going to say, we all do things. I'm not perfect either. There's times I have done things I need to visit myself.

[12:00]

We talk about moving forward. We'll see where we go with this. I know that there's been bills that we as a government, we've worked on as opposition members, as government to try to make sure that it's the right thing to do for Saskatchewan people. And I hear that. And sometimes it's all nice and we pass bills. And the member from Saskatoon Centre has said it well. I know I . . . we will work hard.

Today in question period again, I rose on behalf of families who have lost loved ones to suicide. The lost mostly are Indigenous people. They're not all Indigenous. I have, you know, many people that are asking now to come forward and say, please use my family name. And we'll continue.

It is about respect. You know, I look at government, and it's a big government. You have such a big majority. I've said that before. You can do anything you want. You have the power. We're a small backbench. We're an opposition that's very small. I've encouraged backbenchers. I have said in this Assembly, you know, remind the ministers. Remind cabinet. Sometimes maybe they forget what you're going through back home.

And if you're genuine back there about what's going on in our province with Indigenous people, trust me. We are doing great numbers when it comes to our correctional centres. We're filling them up. It's sad, but that's reality. You talk about hope, losing hope. If you look at the numbers, the suicide numbers, you look at many of the other files that First Nations . . . Why are we leading that? Is there a willingness to work together?

And I believe the Justice minister today. I believe he's sincere. I truly do. I truly believe he's moving this motion because it's sincere to him. I have no belief that, any other than with that with him, that he's sincere and genuine.

I can tell you I don't want to sit here and argue and point fingers at people. Our Indigenous people, my grandkids, our families have suffered enough. My families have suffered. Trust me. When I think about the overdose that so many we lose in our province and are Indigenous people. Suicides, addictions — we have lost so many. There are so many families that are suffering, but they're here as Indigenous people to say, remind the government and opposition, work together.

We hear that we're supposed to work together for the people, and I believe that. I came here believing that. Fourteen years I've been here. I've been honoured to get elected and represent the Cumberland constituency. And many of the biggest First Nations in our province are in my riding — two of them.

And you know, I kind of chuckle a little bit about it because I watch the chiefs and they say, no, I've got more now. And I actually tell them this story, and I say this with a little bit of humour because my grandfather said, "Sometimes, Doyle, when it's hard, things are tough, use a little bit of humour." But I watch Chief Tammy Cook-Searson and Chief Bird go back and forth saying, no, oh, oh, we just had another birth, another birth. And so their numbers go up. And it's amazing.

And I've said to Chief Bird, I've said it this way as fun. I said, "I finally have a band member. My cāpān is with Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation," I said, "so I gave you one more. My granddaughter gave you one more to your number." And I say that in humour and laughter, because sometimes we need that.

But these are serious times our people are going through, and we need to all come together, whether it's provincial, federal government, when it comes to a file that's so important — missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. There are so many families back home that I know that are waiting for their loved ones to come home, and they don't know where they are. And I've been to many ceremonies where they're missing and they want them to come home. And sometimes, you know, it's been years and they're still saying they would like to be able to bring their loved one home even if they find something, a trace to put them to rest.

We have an opportunity, meaningful, and for this . . . And I think we'll get unanimous support. I believe members, I'm hoping, will support it. And like the member from Saskatoon Centre has said, it's not just nice words. It's not just because of the media. It's not just because of the guests that are in the gallery. It's because we're saying we're going to change.

If the member from Athabasca . . . I wish you well talking to cabinet. I do. I hope you can advocate because I know people are watching and they're going to see. And I hope that happens. I wish you well. I truly do. We have so many issues need to be addressed. Maybe you're the gentleman that's going to do that, and maybe someday you'll be a part of the cabinet, and you know, it won't all be non-Indigenous. We'll have an Indigenous person as part of cabinet, and maybe that's going to happen. And that will be good, and you can be that voice.

I know for me in opposition, where I'm at, I will never be there and that's all fine. I can still advocate and fight for Indigenous people's rights when they ask me to do that, when families ask us to come here and fight for them. And don't give up, they say; have hope. And I'm glad that the member from Athabasca said, have hope, because those families that have asked me time and time again to come here and ask about getting supports for Indigenous people, men and women who lost life to suicide. We have a bill that we passed unanimously. We'll see where we go with that. We'll see. I'm hoping that that bill will get what it needs and we can move forward. I truly do.

