



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

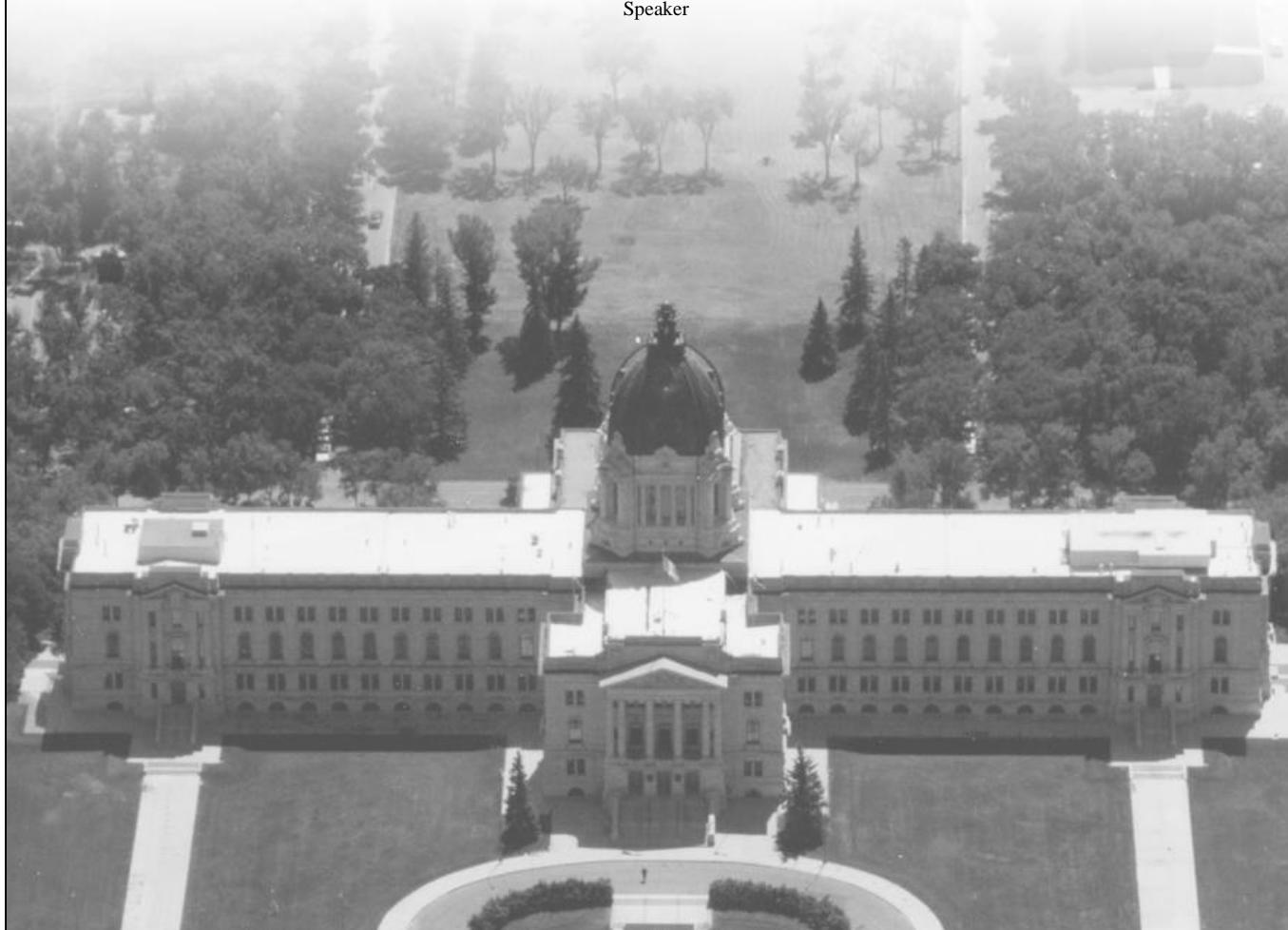
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Carla Beck

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Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)
Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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

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CONTENTS

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Apology 2597

Moe 2597

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mowat 2597

Duncan 2604

The Speaker 2604

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Nippi-Albright 2597

Mowat 2597

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Str8 Up Fundraiser

Friesen 2598

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month

Young, A. 2598

Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan

Harrison, D. 2598

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Mowat 2598

Carr 2599

Inclusion Month Proclaimed in Saskatchewan

Young, C. 2599

Growth in Saskatchewan's Population

Grewal 2599

QUESTION PERIOD

Oversight of Qualified Independent Schools

Beck 2599

Moe 2600

Interpersonal Violence Rates and Support for Second-Stage Shelters

Beck 2600

Moe 2600

Bowes 2601

Eyre 2601

Support for the Health Care System

Mowat 2602

Merriman 2602

Social and Economic Support

Conway 2603

Makowsky 2603

MOTIONS

Appointment of Ombudsman and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner

Carr 2604

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Wotherspoon 2605

Fiaz 2609

Carr (point of order) 2611

Wotherspoon (point of order) 2611

Grewal 2611

Lambert 2613

Bradshaw 2616

Young, A. 2618

Nerlien 2622

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask leave to make a statement.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Apology

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you to my colleagues and to you, Mr. Speaker. Last week there was an individual that attended the Speech from the Throne who should not have been invited to do so. The invitation being extended was a terrible error in judgment, and I have taken some time this weekend to reflect, some time for some personal reflection to think and to listen, to listen first of all to my family, to friends, to listen to colleagues, and to people across this province indirectly and directly.

I've come to the following conclusions: in Saskatchewan we are all connected in some way. We are parents. We are children. We are brothers and sisters. We are friends and neighbours. As individuals, each of us has to make an effort to ensure that we are doing all that we can to stop interpersonal and domestic violence in our families, in our friend circles, in our communities, and across the province. We all have to be leaders each and every day when it comes to stopping these violent acts.

This is even more important when it comes to our provincial government. The message that was conveyed with last week's attendance by Mr. Thatcher during the Speech from the Throne is not a message that is acceptable to Saskatchewan people, nor is it indicative of the direction of a government that has a duty to provide leadership on such an important issue.

This individual was invited by a government MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], and while I do not review nor do I approve MLA invitation lists, as Premier and as leader of the government caucus, ultimately I am responsible. To all of those who attended the Speech from the Throne, to all members of this Assembly, and to all of the people of Saskatchewan, I offer my unequivocal apology.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Deputy Leader.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I would like to introduce some guests that are seated in the east gallery today, hailing from Saskatoon and Weyburn: the family of Sharon Olson. I'll have more to say about Sharon and her advocacy during a member's statement today, but I would

like to welcome Marj Olson, Jeremy Mather, Roland Olson, Lois Olson, and Wilfred Olson. Thank you for making the journey to join us today. And I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present the following petition.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: this government is currently selling off Crown lands that have been used throughout history by Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities for ceremony, agriculture, hunting, fishing, trapping, and recreation with no meaningful duty-to-consult policies in place.

The current process does not work. The first right of refusal needs to be offered to First Nations involved in the treaty land entitlement process when Crown lands are being sold. The duty-to-consult policy framework is broken, and it needs to be revised. The lack of meaningful duty-to-consult policy leaves the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan footing the bill for the government's . . . their mistakes and losses in courts.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on 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 policy for duty-to-consult.

The signatories of this petition reside in Debden, Waterhen, and Loon Lake. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the opposition Deputy Leader.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today once again to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. We know that recruitment and retention of health care professionals is a particular issue in Saskatchewan's rural health care facilities, leading to many emergency room, acute, lab, and X-ray service disruptions; that the ongoing pandemic has created burnout and led to early retirements and resignations which has rippling effects for small cities and towns; that health care workers and their families are valuable assets in Saskatchewan communities and local economies; and that at the 2021 SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention, over 94 per cent of rural leaders voted to support a resolution acknowledging the nursing and health care worker shortage across Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis.

This petition today is signed by individuals from Swift Current, Gull Lake, and Cabri. Mr. Speaker, I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Str8 Up Fundraiser

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my absolute pleasure to rise in the House today and talk about a great organization started in Saskatoon's inner city, working with gang members who are truly committed to getting out and changing their lives for the better. On Thursday evening I, along with members from Melfort and Saskatoon Northwest, attended a fundraiser for Str8 Up. We had the privilege to listen to some of the most courageous tell their stories of how they overcame struggles of exiting gang life and becoming the person they want to be.

Str8 Up is fuelled by a vision of not just getting people out of gangs, but to mentor them into meaningful lives with three clear goals with those who join: (1) being a loving parent, (2) being a faithful partner, (3) be a responsible citizen.

20 years ago, Sherman and Brian, two young men wanting out of gang life, connected with Father André, a man with a heart to help people find their way. Those two men are now helping others follow the same path, because that is how Str8 Up works, Mr. Speaker: those who have overcame helping others overcome. The initiation of Str8 Up is not doing minutes, Mr. Speaker, but writing your own autobiography. That is a first step in a four-year commitment to dropping your colours, dealing with your addictions, living life with honesty and humanity.

For the member from Melfort, a quick shout-out to his friend Russel Misskey. Happy birthday.

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

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize October as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month.

The most precious thing to any of us are our families and our children. While we have much to celebrate, Saskatchewan's perinatal, early neonatal, and late fetal death rates too often lead the country at a rate of 7.7, the last year data was reported, while the national rate is 5.6. This data excludes the thousands who experience miscarriage loss.

On October 3rd the Twinkle Star Project held their annual Silent Hearts Walk created to bring both awareness while supporting and remembering babies lost to families through pregnancy and infant loss, miscarriage, stillbirth, and neonatal death. The Twinkle Star Project was created in memory of Sebastian who was born still to his mother, Jennifer Lea, in December 2016. Leaving the hospital with empty arms and a broken heart, Jen knew she'd find a way to transform her love for Seb into a project

that would both give back to the community and to help raise pregnancy loss awareness.

I'd also like to draw attention to the Izzy Bear Project, individually weighted bears for families who have lost babies, spearheaded by Kathy and Denis Simard, named after their daughter who they lost in 2018. I know for each family or parent who's experienced loss, these events are hard but important so that we remember those we whispered hello and goodbye to in the same infinite moment. Mr. Speaker, I send a very special thanks to the Twinkle Star Project and solidarity to all families living with loss.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They say things never slow down on the farm. Calving season, getting ready for seeding, finishing up harvest, hauling grain or cattle — farmers and ranchers are always on the go. Mr. Speaker, October is Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan. It's time to recognize those efforts. It's a time for us to celebrate the successes of our producers and the world-class, environmentally sustainable products they produce right here.

Saskatchewan's agriculture can't thrive without the dedicated individuals that make up the value chain. Throughout the month of October, Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan, in collaboration with industry partners, put on several events across the province showcasing our producers. This included the #CelebrateAg photo contest online, in which Saskatchewan residents post their best farm photos online with the hashtag #CelebrateAg. This year Ag Month also focused on meals from the farm. Saskatchewan people were encouraged to post their best homemade farm meals online to show off the great food grown in the province and some classic Saskatchewan cuisine.

Mr. Speaker, I can't think of a better way to show off how great it is to live and farm in Saskatchewan. So through you, Mr. Speaker, and on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, thank you to all our agriculture producers in this province. Thank you.

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

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The month of October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a month dedicated to honouring those we have lost to breast cancer and supporting those going through treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to speak about Sharon Olson. Sharon was a resident of Weyburn, a teacher, an artist, a patient advocate, a loving family member and friend. She died on August 5th from breast cancer that had metastasized to her brain. Even in the hospital she continued to raise awareness of the risks of dense breasts amongst hospital staff and visitors.

Dense breasts are common but it's important to recognize they pose a more prevalent risk for breast cancer than having a family

history. Since it was difficult to detect on mammograms, Sharon's cancer was not found in time. No one told her she had dense breasts, and by the time the cancer was found on an ultrasound, it was too late.

Sharon Olson didn't want other women to lose their lives, and that's why she persevered to raise awareness in her final days. By supporting Sharon's work, we can ensure the women of Saskatchewan have access to necessary additional screening to prevent these untimely and preventable deaths.

On the final day of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I ask all members to join me in honouring the life of Sharon Olson and committing that we will do better.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Inclusion Month Proclaimed in Saskatchewan

Ms. C. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year our government officially proclaimed October as Inclusion Month in Saskatchewan. Inclusion Month is an opportunity to celebrate the positive difference inclusion has made in the lives of Saskatchewan citizens and the contributions people with disabilities make in their communities.

For more than 60 years, Inclusion Saskatchewan, formerly the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living, has aimed to ensure people with disabilities are valued, supported, and included. Inclusion Saskatchewan directly supports more than 2,900 people every year in 13 communities across the province. Throughout the month, residents and communities have been encouraged to share their accomplishments and stories surrounding disability using the hashtag #SKDisability.

Mr. Speaker, by working to accommodate and include people with disabilities in the workplace and the community, Saskatchewan comes closer to realizing its full potential. This government is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities can make choices in all aspects of their life, including being able to have a fulfilling career. This year's Throne Speech highlighted our government's introduction of the accessible Saskatchewan Act, which will legislate the removal of accessibility barriers for those living with a disability.

[13:45]

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, thank you to Inclusion Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan citizens with disabilities for all the good work you continue to do. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Mr. Speaker. An estimated 760 Saskatchewan women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2022, and 170 will die from the disease. In fact breast cancer is the leading cancer in women and the second-leading cause of their death.

Mr. Speaker, one in eight Canadian women is diagnosed with

breast cancer in their lifetime, but there is so much hope. Today people are living with a diagnosis of cancer longer and more comfortably than ever before, thanks to advanced screening technology and early diagnosis.

The Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan has committed to raising \$2 million by March 31st, 2023 to replace the aging breast cancer screening bus. Mr. Speaker, the bus travels to Saskatchewan communities for mammograms to rural and remote populations who may be unable to access mammograms in their communities. Since 1990 the bus has provided more than 250,000 mammograms.

The CIBC Run for the Cure for cancer was held on October 2nd in Regina and Saskatoon, after two years without an in-person event. Canada-wide, a total of \$13 million was raised.

Mr. Speaker, having a mother who has survived breast cancer, I am so very proud of the generosity showed by Saskatchewan people. Let's keep up this momentum and put an end to late diagnosis of breast cancer in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Growth in Saskatchewan's Population

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise and speak today about how our province is growing. Saskatchewan grew by almost 6,500 people in the second quarter of 2022. This is the largest population jump in any three-month period since Statistics Canada started releasing quarterly population counts in 1971.

As of July 1st, there were nearly 1.2 million people living in Saskatchewan. Compared to the same time last year, Saskatchewan saw an increase of 13,310 people. Mr. Speaker, this is an annual growth rate of 1.1 per cent. The population increase was driven primarily by immigration from other countries. As our Minister of Trade and Export Development has said, "Saskatchewan's economy is firing on all cylinders and creating thousands of new jobs. That's attracting more people than ever to our province."