So here we have an opportunity again to work together in a meaningful way, and I hope. Backbenchers, I talk to you because I feel sometimes you get out there, you are . . . Ministers are so busy. They're doing all their files. You have opportunities to talk to some of the community members that are back home. You have a chance to say to the ministers . . . because they're busy. I know they're always busy doing their stuff. And the Premier,

he's busy going all over and doing the work he has to do. I understand. It's a busy file sometimes. But don't forget about the people back home that are saying they're hurting. Don't forget about those missing and murdered women and girls.

There's going to be opportunities, and we'll continue to have back-and-forth. I get it. But just remember, at the end of the day, we'll all be judged. We'll all have a Judgment Day. Maybe from some of our constituents. But I believe I will have a Judgment Day for me by a higher power. Did I do right? Did I treat people good? Did I try? And that higher power, the Creator I rely on and meditate and ask guidance, he lets me know I'm not always a nice person because I'm hurt and I'm angry.

And sometimes I try to change that. And I know sometimes I'm not always the nicest, but sometimes I want government to hear the pain the people I represent that come here are going through. And I want you to understand that it's the pain I bring here, the hurt. I've been to so many funerals, so many community walks when it comes to murdered and missing women and girls, to support it.

So I want to say, today we have an opportunity. And I hope today it isn't all good, good, good, back and forth. And I guess we're going to all have our say. But I hope we move forward in a good way and genuine.

And the last thing I'm going to say, I want to thank my colleagues. And you know, the member from Saskatoon Centre has done so much to work . . . you know, has done so much work on First Nations files and getting people coming here and working with them. I just want to thank her for her good work and . . . sometimes she has to be tough. But hopefully we can move forward.

And again, my last thing I will say . . . I know I've got my other colleagues would like to say some comments for the record. Again, I believe the minister to be genuine. And I'm hoping as Justice minister he will make sure and hold all of us accountable and his cabinet and his colleagues accountable. Because anything I can do to work with him, I will do it all I can.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know there's so much work being done by so many organizations and groups, First Nations, and our Métis when it comes to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. There's so much work. So many hours go into it and so much pain. I just want thank them. And the leaders, I want to thank the leaders. Keep doing what you can.

And I know for myself, I will be supporting the motion. So with that I would just like to say thank you for allowing me to join in on the debate and having a little bit of a conversation. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First off, I want to acknowledge all the families who have lost a loved one or a family who has a member that has gone missing. I also want to thank all those who attended at the legislative today to raise this awareness. And I want you to know that your government hears you, and thank you so much for coming today and sharing your stories.

I've a story to tell, and it's my family. I thank the member for Athabasca for bringing up my family's community of Pinehouse. When I sit down at the dinner table with my nieces and my nephews and my sister-in-law, I just thank heavens that none of them have gone missing. And a lot of it has to do with the strong leadership of the mom, and that's my sister, Shirley.

Now Shirley was an abused young woman who was married with two little kids and lived in terror. And she made the choice to leave because she knew that if she didn't leave, her life would end and who would look after those little girls. So when the member from Athabasca talked about strong women, he talked about my Shirley. Like I said, when I sit there and I look at these beautiful young women, my nieces, my grandnieces, ah, it would break my heart to see any of them gone.

But our government remains committed to the reconciliation and continues to work towards addressing the Calls for Justice, as outlined in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry report.

Now as the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women office, I recognize the work that has been done by many organizations and community members across the province because it's the community members that are going to make the big difference. I realize how critical the work is in responding to the Calls for Justice for the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, not only in our province but across our whole country, because we recognize the need to work with Indigenous people, community partners, and other Canadian jurisdictions to ensure that a coordinated response for the Calls for Justice.

The Government of Saskatchewan welcomes collaboration and conversations on how do we move forward. Ending violence is everyone's responsibility. To ensure success, communities, government organizations, individuals, Mr. Speaker, we all have to work together. The Status of Women office works closely with internal and external stakeholders to address gender-based violence, including the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The Status of Women office plays a key role in providing support and enhancing collaboration among government ministries. The Status of Women collaborates on the province's interpersonal violence and abuse campaign, Face the Issue. Mr. Speaker, this campaign is meant to highlight a shared responsibility, but to encourage the conversation, to shift attitudes and norms that perpetuate violence in Saskatchewan communities. And our campaign has been translated into Cree and Dene because we know how important it is to reach everyone in this province.