Mr. Speaker, with so many opportunities, such welcoming communities, and a more affordable cost of living than most other places in Canada, people are choosing to make Saskatchewan their home. Our strong economy and this growing population means a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. Our government's objective is to reach 1.4 million people by 2030. As most of the country faces a recession, thanks to our government's foresight and strong economic decisions, Saskatchewan's economy continues to gain momentum. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Oversight of Qualified Independent Schools

Ms. Beck: — Thanks to this Premier, it's been a rough week for Saskatchewan. Between his widely ridiculed separatist white

paper getting national attention, to this government's decision to invite a convicted killer to the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, it's been one embarrassment after another.

But honestly, this Premier's choices were causing embarrassment long before this, all summer long, including his choice not to act on allegations of abuse in qualified independent schools.

I ask, why did it take so long to act? And why is it so hard for that Premier to stand up for the safety of kids in schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Education has been in touch — through the ministry as well as directly — with many of those that experienced some of the allegations in the case of the Legacy school in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, been in touch with leaders across the independent school division . . . independent schools, Mr. Speaker, across this province.

And the Minister of Education as well has moved forward with a number of regulations and a number of additional points of oversight, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that our children, Mr. Speaker, in this province most certainly have the opportunity to attend school — wherever their family may choose — attend school in a safe environment.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, that Premier's Education minister buried those allegations of abuse for months, and then he refused to commit to protecting the human rights of students. When asked why, here's what the minister had to say, and I quote: "I think in all educational situations there is, I think, that balance between, particularly in schools that may have a faith-based component to them, of kind of balancing off those rights."

Mr. Speaker, when did the human rights of Saskatchewan children become something to be balanced off? And will the Premier condemn that comment and will he commit that moving forward, the human rights of kids are actually protected in our schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, most certainly the human rights of all Saskatchewan people — I'd say likely all Canadians actually, Mr. Speaker — are protected and are protected in our school systems here in the province, Mr. Speaker, and they're protected across it. The Human Rights Commissioner is there just to ensure that that ultimately is the case in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as we find our way . . . And the Minister of Education has already put in place a number of additional oversight measures in the case of independent schools, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that all of our students, our children, our next generation have the opportunity for a safe learning environment wherever their parents may choose to send them, Mr. Speaker.

And we are also committed, I would say, to ensuring that that

choice for families in Saskatchewan, the choice of whether to send their child to a faith-based school, to a Catholic school, to the public school system, to a school like the Huda School, for example, Mr. Speaker, most certainly we are going to ensure that Saskatchewan families have that choice into the future.

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

Interpersonal Violence Rates and Support for Second-Stage Shelters

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, for days people in Saskatchewan and around the world have been outraged by the fact that Colin Thatcher sat here in this Chamber during last week's Speech from the Throne.

Now leaders don't point fingers, and they accept responsibility. We welcome the apology, Mr. Speaker, but the Premier shouldn't have to be shamed into doing the right thing. And I heard the Premier's apology and I heard him talk about leadership and I heard him talk about the need for action on domestic violence. So I ask the Premier to make good on his words. Will he commit that second-stage shelters for survivors of domestic violence get the operational funding that they so desperately need?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the conversation with a number of community-based organizations that offer and fundraise for the operations of their second-stage housing, Mr. Speaker, and the services that go along with that, Mr. Speaker, the minister, previous ministers have worked closely to work on how we can participate in capital funding for those projects, Mr. Speaker.

I would go back to the shelter that we were a part of in the community of Melfort, Mr. Speaker, the first transition house that the government has built since 1989, Mr. Speaker. There's just about \$25 million a year that's invested into interpersonal and domestic abuse and addressing and supporting those individuals, Mr. Speaker, that unfortunately have been subject to that type of an occurrence, Mr. Speaker.

But at the end of the day, yes, we do need to do better. Each of us and individuals across this province do need to do better, educating ourselves not only, Mr. Speaker, that this is not right but ensuring that in our friend circles and in our daily actions that we are most certainly, most certainly talking to our friends about the fact that we do have some of the highest domestic and interpersonal violence rates in this province, and we need to do better as individuals in the province of Saskatchewan. And I would say, yes, that starts with the Government of Saskatchewan.

And so as we move forward, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, Mr. Speaker, we need to continue to have the conversations not only, not only with secondary housing support, Mr. Speaker, but supporting those folks that have been subject to domestic violence — those individuals and those families, Mr. Speaker — in any way that we can, Mr. Speaker, and doing what we can on the education front to drop those actual numbers that we have in this province and help drop those numbers across the nation.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this is not about having individual conversations. This is not about domestic violence shelters having to fundraise for basic operational funding. And this is not about capital funding, Mr. Speaker. And the Premier should know this because organizations that support domestic violence survivors have been calling for this for years.

They've been calling for it because Saskatchewan has some of the highest rates of domestic violence in the country — double the national average — and because we're one of only two provinces, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't fund second-stage shelters for those who are fleeing domestic violence.

Now finally apologizing was the right thing to do, but actions, actions speak louder than words. Again to the Premier: will he commit to operational funding for those second-stage shelters in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, first and foremost I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of those community-based organizations and individuals that are offering the second-stage service, Mr. Speaker, which is most certainly an important service in the province of Saskatchewan. That's why the Government of Saskatchewan does participate in capital funding in that area, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also participated in capital as well as operational funding when it comes to transition spaces in this province, Mr. Speaker, and work very closely with those community-based organizations and those operators — the YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] among them, Mr. Speaker, as well as a number of others — in transitioning individuals and families, individuals and families, Mr. Speaker, that have been subject to interpersonal or domestic abuse, Mr. Speaker, transitioning them into a home through the Saskatchewan housing authority or wherever that may be in the province, Mr. Speaker.

But as we move forward, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that we are open to all conversations on how, one, we can support those individuals — and families in many cases — that have been subject to domestic and interpersonal violence. But as well doing what we can, and I use education as an example, Mr. Speaker, but doing what we can as a government and doing what we can as individuals to ensure that we, as we look back in the years ahead, Mr. Speaker, we don't have the highest interpersonal violence rate in the nation of Canada.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, last week was proclaimed Violence Prevention Week by the Sask Party government. The Minister of Justice encouraged everyone to learn the signs of violence and speak up, in the government news release. Yet those government members sat awfully silent and shamefully unapologetic about welcoming an unrepentant convicted wife murderer to the Chamber floor. What does that deafening silence say about this government's commitment to addressing domestic violence in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite referenced Violence Prevention Week, and certainly that was one where we're engaging on this very recently and on the topic. And the theme of the week, Mr. Speaker, was It Starts With You. And of course we hope that every week, when it comes to interpersonal violence, it stops with you . . . or It Starts With You leads to it stops with you, Mr. Speaker.

And absolutely we are open to exploring second-stage housing possibilities, how that looks like. We're having those conversations actively and have been for a number of weeks and months, Mr. Speaker. We do all have a role to play to be agents of change. And it's very important to know the signs, as we were saying, and speak up and move the onus away from victims alone, to raise the alarm so that we can engage in that early prevention and, in some cases, intervention.