The Status of Women office will continue to work as a bridge between community-led solutions and the work of government in addressing gender-based violence. And I know in the declaration, article 4: "Indigenous women and girls have the right to physical, mental, emotional and spiritual protection. It is incumbent upon all [persons] to ensure the safety of all women and girls."

It's all of our responsibility, and that's why we do the work we do. That's why we're committed to the work we do, because the Status of Women office will continue to work as a bridge between community-led solutions and the work of government

in addressing these very important issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to close my remarks by saying thank you very much for all the strong women who stand up, who stand up against violence, who stand with their sisters. On behalf of all of them, thank you so much.

[12:15]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege and a real honour to be able to enter into this discussion today and to talk about this motion, today especially, on May 5th. And I want to begin by recognizing the dozens and dozens and dozens of Indigenous women and allies and supporters and families who made their way here to this legislature, their legislature, today.

And I want to talk a little bit about the reason that we're having this debate in this Assembly right now today. Of course, reason number one is what day it is. It's May 5th. It's Red Dress Day. We've talked about this today.

The second reason that we're having this discussion today . . . And I hear what members opposite have said, heard what members on this side have said about the importance of this discussion. But let's not forget that the reason that we are having this discussion today is because of the women and families in the gallery and the good work that the member from Saskatoon Centre did in engaging with these families, in sitting with them, in mourning with them, and the effort and the bravery and the courage that these families have shown to come here to this legislature, to sit in the galleries, to bleed out their sorrows, and share about their families. That is the reason we are having this discussion.

And the third reason we're having this discussion is the good work of the government, the Government House Leader. Because I've never seen this government raise issues for missing and murdered Indigenous women to be debated in this legislature until today. I've only been here 18 months, but I've never seen them on their own accord bring this discussion to the floor of this Assembly until today, when they could screw working people in the process — in this legislature built by working people.

And this is a good motion, Mr. Speaker. This is a good motion. It's interesting. I'm not sure if all members, before we agreed to have this emergency debate, had the opportunity to read the declaration from FSIN. There's some good parts in it, there's some interesting parts, and I have some questions for the government who's committed to this declaration.

There's some really interesting parts that I believe people in this province will be interested to see if this government is implementing, addressing. Because I've read the declaration, and I'd be fair surprised to learn that this government is about to endorse UNDRIP [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples]. It'd be interesting. Haven't done that before. Yeah, it'd be welcomed. It'd be real interesting to see what this government is going to do, or if they're just going to pay lip service as they did to the bill by the member from

Cumberland.

And you know, I hear members talk about . . . And we hear it all the time. We hear the tone policing: oh, you're so negative; it's about hope; it's about moving forward. And it is. But the reason people are frustrated, the reason we have people in the galleries, the reason we had literally hundreds of families here today is because they're angry. It's because they're hurt. It's because the status quo is not on.

The status quo was not on when the member for Cumberland introduced his bill. The status quo is not on when the member for Saskatoon Centre stands up and speaks on behalf of Indigenous women in this province.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I'm a pretty white lady here. I don't have the experience of being an Indigenous person in this province. I do not have the experience of racism that many in this room and many in this province — far too many inside and out — have.

But what I do have is the experience of misogyny. And misogyny — violence against women, dismissing women, ignoring women, maintaining power over women — this is inherent in the ongoing tragedy in this country around missing and murdered Indigenous women.

And misogyny is present in this building, in this Chamber, every day. You know, if . . . what we talk about in this room doesn't . . . the insider baseball, the kind of petty back-and-forth. That doesn't matter. We should be talking about the issues. But it's been brought up so I want to address it.

Misogyny and white supremacy are here in this Chamber every day. And I know many members on that side don't care for my colleague from Saskatoon Centre. I see them roll their eyes when she speaks. I hear the crosstalk. Maybe you're not here in night sitting when we have it. I have been witness to those things. And the reason that they happen and the reason that they go on and the reason that members feel confident in shoving her down is because she's an Indigenous woman.

Power and the power implicit in patriarchy and the hierarchy are there and misogyny is real, and it's real in this Chamber. You don't do that to the member from Regina Rosemont, but you do that to the member from Saskatoon Centre. And the people who do that — not all of you — people who do that, do that because they feel empowered to be able to do that.

And we see this go on, session after session. We see the silencing and we see the tone policing. And we see that today, even in the discussion about missing and murdered Indigenous women in this province.

And so when you hear my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre, stand up and talk about these things . . . Maybe she sounds different from some members in cabinet. Maybe she looks different. Maybe her experience . . . For those of you who don't know her and don't know what she has lived through, what she has survived, and what she has overcome in her life to take her seat in this Chamber and stand up for Indigenous women, I encourage you — speak with her. And then consider whether it's acceptable for some of your colleagues to be shaming her for how

she brings things forward, how she speaks when she does it, whether she is bringing forward the issues you like or not.

And the reason today that we are feeling, you know, noble, we're feeling moral, we're having an emergency debate raised by the Minister of Justice — and I applaud him for that — on missing and murdered Indigenous women, is because of the good work that Indigenous people are doing in our communities and the families who have come here and will continue to come here, because the status quo is not on.

I heard the minister stand up, ministers stand up and talk about, you know, the investments that they've made in victim services and policing. And that's great, I suppose. But are we really going to talk about investments in victim services and policing when we have families here, families representing missing and murdered Indigenous women? They don't want to talk about more policing money going in. We want to talk about prevention.

We talk about supporting culture. It has to start here. We need a positive change in this province. And we may not be able to control everything that happens in every community, no matter how good or well-intentioned or effective a government. But we have some control here, and we can do that by showing respect to the families, by showing respect to all members who bring these issues forward.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I applaud the motion. I'll be supporting the motion. And I thank the Minister for Justice and all members on that side who put in the good work behind the scenes to ensure that we were able to have this discussion today, and to the families who have stayed, who came, who made the trip, made it through the security gauntlet this morning, and are sitting and listening to this discussion, bringing forward the memories and the stories of their loved ones. Thank you for being here.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Difficult words being heard today, and I think they're very important words that need to be said on this floor. And I want to take the opportunity, as many have, to thank the hundreds of families who came here today to show their support for the FSIN motion, to show their desire to see this government do more, do better, to be faces to those who have been lost tragically in this province, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for coming. It is not an easy task to get here. Work, child care, travel — all of those things take work and take time. Thank you for sitting here. Thank you for listening to this debate. Thank you for continuing to fight. And we will do all we can to amplify your important voices as much as possible.

I want to also, as many already have, thank the member for Saskatoon Centre who has worked tirelessly with survivors, with families, pushing forward these important issues in a space where it's sometimes difficult to put these things forward, even if it's just a procedural difficulty, Mr. Speaker. The institution that we are is a traditional institution. I applaud my colleague, the member for Saskatoon Centre, in often trying to find ways to do what needs to be done in traditional and untraditional ways in this difficult, difficult building, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to take the time to thank everyone who's entered into

this debate so far, but in particular those who've shared, on both sides of the floor, stories and experiences that they have had. I appreciate that. I think that furthers this discussion in a positive way, and I think that is what's important to be doing in this type of motion, in this emergency debate.

Where I am disappointed, and I echo my colleague's disappointment, is when the time is used to slowly talk about government initiatives that have already occurred, dollars that have been invested — a few, you know, thousand dollars here, a few thousand dollars there — and the pride that this government has indicated again that they have in the work that they have done.

Mr. Speaker, hundreds of people have come today to express that that work is not enough. And this time should be spent talking about what could be done moving the ball forward, not slowly talking about what has been done in the past, Mr. Speaker, because clearly it's not enough. It's not even close to being enough, not even close, Mr. Speaker.

One life lost is one life too many, and when we are in a province where the rates of interpersonal violence . . . We have the highest rates of domestic violence amongst provinces, the highest rates of domestic homicides in the province. And we know that Indigenous women are three to five times more likely to experience these rates of violence. And when government does very little, as little as possible to try and move that bar lower, it shows where their priorities are. It shows whose lives they value and whose lives they don't.

We talk about government and how words get used in this Chamber often. Expressions of concern, desire to move toward reconciliation, we hear that a lot. But, Mr. Speaker, we know that what matters most is where the dollars go. We know that this government controls the purse strings. And while they can use wonderful language on all sorts of different issues, where they're choosing to put all of our dollars is where they actually care in their priorities, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why I brought up again today, and I have brought up for a few years now, as have those who are advocates on supporting survivors of interpersonal violence, why on earth we are one of the only provinces in Canada who don't provide operational funding for second-stage shelters, Mr. Speaker.