Mr. Speaker, Jo-Anne Dusel, the executive director of the provincial association of transition houses, did say last year that the provincial government had implemented positive programs and legislation. And we appreciate those comments, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, even John Gormley called the invitation of Thatcher atrocious. A letter to the *Leader-Post* editor called it disgraceful and reprehensible. Others in the media aren't sure what's worse: Thatcher's presence at the tough-on-crime Throne Speech, or the Premier and Corrections minister shrugging the whole thing off until today and only after facing enormous public blowback.

[14:00]

Yet those fleeing domestic violence struggle to find housing because the Sask Party government doesn't care enough to fund it. When will this government do better, get tough on domestic violence, and finally start funding second-stage shelters?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do think that it is important context to mention that in the 2011 NDP [New Democratic Party] election platform, there was not one mention of funding for second-stage shelters. 2016, zero mention. 2020, zero dollars. And the provincial association of transition houses asked the NDP during the 2020 election if they would provide ongoing operational funding to second-stage shelters. PATHS [Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan] gave the NDP's response a grade of C on second-stage shelters.

Mr. Speaker, the time is now to look at what we all can do together. We invested \$650,000 for early outreach and support through the very successful FIRST [family intervention rapid support team] program that the Premier has mentioned in Kindersley, Moose Jaw, Estevan, Weyburn, Carlyle, and

Nipawin. I would like to invite FIRST to the legislature, Mr. Speaker, so they can help raise awareness about the important work that they do. We've invested \$8.7 million for shelter services for women and children, Mr. Speaker. And it . . .

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

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, it's unbelievable that the minister is referring to the NDP's commitments on this. In 2011 our leader was running a shelter. This government has lost the plot, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Corrections and Policing, a cop herself, incorrectly said Colin Thatcher is a free man and has served his time. While no longer incarcerated, Thatcher is on parole for a sentence he will spend the rest of his life serving. The minister chose to downplay and justify his presence here at the Assembly. What do her comments say about the government's commitment to end domestic violence in Saskatchewan? And will we also see an apology from that minister today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Justice minister and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — There is no question that it is a tragedy. I was speaking to a shelter provider just the other week, and we were commenting on how the rates of interpersonal violence — not just here, Mr. Speaker, but across the country — are not coming down despite our very best efforts. So we have to keep trying everything.

This year we've allocated \$25 million, Mr. Speaker, for interpersonal violence supports, including 1 million to support children exposed to violence. We continue to engage with providers of second-stage housing. The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has been mentioned in terms of the second-stage initiatives that it has in place. Last year we announced a 2 per cent funding increase for funded emergency shelters for women and families, and before that \$389,000 in one-time payments to domestic violence shelters.

I don't see that as groanable, Mr. Speaker. I see that as important work on specific projects where we are all in this together.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Deputy House Leader.

Support for the Health Care System

Ms. Mowat: — Three hundred thousand people live in Saskatoon, and not a single family doctor is taking new patients. Simple question to the Minister of Health: does he think it's acceptable that people in Saskatoon have no access to primary care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And coming on the tail end . . . what we are right now in an endemic of COVID-19, there are some challenges in our health care system. We have identified that, and that's why we've created our four-point plan to be able to recruit, retain, and incentivize and train

individuals, Mr. Speaker.

Part of that plan has already been acted, Mr. Speaker. We've had 107 doctors that have come to our province in the last 12 months. I think that's a significant amount of doctors. Fifty-one of those have been general practitioners, Mr. Speaker. Again we had 23 doctors come in September alone to this province, choosing to come to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we're out there trying to sell the health care system across the country and around the world, to be able to draw people in there. What doesn't help, Mr. Speaker, in recruiting physicians from around the country and around the world is when the NDP continuously runs down our system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, that's unbelievably tone-deaf. When no one can find a family doctor in Saskatoon, clearly this magical plan that hasn't even begun to be in motion is not good enough, Mr. Speaker. That minister knows that. That's what he heard from doctors at the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association] conference this week.

Doctors are closing their practices in every corner of the province, and it is getting worse day by day. Clearly this government's status quo approach is not working. Given the absolute chaos that is in our health system, how can the minister justify not getting a dime of windfall revenues directed to our health system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, I only have to reference to the member opposite that in the beginning of September we announced \$60 million. If that's nothing to the member, Mr. Speaker, that's a significant amount of dollars. Those dollars are extremely focused, focused on our four-point plan incentivizing individuals who are . . . up to \$50,000 on a three-year return to service to go into some hot spots where we do have some challenges.

Mr. Speaker, we've had great uptake on this plan. We've had 400 individuals from internationally educated health care workers come. We've had over 3,000 applicants coming in from the Philippines. The 150 additional seats in our post-secondary already full, Mr. Speaker. They're standing over there saying nothing's happened. 107 doctors here. This is exactly what we're doing to be able to secure our health system, to make sure that it is stabilized for the short term but also for the long term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we know that they will torque the numbers and dance around the truth, but the reality is there is fewer family doctors and more people without one in this province. Incredibly tone-deaf considering the people in Saskatoon who cannot access a family doctor today, Mr. Speaker.

Doctors and other workers in primary care know that the status quo is not working, just like the countless nurse practitioners willing to step up and do what they're trained to do. Instead the Sask Party gives a bit of lip service and half promises, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: why not do your job and listen to professionals who are doing theirs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And part of the job that the Minister of Rural and Remote and myself have done over the summer is our tour. We have toured dozens and dozens of facilities. I've sat down and talked to front-line health care providers. They have provided us with feedback on what some of their challenges are. All the way from Black Lake to Estevan, all the way to Shaunavon to Yorkton, we've been having these conversations, Mr. Speaker.

But on top of that we're also meeting with the associations. We're meeting with the colleges of nursing. We're meeting with the College of Physicians and Surgeons. We're meeting with the SMA. Mr. Speaker, in the last six months alone, I've met with the board three times. I've also met with Dr. Andries on October 13th in charge of family physicians. We're meeting with the nurse practitioners again this Friday, Mr. Speaker, and attending their conference to be able to hear their points.

Mr. Speaker, these organizations know that we are trying to invest in Saskatchewan's health care to make sure that it's secure, to take the pressure off the individuals who have been working extremely hard, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Social and Economic Support

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, we've been calling for affordability relief now for eight months, and for eight months Saskatchewan people have watched as their basic costs like groceries have skyrocketed.

One food bank client in Moose Jaw says that after he pays rent, utilities, and his phone, he has \$200 left to spend on everything else, including food. In his words, that doesn't go very far. Does the minister agree \$200 doesn't go very far?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The matter the member opposite brings up is important, and first of all I thank all our CBOs [community-based organization] and all our service providers out there in Saskatchewan, the food banks right across all our communities in Saskatchewan, and all the people that donate and help out when they can. We thank them very much.

Mr. Speaker, this is a issue right across Canada. Mr. Speaker, there's been recent increases to the SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program in the last budget, \$11 million increase, part of \$640 million we have on the income assistance side, Mr.

Speaker, some of the highest rates in the nation of Canada.

As well, government-wide there's \$2 billion every single year that . . . there's affordability. We've removed 112,000 low-income residents off the tax rolls entirely. One of the lowest utility bundles in the country. Low-income tax credit, we created and increased that, as well as the seniors' income plan has been tripled, and we are going to quadruple that.

Since we've taken government, Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This isn't just a one-off. A new report shows that food bank usage is way up in Saskatchewan. In fact, Saskatchewan saw the biggest spike in food bank usage among all provinces. The increase of 37 per cent is truly stark, Mr. Speaker.