[12:30]

Second-stage shelters are the second step afterwards, after an emergency shelter, a survivor of interpersonal violence will go to that they can stay in oftentimes up to two years to get themselves back on their feet, housing with wraparound supports to make sure that that family has everything they need to not fall into a situation of violence again and to not be out on the street, Mr. Speaker.

It's an incredibly important key in the puzzle piece of supporting survivors, Mr. Speaker. I do not understand why year after year this government chooses, actively chooses to not provide what almost every other province in Canada provides, when we have the worst domestic violence rates in the country, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing I wanted to do today is recognize one specific

person. Everybody is here because they have a story, because they want to honour at least one, often many more than that, people that they know personally who have lost their lives, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize Nadine Machiskinic. I never had the opportunity to meet Nadine. I have met her aunt. I have met her child. But her story has impacted me and continues to impact me in the work that we do here in this Chamber.

And I try every single day to not forget Nadine Machiskinic's name, because what we see happen far too often is another story happens. We lose another woman, another Indigenous woman in particular. And then the next day something else is on the news and we've forgotten. Those who love those people who have been lost, they never forget. But collectively as a society we move on to whatever the next highlight of the day is, Mr. Speaker. And that's why I wanted to say Nadine Machiskinic's name into the record as many times as I could today.

Nadine Machiskinic's body was found at the bottom of a laundry chute in a hotel in Regina in 2015. She was failed, Mr. Speaker. Her and her family was failed all across the board — all across the board. She was failed by police. She was failed by the coroner's office. She was failed by the province. She was failed by society, Mr. Speaker. We still don't know what happened to Nadine. And I will say, we still don't know who her killers were, Mr. Speaker. And that family will never have the closure that they deserve to have, Mr. Speaker.

As a result of her death in fact, Mr. Speaker, there was major overhauls at the coroner's office, and that's great. That was great news. But it was too late for Nadine, Mr. Speaker, because she was never able to get her toxicology reports in time. I think it took about 18 months. The delays in getting the reports that were needed for the police to be able to actively investigate her murder — I'm going to call it a murder, Mr. Speaker — meant that her family was never able to get the closure that they deserved.

There was an inquest, Mr. Speaker, as the result of what happened to Nadine. And the only recommendation that came out of it was a recommendation that hotels put locks on laundry chutes. That's it, Mr. Speaker.

Nadine was a strong woman. She was a mother. She was a daughter. She was 29 years old. She had a whole lot of life left to live, Mr. Speaker. This is just one story. So many stories that happen in Saskatchewan . . . I wanted to take this opportunity to remember Nadine. I will continue to remember her every single day. I will continue to work to honour her life as much as I possibly can. And I know that won't be enough, and that won't be justice, Mr. Speaker.

I hope everyone else in this Chamber does the same, if not for Nadine then for somebody else. Everybody's got a story. Like I said, Mr. Speaker, tragically there are too many of those stories in Saskatchewan. Pick one, but don't ever forget that name. Don't ever let that just be the story of the day, Mr. Speaker. And with that, I will be supporting this motion.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Done a lot of listening this afternoon from members here today, conversations with

people who have travelled to join us today and brought their stories and their sorrows here today. I want to thank everyone who joined us and who is still here. I want to wish you healing. I know it's difficult when you've lost someone to have to be reminded, to talk about it publicly, so I do wish that you've got someone to talk to and someone to help take those sorrows to.

I want to thank my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre, for her efforts to bring people here today, people from all over the province, the matriarchs, the aunties, and the kohkoms who joined us here today, the chiefs. A third of the chiefs in Saskatchewan are female right now in this province, and I think that's the first time in the history of our province. And you know, you can feel a powerful energy when women are leading, when women are speaking up. And it's about time that women started speaking up.

Our job here is to listen and to raise up voices. I think too often here the inclination is to stand up, you know, filter everything through a very partisan lens or to brag about the things that have been done. I think we want to thank all of those leaders and their communities for what they've done and will continue to do. And sometimes it's our job to get out of the way and to listen and to make room for voices that are under-represented here far too often.

You know, we've talked a lot, and I mentioned this yesterday, we've talked a lot about caring. And you know, it's hard to see what's in someone else's heart. So I'll leave that, as some of my colleagues have said, to let people to their own conscience, what's in your heart and what's not in your heart. And people have hurts that they display and they don't display. And you know, we don't know everyone's story, so I'll leave that be.

And we've talked a lot about money that goes into different programs. And that's important how much we spend, you know, actions we take. That's part of the story. But the other part of the story is the results, the impact. And unfortunately in this country and in this province we continue to have impact. We continue to see, despite efforts, despite money spent, twice the national average for domestic violence, the highest rate of interpersonal homicides. And unfortunately within those statistics, Indigenous women and girls are way overrepresented, Mr. Speaker — three to five times, 17 per cent higher in the case of homicides in this province.

So individual responsibility will get us so far. Caring will get us so far. Money will get us so far. But at a certain point we have to be committed, and absolutely committed, to results, because I don't know how we can allow that to stand in our province. And that means putting ego aside. That means putting, you know, brands aside and being really relentless about seeking results.

I've heard today comments about being too negative, not showing hope. And you know, I think about that because hope is important. But we can't get to that part when people feel like their voices haven't been heard, when their reality has not been acknowledged. So let's be real about what is happening in our province, about the scope of the issue.

And then let's work together to find solutions. Because if you tell someone who brings pain to you, who brings the reality of their community, of their family, forward and ask them to be more

optimistic, Mr. Speaker, I think too often folks will feel unheard. They'll feel like they're trying to, you know, paint a happy face on something that they're not ready to be happy about, Mr. Speaker.

And when we have an emergency debate about the five articles in the Declaration to Honour Indigenous Women and Girls, Mr. Speaker . . . And I thank the creators of this document and the work and the experience that went into that. But when we have an emergency debate brought on by the members opposite, and I think it's been well canvassed, you know, some of the reasons why we might have seen that here today. And then we have members — first three speakers, male members of the government — stand up and talk about all of the great things that we're doing. Mr. Speaker, I do worry about the commitment to making progress.

And I am a little bit cynical because we saw a very similar thing with the suicide prevention bill, where the political pressure at some point became great after Tristen Durocher made the trek here to Regina, the camp. And I think members opposite have noted that they heard this on the doorstep in the 2020 election. We saw them. And I think it was a happy day in here. It was a hopeful day when we had unanimous agreement that we needed to do something. We needed to sit down . . . And like the rates, the incidences of missing and murdered Indigenous women in this province, there was also a commitment there to work together to find solutions, not on the floor of this Assembly where we're yelling back and forth at each other, but actually sitting down with communities, with experts, with people who have lost loved ones and actually putting some things aside so we can find results.

I thought we had that that day, and I know the member my colleague for Cumberland thought we had that too. In recent days we hear that, well what was already being done was great, was enough. The Pillars for Life was enough.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that we could be faulted for feeling a little bit cynical. I hope, I hope I'm wrong. I hope that there's a real new commitment here to work together to find results, to work with communities to find results. But I can't help but think of that.

So I know, members, I have colleagues who want to enter into this debate as well. With that I will conclude my remarks. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a heavy day, and I've been taking in what everyone's talking about here. And I want to share a couple of thoughts but by no means monopolize the conversation.

[12:45]

It strikes me that what we should be doing here today is listening to the folks who have joined us and the families who have lived experience, rather than talking about our own notions about this. So with that in mind, my remarks I think will acknowledge my privilege in this conversation.

I didn't know much about Indigenous issues until I entered university, and I think we all have moments in our lives where we start to see the bigger picture of the world around us. And you know, I grew up in a small town, in Pincher Creek, Alberta. And I knew what was around me and what people had said around me and probably grew up with biases that I didn't even internalize . . . or realize.

And when I was growing up in Saskatoon after that and then going to university, I learned about all of these issues in sort of an abstract way — about the issue of systemic racism, which the member from Saskatoon Centre has spoken about quite eloquently in this Assembly — in a quite abstract way.

And even though my family grew up with not a lot of money, not always on the right side of the tracks, I always felt pretty safe. And I always felt, you know, I didn't have amounts of trauma in my family. I didn't have to deal with historical trauma. And I didn't have to worry as I grew up that if I went out to a party, I might not come back, or worry that that might happen for my friends. I was pretty assured that if I went missing, you know, I was assured that law enforcement would take my family seriously, that I would be found. These were things I took for granted, Mr. Speaker.