And it's not just folks on SIS, a cruel program that minister endorses. These are working people, Mr. Speaker. More people are struggling to feed their families in Saskatchewan than in any other province in the country. And to top it off, that government has made a choice to cut 350 good jobs right before Christmas, Mr. Speaker.

Why hasn't this government done anything to help make Saskatchewan more affordable? Why are they so intent on making things even worse?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with the member opposite. We have done several things. My previous answer talked about several things we've done, as well as there's been funding for emergency shelters, meals at emergency shelters, emergency vouchers if any IA [income assistance] clients need that. But also \$500 affordability tax credit that this government brought forward that is going to help with affordability, five times higher than what the members opposite put forward in their plan, Mr. Speaker.

So again we're going to be there for the folks that need help, Mr. Speaker. We've been able to do a lot on the housing side, on the affordability of housing. The Saskatchewan housing benefit has been enhanced several times, including those for, we talked about earlier, for those experiencing domestic violence . . . expanded to help those people, Mr. Speaker.

The education and training incentive, Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, did the minister not hear correctly? We're doing the worst in Canada. It's the worst, Mr. Speaker. And is that really good enough for that minister? And it gets even more grim. We're not just leading the nation in food bank usage, we also saw the second-largest increase in the reliance of kids on food banks, Mr. Speaker. Forty per cent of people accessing food banks in Saskatchewan are children. It's no surprise perhaps given that government's record of having the

second-worst child poverty rate in Canada.

Does the minister, during a time of windfall provincial revenues, think it's acceptable that two out of every five clients that visit the food bank are children. And does the Premier still think that this is a Saskatchewan that works for everyone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Again, Mr. Speaker, we talked earlier in some of my answers about the \$640 million this government spends on income assistance clients, those that need the basic shelter and benefits that are available to folks. Also under that, the \$500 that will be arriving soon into households to help make ends meet at the end of the month during this month, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to work, we'll continue to work with our CBOs, listen and, Mr. Speaker, with the strong economy that we have we'll be able to hopefully make some investments into the future. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — With leave, to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank my colleagues for providing me leave, and I do want to join with the member from Saskatoon Fairview in introducing the Olsons to their Legislative Assembly, particularly Roland and Lois who are here to hear the member's statement and a touching tribute to their daughter, Sharon.

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, Roland and Lois have been fixtures in north Weyburn for many decades, as I believe it was Western Christian College that brought Roland to north Weyburn, that brought the Olsons to Weyburn to teach. And I believe Lois worked many years at the hospital in the lab. Mr. Speaker, they are fixtures not only of that community — to the point where this past summer the RM [rural municipality] named a road after them in tribute to their long-time residency at the community of north Weyburn — Mr. Speaker, they are fixtures in the arts community in Weyburn.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm just pleased to be able to join with the members, with all members in welcoming the Olsons to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to move the motion appointing the Ombudsman and the Public Interest

Disclosure Commissioner, please.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Government House Leader has asked leave. Is leave approved?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted.

MOTIONS

Appointment of Ombudsman and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Mr. Speaker, by leave to the Assembly, I want to move the motion of the following:

That pursuant to section 3, *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*, Ms. Sharon Pratchler, K.C., be appointed Ombudsman for Saskatchewan; and

Pursuant to section 27 of *The Public Disclosure Act*, Ms. Sharon Pratchler, K.C., be appointed Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner; and further

That the said appointments be effective November 1st, 2022.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Government House Leader has moved:

That pursuant to section 3 of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*, Ms. Sharon Pratchler, K.C., be appointed Ombudsman for Saskatchewan; and

That pursuant to section 27 of *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, Ms. Sharon Pratchler, K.C., be appointed Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner; and further

That the said appointments be effective November 1st, 2022.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my honour to introduce and welcome Ms. Sharon Pratchler to the Assembly today, and to congratulate her on her appointment to the role of Ombudsman, Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner for Saskatchewan, effective November 1st, 2022.

Joining her today is her husband, Tom Irvine; Mr. Ron Barclay, the former Conflict of Interest Commissioner and lobbyist

registrar; and Ms. Leila Dueck, communications director from the Ombudsman office.

I ask that all members please join me in welcoming Ms. Pratchler and her guest to their Legislative Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Meyers, seconded by Mr. Lemaigne, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Ms. Mowat.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to weigh back in this afternoon on the Throne Speech. I started, of course, on Thursday, Mr. Speaker, and talked about the extraordinary times that we face as a world and as a province. I touched on the atrocities that continue to play out to the people of Ukraine in Ukraine, the unforgivable invasion by Putin, and the fact that in many ways this news that we see is almost normalized as we go home each day and we read it on the internet. And these kind of war crimes, these kind of atrocities should never, ever become normalized.

And of course we stand with Ukraine. We stand with Ukrainian Canadians here in Saskatchewan. And we need to be doing all we can to exact the punishment that Putin and his regime deserves. And we as a province and as traders play a role on this front, very importantly standing with humanity and standing with Saskatchewan people and supporting those that are seeking security when they're facing anything but, Mr. Speaker.

We're in the wake as well of the horrible tragedy that took the lives, as I mentioned, on James Smith Cree Nation as well as Weldon, Mr. Speaker. An extraordinary loss for this province that shook a community, that shook a province and a country, and that provided a window into the kind of crisis that many people and communities face as well. It also offered us as witnesses to incredible community leadership, Mr. Speaker, of those stepping up to provide support and care.

Mr. Speaker, we don't serve alone; we serve with the support of our families, Mr. Speaker. And you know, on my front, I want to recognize and thank Stephanie and William for their steadfast support and care and advice. Mr. Speaker, they're both really amazing, Mr. Speaker.

Stephanie's a school teacher and a teacher librarian who cares deeply about that work and the impact that she has on students, Mr. Speaker. And she's active in every way within our community as well, Mr. Speaker, and she offers me, you know, incredible advice as well along the way in entries like this here today and in my service, Mr. Speaker.

I recognize William, who is just such a willing partner to be out and about throughout the community and activities, Mr. Speaker, all sorts of community engagements that he thrives in, Mr. Speaker, and then just for being that ready adventure partner for his dad, Mr. Speaker. And on any given day, if he's ready to join me in the field or on a lake or camping or hiking or all these good things, Mr. Speaker, and I'm just so thankful for him. He's a curious, smart, caring, talented, young person and I certainly, you know, cherish that little guy.

I want to thank our extended families who are there in support. We're awfully lucky as a family to have that support as a family on practical ways, Mr. Speaker, but also in my service.

I want to recognize Jennifer Morin in our constituency office for her leadership and care, her service and advocacy for constituents and those that are reaching out. We often say that folks that are reaching out to our offices are doing so at a time of stress in their life, of uncertainty, of crisis often, Mr. Speaker. They're not reaching out to us always with just advice about how to build out a better future or the community. We get that too, and I value all that input.

But often the folks that are reaching out to our offices are reaching out at a time of incredible stress and crisis in their life, sometimes from a mental health and an addictions perspective, Mr. Speaker, sometimes because their power has been shut off, Mr. Speaker, and they have children at home. I think the minister would be aware of advocacy that's being brought to him at this very time right now, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we implore the minister to be responsive on these fronts to make sure those that are working so hard to pay the bills and keep their head above water receive the support they deserve. And certainly that means having their power on, Mr. Speaker.

And I also want to thank Jennifer for all of her support of me and my calendar and my work as we go about our outreach and our meetings, Mr. Speaker. I'm really thankful to serve the good people I serve. There's never any doubt — as I meet with constituents, as I see them in action, as I see the way they support one another, Mr. Speaker, rising to the occasion, extending compassion time and time again — that I work for and with really good people, Mr. Speaker.