And I don't know anyone personally who has went missing, and this is still an incredibly emotional topic for me to wrestle with. So for all of those folks who have lived that, in this Assembly and outside of this Assembly, you know, I can only try to imagine what that feels like to have a loved one go missing, and to not see a full force of effort behind getting that person safe, and to not have closure in what that looks like.

And I remember when the REDress installation came to the University of Saskatchewan. And it might have been right when it was starting. I was trying to figure out the dates as I was preparing my remarks. I couldn't figure out what exact year it was. But I remember just walking from class to class and stopping dead in my tracks when I saw the red dresses hanging in the trees, and it was such a haunting experience. And I cannot even imagine what it is like for the families who can put people in those dresses, who know those individuals.

And we need to show up for those folks. We need to listen to those folks. We need to not pretend that we know all the answers and that we have it right because we know that is not the case. We need to be open to having these conversations. So a ton of respect for the folks who have come here today, very much acknowledging the privilege that I have in this moment and trying to be a constructive ally. And with that I will conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize that there's been a lot of important words shared in this Assembly here today by many on both sides here today. I want to give special recognition though, and thanks, to the courageous folks that have joined us here today — matriarchs in our community, those that have suffered loss that is really beyond description, Mr. Speaker, those that have stood together as communities, those that have been acting for a long period of

time to have this sort of awareness put on the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and two-spirited individuals in our community, Mr. Speaker.

And there's many that have been working and marching and using their voices for many years on this front, Mr. Speaker, in our own community. I want to think of some of those individuals and to thank them, the matriarchs, the grandmas, the kohkoms, the elders, Mr. Speaker. I think of Elder Beatrice Laframboise, Mr. Speaker, who's been there for so many within our community and who's been a voice and a force calling out the abhorrent injustice on this front, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize Elder Lorna Standingready, Mr. Speaker. These are leaders who are there to console and to provide care and compassion in times of tragedy. They're also leaders who have long been calling for action on these fronts. I want to thank Kohkom Brenda Dubois, Mr. Speaker, for her tireless voice and leadership for decades on this front, long before there was ever a hashtag, long before Twitter was a thing, Mr. Speaker, who have been providing care to those left with holes in their hearts that we can't describe, Mr. Speaker, and calling out and speaking truth to power.

And it's folks like these that have been teachers of mine, Mr. Speaker, before I was an MLA and every step of the way while serving as an MLA, Mr. Speaker. I became aware to some of these horrible tragedies and injustices and inequities early on in life through learning, through the experience of my father who was an inner-city school principal and who often was sharing tragedy that our family would struggle to get your mind around, difficult to fathom.

And I did so . . . I learned as well through the experience of working with young people who were dealing with the justice system, dealing with addictions, dealing with challenges — as a teacher and as a youth worker — and the correlation and the connection to that missing mom in their life at a very young age, or the tragedy that had occurred, Mr. Speaker. That correlation was there and it makes sense, Mr. Speaker. It makes sense that you'd have that sort of loss and that it would connect to other horrible things in a child's life, Mr. Speaker. So I learned through . . . You know, I learned a lot more from those young people than they ever learned from me. I can assure you that, Mr. Speaker.

I've learned that by walking with my colleagues. I think of the member from Cumberland, walking with him and learning from him and walking — literally — with folks that have lost. Like Happy Charles' mom or Ashley Morin's family. In different parts of this province listening to stories and loss and heartbreak, Mr. Speaker, and calls to action.

I want to recognize as well a force on this front, Star Andreas within North Central Regina, Mr. Speaker, who you know, throughout the years has organized so many walks and so many vigils — red dresses on the Albert Street bridge to gatherings at the university and so many more — and someone who extends so much care and who has, you know, experience to draw on, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to recognize my colleague, the member for Saskatoon Centre, one of the strongest women, one of the strongest people I have ever met in my life whose voice is so very important in this Chamber and on these issues. And you know, I'll say it. My colleague, she comes at things straight on. Sometimes like a bit

of a T-bone, you know, hard at it. But listen to the sincerity and know the story of this member, Mr. Speaker, and what she's lived through, you'll know that that voice should be listened to every time that it's speaking, Mr. Speaker, and that there's incredible strength in that member.