I want to recognize the community associations as well that serve in so many ways: Normanview West, Mr. Speaker; Prairie View; Dieppe; Rosemont Mount Royal Community Association, Mr. Speaker. They deliver service and programs. They enable thousands of hours of volunteers, Mr. Speaker, to bring about meaningful support to people, Mr. Speaker, and they definitely build a better community, Mr. Speaker. I say thank you to all of them.

I say thank you as well to those that serve at other levels of government, Mr. Speaker, that overlap with the community. I want to thank councillors Shanon Zachidniak and Jason Mancinelli for all their service, Mr. Speaker. I want to, you know, certainly be on the record once again, Mr. Speaker, in the important role that they fulfill to people and the important role of the city, Mr. Speaker.

I want to amplify and recognize the voice of community members, Mr. Speaker, and community associations that have

been really tireless in putting forward the case and the importance of a multi-purpose community centre on the west side, Mr. Speaker, through Rosemont Mount Royal, serving Dieppe and the communities on the west, Mr. Speaker. It's really notable that there's an inequity that the communities on the west face on this front, Mr. Speaker.

And certainly I know the city and our city councillors are engaged on this front, Mr. Speaker, but there's a direct role for the province to support that kind of project as well, Mr. Speaker, by tangible ways with dollars, Mr. Speaker, as a funding partner, ideally along with the federal government as a partner as well, Mr. Speaker. But also a new approach in working with community to establish better ways to deliver services that come from the provincial government, if you will, Mr. Speaker, right directly in the community, Mr. Speaker. And certainly a multi-purpose centre would provide that opportunity.

You know, all too often we hear those that are trying to interface with the provincial government or with the ministry, Mr. Speaker. You know, I think of Health, I think of Social Services. All too often it's folks that are stuck on, you know, long waits, Mr. Speaker, on the phone, not getting through, going through, you know, online portals to do so. I think we'd be well served to work with our communities and our community associations to deliver those services closer to residents. And certainly that would provide that opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank as well all the Catholic school board members, Mr. Speaker. They don't represent any specific area or schools, so I want to thank all of them, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to recognize as well Sarah Cummings Truszkowski and Lacey Weekes, who represent schools throughout the riding, Mr. Speaker. You might be familiar with Lacey Weekes, Mr. Speaker. They're both exceptional school board members, Mr. Speaker, and they're doing everything they can for students, I know, Mr. Speaker, in face of years of inadequate funding and cuts by that provincial government, Mr. Speaker, that have exacted a terrible toll on our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, leaving our students often without the support that they need and deserve, leaving teachers in situations with more complex classrooms and larger classrooms, Mr. Speaker. And it's not the kind of recipe that we need to build the future that everyone deserves, Mr. Speaker, the kind of future that every kid deserves, Mr. Speaker, and certainly not the kind of economic and social future that we desire for this beautiful province, Mr. Speaker.

And we also need to have adequate funding to make sure that we're enabling the actual infrastructure improvements that are needed. The rebuild of Rosemont School as but one needed example, Mr. Speaker, a school that's so important to the community but that's past its lifespan, Mr. Speaker. And the reopening very importantly of Dieppe School, Mr. Speaker, which was closed during a time of inadequate provincial funding from the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. But a school that is needed, a school that's valued by Dieppe but then also Westerra, Mr. Speaker, a school that is in good shape, that's been well maintained.

But we need the proper funding from the provincial government to allow school boards to redeploy a school like that in the meaningful way that it should be for the community, Mr.

Speaker. And I'll keep fighting for that in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

There's a practical connect to Dieppe as well. Of course Dieppe needs and deserves its school back, Mr. Speaker, but we also know that McLurg itself is bursting at the seams. And it's an awesome school with amazing teachers as well, but by redeploying Dieppe, of course it takes that pressure off of McLurg as well, Mr. Speaker.

So it's through the lens of the people that I serve, Mr. Speaker, that I enter into the Throne Speech debate. Mr. Speaker, I'll offer a bit of flavour from my critic areas as well. But without a doubt this is a Throne Speech that falls far short of addressing the most pressing issues that my constituents and that Saskatchewan people across this province are facing. It's visionless. It kicks old, recycled promises down the road — kicks the can down the road, Mr. Speaker, and offers nothing new when it comes to the affordability crisis that Saskatchewan people are facing, Mr. Speaker.

No new measures to address the affordability crisis that Saskatchewan people are facing, all while hiking taxes, Mr. Speaker, and adding fee after fee after fee onto Saskatchewan people. Adding costs this month, next month, and every month, year after year after year into perpetuity, Mr. Speaker. And it doesn't offer up a new measure on these fronts.

But what it does do is it takes away the good jobs of 350 Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. Jobs that they count on, jobs that they're proud of — their livelihoods, Mr. Speaker. Jobs that pay their mortgages. Jobs that allow them to send their kids to sports and activities and recreation, Mr. Speaker. Jobs that allow them to be able to plan towards the possibility of one day being able to retire, Mr. Speaker, with a level of dignity that doesn't have them accessing the food bank, Mr. Speaker.

So this government doesn't offer up any affordability measures, anything new. It piles on with new costs, new fees, new taxes, Mr. Speaker. And it scraps 350 jobs, Mr. Speaker, from a profitable Crown corporation in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. But another attack on our Crown corporations by this government, Mr. Speaker, at a time where people need and deserve jobs.

What we see from this old, tired Sask Party government is that old right wing approach of an outsourced, privatized, low-wage economy, Mr. Speaker. We know that fails Saskatchewan people. We know that that builds a weaker economy, Mr. Speaker, instead of building an economy that people can count on with jobs that they can count on, Mr. Speaker. A Saskatchewan that truly works for everyone, if you will, Mr. Speaker.

And of course we see nothing on health care to step up to the crisis and the closures that we face on so many fronts. Not a single hospital reopened that we hear about from the side opposite. You know, in fact in June of this year we had 37 hospitals that were in closure, Mr. Speaker. There's a situation up in Kamsack of course, Mr. Speaker, where we had closure there, Mr. Speaker. And then the folks there were directing them — I think it was the MLA was directing them — well they should

go to Canora, Mr. Speaker. Well folks went to Canora who needed care, and there's a sign over there saying, well no, go back to Kamsack.

We saw residents rising up rightfully, holding that government and their MLA to account, Mr. Speaker. And in face of that, what did we see, Mr. Speaker? We saw the Kamsack shuffle, Mr. Speaker. That MLA couldn't get out of Dodge fast enough and didn't have answers or support for the people that he represents, Mr. Speaker.

We see the same sort of abject failure in response to the doctor shortage crisis facing communities across Saskatchewan. Not a single doctor taking new patients in Saskatoon — the biggest centre, the biggest city in Saskatchewan. Nary a doctor available in Regina. And of course we know the unacceptable reality that rural and First Nations people face across Saskatchewan and through the North, Mr. Speaker. ERs [emergency room] that are under huge pressure, Mr. Speaker.

And now we're hearing, of course, that this is a government that's not even able to pay the health care workers right now, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this AIMS [administrative information management system] program, Mr. Speaker. People deserve better.