I see that I have a message here from my good colleague that my time is up, and I want to pass the torch to our leader. I will certainly be supporting this motion and will continue to fight for action, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I too am grateful for the opportunity to rise and discuss the issues of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, of violence in our province, of the risk that people live with every day, and of those we've lost, and of those we want to never lose.

I do want to add those words of thanks to the member for Saskatoon Centre for the leadership from FSIN and for various First Nations and all of the community members who are willing to come down and spend this time today to honour this day, honour those who've been lost.

I have to thank the Government House Leader. And I say this not to be flippant. Actually I am grateful for the opportunity that we had to discuss this. I know it's only happening for procedural games. But it doesn't happen enough that we talk about Indigenous people's issues in this House. And so let's take the opportunity and be glad for it.

But as I was reflecting . . . And we've heard the statistics, we've heard the programs that need to be improved and enhanced. I was just trying to think about that experience. And the member for Cumberland and I were up in Red Earth a few days ago. And just thinking about sitting with Barb and Jarvis in their house, and the Paw Patrol signs all through the community, and the paths that had been walked through the muskeg and the brush because people had been over and over again those same paths. And this is a missing little boy but it's all part of the same story. And the despair that that community is feeling as they're not knowing what's happened to Frank, and just how hollow and awful that must feel for the family.

And we think about, that's one family. But there have been so many who've lost loved ones, who've known that their loved ones have died in terrible and tragic ways, or who don't know what happened and are left with that wondering, that emptiness. And so my mind obviously, given where I've spent my time, goes to the women of the west side of Saskatoon, the folks that I had a chance to work with at Westside Clinic, or these days at the Lighthouse. And yeah I can think of some names of people that went missing. Some turned up eventually. Many were never seen again.

But it's not just missing and murdered. I cannot count the number of times I sat with a woman who told me about being abducted and managing to escape; about women who were raped and beaten, abused by their partners. I think about the patients who I worked with for months, and then you get that call in the morning that they took their life overnight. And you ask yourself, what more could we have done?

There was a woman — I won't share her name, but I think of her often and her family who I knew well — and going to her house at a time when she was really struggling, being in her home, trying just to get her into some kind of care, some kind of help. But just knowing that the life that she had had, the abuse she dealt with, the intergenerational and personal trauma that had led her to the situation she was in, how rough that life had been. And she couldn't accept the help she needed. She disappeared and turned up a few days later having died from an overdose.

And I think of these stories. I think of the women who died from hepatitis C or HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] or tuberculosis in a province as wealthy as ours in a so-called developed country, and that's what we see. And when that happens to an individual, when a violent death happens to an individual, when an illness that is avoidable happens to an individual, that's an individual tragedy.

But when it happens over and over to a people . . . I'll quote Paul Farmer, who called that structural violence, called that structural violence when it happens to the poor and the marginalized. And when it happens to a particular kind of people, people of a particular ethnicity, that's called systemic racism and that's what we need to acknowledge and address.

I'm grateful that we're talking about this today, and that's why I'm happy to stand and encourage all members here to support and vote in favour of this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — 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: — All those in favour say yea.

Some Hon. Members: — Yea.

The Speaker: — Yea. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:59 until 13:00.]

The Speaker: — All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yea — 45]

Moe	Stewart	McMorris
Reiter	Harpauer	Morgan
Duncan	Tell	Wyant
Makowsky	Docherty	Bradshaw
L. Ross	Carr	J. Harrison
Dennis	Marit	Buckingham
Fiaz	Lambert	Bonk
Kirsch	Steele	Ottenbreit
Skoropad	Nerlien	Meyers
Friesen	Grewal	McLeod
Cockrill	Keisig	Lemaigre
Jenson	D. Harrison	Meili
Wotherspoon	Vermette	Sarauer

Ritchie	Beck	Mowat
Bowes	A. Young	Nippi-Albright

The Speaker: — Those opposed, please stand.

[Nays — nil]

Procedural Clerk (Ms. Drake): — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 45; those opposed, zero.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried.

Now that it's past the hour of adjournment, this House stands adjourned till Monday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:04.]

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
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Minister of Education

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Provincial Capital Commission

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Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
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Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
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Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
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Saskatchewan Water Corporation
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Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor
and Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority

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Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Justice and Attorney General