When it comes to mental health and addictions services, Mr. Speaker, of course we need to address the . . . And the Minister of Health can heckle while we talk about mental health and addictions if he chooses. That's how he can choose to relate to this Assembly if he wants. And he can holler more. He can holler more. Saskatchewan people . . . So the minister is yelling. I have no idea what he yelled. Would you care to yell? What would you like to say? I didn't hear what you said, Minister. Go ahead.

You know, there's a pent-up frustration in that minister, Mr. Speaker, and for good reason, Mr. Speaker, and we can understand that. When it comes to mental health and addictions services, of course we need to address the stigma, Mr. Speaker, but then we need to make sure those services and supports and treatment are extended when people need them, barrier free, to Saskatchewan people. We see nothing on that here either, Mr. Speaker.

What we see, Mr. Speaker, is a government that's tired and not stepping up to the challenges Saskatchewan people face, you know, and nothing on health care, nothing on education. A government that's been eviscerated, Mr. Speaker, in the national news, Mr. Speaker, by local people, by economists, Mr. Speaker. Economic and fiscal credibility that's been torn to shreds, Mr. Speaker.

And then the questions around their judgment and morals that have been placed directly to them, Mr. Speaker, with the inconceivable invitation to wife-murderer Colin Thatcher to this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. It's an insult to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, and it's just beyond me how it could take day after day after day for the Premier to finally realize that somehow this was offside, that somehow this was a horrible message to send to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

So in face of those challenges that we face, the extraordinary times, Mr. Speaker — windfall revenues being enjoyed by

government — we have a government that's falling far, far short. It's clear there's a level of entitlement that has crept deep in that Sask Party government, a government that seems all too often to just be mailing it in, Mr. Speaker, that aren't up to the task, that are in it for all the wrong reasons, Mr. Speaker. A real change that's gone on in this Sask Party government, a Sask Party cabinet that seems to be way more interested in their partisan interest than the public interest time and time again, Mr. Speaker, a government that simply won't simply be straight with Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I hear a faraway echo, Mr. Speaker, a squeak from the back, from the far reaches of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and I think I know what it is, Mr. Speaker. I think I know what that squeak from the back was, Mr. Speaker. It's the member for Walsh Acres, Mr. Speaker. You know, and it's good to hear him squeaking from the back, Mr. Speaker, but I would sure call on him, Mr. Speaker, to stand up for the very good people who he's elected to serve and entrusted with that duty, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the fiscal record of this government, of course they've proven themselves incompetent time and time again. They couldn't balance the budget during the best days, Mr. Speaker. Didn't save a dime during the boom, Mr. Speaker. Spent every last dollar and more, and piled on debt year after year after year. Tripled the debt, Mr. Speaker, during some of the best years in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker. Just couldn't get it done, Mr. Speaker.

And that comes at a cost, comes at a cost, Mr. Speaker, the cost of their mismanagement. The GTH [Global Transportation Hub], the bypass, Mr. Speaker, so many other mismanaged projects by this government — they come at a price. They come at a price when we then see the government going to try to pay that bill with the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker, but a few years ago with the PST [provincial sales tax], a massive increase on Saskatchewan people that have hit Saskatchewan people hard now as they face a cost-of-living crisis, Mr. Speaker, and of course weakened and hurt our economy.

And then we've seen that fiscal incompetence on full display once again with the white paper, Mr. Speaker. A government that does itself no favours in trying to advance the important interests of Saskatchewan when they bring forward such a sloppy, partisan, bush-league paper, Mr. Speaker, that's been eviscerated by economists, Mr. Speaker, where the costing has been simply blown apart, Mr. Speaker.

It's a terribly trashy way, I should say, Mr. Speaker, of treating the very good civil servants at the Ministry of Finance as well, to somehow try to suggest that that came from the Ministry of Finance, because the people of Saskatchewan know, Mr. Speaker, the exceptional people that serve them in the ministry. And of course that's partisan finger pointing that we see again from this government that simply can't work a calculator, Mr. Speaker. Can't pass a basic math test, Mr. Speaker.

And the problem with all of this is it makes this government — and sadly weakens the argument for Saskatchewan — makes this government economic lightweights, Mr. Speaker. And I think of those times where Saskatchewan has always been able to rise to the occasion and to fight, you know, punch well above its weight, Mr. Speaker. You've got to have your argument based in fact.

I think of the leaders in the past that were a part of that. Think of, you know, the cross-jurisdictional work of Premiers Blakeney and Lougheed during the repatriation of our Constitution in 1982, Mr. Speaker, supported by the incredible leadership of Roy Romanow, then attorney general, and Howard Leeson and many others, Mr. Speaker, who led that discussion and advanced the interests for Saskatchewan and for Prairie provinces. Mr. Speaker, those are the giants whose shoulders we stand upon. And what a shadow of our former self we are when we see this sort of ham-handed, partisan, bush-league approach from this current government, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan have always been leaders. They expect their government to be leaders, Mr. Speaker. And the approach of the crew opposite just doesn't cut the mustard, Mr. Speaker.

You know, think of the fact that this is a government that sat on affordability relief, that came before the people of Saskatchewan not being straight with them at budget time about the windfall revenue situation that they were enjoying. Instead they hid and hoarded windfall revenues, Mr. Speaker, while Saskatchewan people have faced through-the-roof increases to their cost of living: fuel that's through the roof, food that's through the roof. On front after front, our costs are through the roof, Mr. Speaker. And this is a government that did nothing, that instead decided to politically manage expectations, hiding the fact that we were in massive surplus, Mr. Speaker.

When we brought this to the attention of the Finance minister and the Premier and we exposed this and called them out as they brought forward that budget, they pretended otherwise and chose not to be straight with the people of Saskatchewan. The consequence of that is that Saskatchewan people have worked so hard to keep their head above water, and many haven't been able to, Mr. Speaker, from a financial perspective, after months of these sky-high costs. And not a stitch of relief to Saskatchewan people.

Finally we hear there's some money that's going to come out to Saskatchewan people, a rebate, something we've called for as one measure. Some one-time support as well as long-time support, Mr. Speaker, to address the other costs that we see this government jacking up on Saskatchewan people. And even when they bring forward a rebate, Mr. Speaker, it's inequitable. It's unfair the way that it's organized, shutting out families from getting the support that they need and deserve by excluding children, Mr. Speaker. A childless couple will get more than a single parent with four kids, Mr. Speaker. A rebate should also be going to children. It costs an awful lot to be feeding children, to be raising children, to be clothing children, Mr. Speaker, to make sure they have the basics that they need and deserve.

Not to mention, Mr. Speaker, that the way that they've chosen to organize this is going to shut out some of the very most vulnerable in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, using tax records alone. They chose not to reconcile that with health records and to utilize other records to make sure that all Saskatchewan people are recognized. So some of the very most vulnerable, some of the folks that are homeless are going to be shut out from this rebate, Mr. Speaker. And these are things that should and can be fixed, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

I want to touch just a little bit on connectivity, Mr. Speaker. We need to do all we can in 2022 and actually long before that to connect Saskatchewan. It's not a luxury to be able to access your cell phone or your hand-held to have internet and cell coverage in 2022. It's a necessity, Mr. Speaker. It's critical to basic security and peace of mind, for safety, for those on roads and in isolated communities and those on farms, Mr. Speaker, those on First Nations.

We need to be connecting Saskatchewan people. We continue to call on this government to put the money where their mouths are, Mr. Speaker, and to make connectivity happen. It needs to become a priority to connect rural residents, to connect our towns and villages, to connect our First Nations, and those throughout the North. It presents as well an incredible economic opportunity to Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

We'll continue to call on this government to end the dividend from SaskTel at this point in time, to fully deploy it, to fully leverage it to make connectivity happen now. This is something that shouldn't be slow-walked, Mr. Speaker. This is critical to communities and people and First Nations communities all across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And we need to be making it happen now. And we need to make sure that's happening in all places, Mr. Speaker.

I think of last year when we were working with the chief and council of Ministikwan First Nation, Mr. Speaker, large First Nation with no connectivity. And when you look at things further, Mr. Speaker, and where cell phone and internet technology and satellite infrastructure is being placed, it's certainly not supporting First Nations in an equitable way. In fact it's almost impossible to find a cell phone tower, for example, on a First Nation, Mr. Speaker.

I want to touch on one of our proudest and most important sectors, Mr. Speaker, that being agriculture. And I want to send care to the producers of this province who are dynamic and world leaders and who do so much, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we offer those words at the end of harvest here. We do so a year after the horrible drought that impacted most of the province last year, a generational drought, Mr. Speaker.

I should say though, Mr. Speaker, that the Southwest and the west side of the province this year continued to face that drought, Mr. Speaker, in a really challenging way. Ranchers and livestock producers, beef producers have continued to face very serious choices and stress this last year. But in most parts it was a much better crop year, Mr. Speaker.

What I would say is that we finally see in this budget an improvement to AgriStability, Mr. Speaker: the payment rate from 70 to 80 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we've been fighting for that for years, and it falls short to offer that up at a time where folks were high and dry during that historic drought.

We're calling as well for a beef pricing investigation, Mr. Speaker, to ensure fairness for producers and importantly for consumers, to address the anticompetitive behaviour of the consolidated meatpacking industry and ensure fairness for consumers and for producers. The price of live cattle simply doesn't correlate anymore with the price at the butcher counter or at the grocery store, Mr. Speaker.

We're calling as well of course for the expansion in a robust way of local meat processing in Saskatchewan, of abattoirs, of that important economic activity, for similar reasons and of course for all the jobs that it would create, Mr. Speaker.

And we're going to continue to push this government for equity for livestock producers, Mr. Speaker, on the insurance side. Certainly we have insurance programs in place on the crop side that are valued and important and critical, Mr. Speaker, and they need to be always strengthened and improved. But when it comes to the premiums that the provincial government and federal government place on the crop side, they don't make those into the livestock insurance programs, Mr. Speaker, when we look at livestock price insurance or forage insurance. And we need equity for those important programs, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that livestock producers have the backstop that they need and deserve.

We need to address the foreign ownership acquisitions that are going on in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that break the spirit and intent of the law. We need enforcement on this front. We need mandatory declarations of beneficial interest, Mr. Speaker, at the time of purchase, and we need that to be enforced. We've had a government, of course, that hasn't upheld the law on this front and has treated this issue with kid gloves, Mr. Speaker.

We need a transportation system that will work for producers and that will work for all of our exporters and all of our economy, Mr. Speaker. So these are fronts that we'll continue to push for producers, Mr. Speaker.

But in closing, this Throne Speech doesn't rise to the occasion. It puts Saskatchewan people on notice what's at risk when you see the dirty attack on the 350 jobs at the SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority], Mr. Speaker, something that this government never ran on. A few years back, at least the previous leader, the previous premier, had the decency, Mr. Speaker, to run on a plan when it came to the SLGA.

This case, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that didn't have the backbone to be straight with Saskatchewan people. And now just before Christmas, during an affordability crisis, they're taking away their jobs. A greater pursuit towards that outsourced, low-wage, privatized economy and a wake-up call to everyone once again that the Sask Party just can't be trusted when it comes to our precious Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. And when we think of SaskPower and SaskTel and SaskEnergy, Mr. Speaker, when they're gone, they're gone. And they're so important to Saskatchewan people from an affordability perspective, Mr. Speaker, and they're so important to Saskatchewan people from an economic perspective.

So, Mr. Speaker, under our new leader and together with this amazing team, we're going to fight for Saskatchewan people and we're going to work tirelessly to listen and to build, to build that future that Saskatchewan people deserve in every corner of Saskatchewan and in every sector across this wonderful province, Mr. Speaker, to allow young people to fulfill their full potential because it's only then that our province will be able to live up to its, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to work as the official opposition Saskatchewan New Democrats, towards that hope-filled future, that future, Mr. Speaker, with so much promise, a future that delivers for Saskatchewan people.

Thank you so very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to second the amendment brought forward by the member from Fairview, and I'll leave the floor to my colleagues.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid I have to disagree and very much disappointed with that amendment, Mr. Speaker. And I discourage any amendment to this government's ambitious investing plan in the health care infrastructure and education, agriculture, and research and much more, Mr. Speaker. And I agree with the motion moved forward by the member from Walsh Acres and seconded by the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Speaker, very excellent words that member from Athabasca put that in *Hansard* on last Thursday. Fabulous family values . . . [inaudible] . . . connectivity with Athabasca constituents, Mr. Speaker, and very, very true, actually, superlative representation from Sask North, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Saskatchewan Party government refuses to stop working for the people of Saskatchewan, the province, and the strong economy, and the growth that works for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, before I proceed with my response to the Speech from Throne, I would like to say few thanks to the people who play a good role in my life and help me perform my job, while I'm sitting in this chair, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I would like to say thanks to people of Regina Pasqua who put the trust on me for it's been six and a half years plus, Mr. Speaker, and would like to say thanks to them to contact my office time to time and come and drop in and give their feedback and tell me what to do and what not to do and to represent them to government and to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to say thank you to my family, Mr. Speaker, my brother and sisters and all other family members for morally supporting me performing my job and would like to say thanks for their prayer. I also would like to say thank you to my wife. We've been together since about 24 years, Mr. Speaker. We have three boys, our very intelligent, brilliant kids. One is in third year of university, one in grade 12 in Campbell Collegiate French immersion, one in grade 8 — Ayaz, Kashif, and Arsalan — very intelligent. And would like to say thanks to them for supporting me while I'm doing my job, Mr. Speaker.

Would like to say thank you to my CA [constituency assistant], Mr. Speaker, that keeping my office connected with the constituents and connected to these ministers' offices. And thanks to all that stop in government caucus and all these ministerial offices, the connection between my CA and all these offices. My CA, Josh Fryklund, thank you very much for working in my office.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give brief comments on behalf of my constituency, Regina Pasqua, and my family about the incident on September 4th, 2022. A horrific mass stabbing occurred in James Smith Cree Nation and the town of Weldon, Saskatchewan. The incident tragically claimed the lives of 11 people and injured 18 others. Our entire province shared in the grief of victims and their families, and we stand with the residents

of James Smith Cree Nation and the town of Weldon as they grieve and heal.

Mr. Speaker, on September 8th, 2022, we learned of the passing of our beloved Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada and the Commonwealth for more than 70 years. A day before her passing, Her Majesty shared a message about the James Smith Cree Nation incident that she said, mourns with all Canadians. We mourn the death of Her Late Majesty and thank her for 70 years' leadership. Rest in peace, the Queen, and long live the King.

Mr. Speaker, the province of Saskatchewan, Canada, and the rest of the world went through many economic challenges as we battled COVID-19. Our government released a back-on-track plan with a good strategy for a strong economy. Thanks to the Saskatchewan people's hard work, our government has balanced the budget this year and we are four years ahead of schedule.

High prices of our resources have brought forward a projected \$1.6 billion surplus belonging to this province's people. The surplus has allowed our government to announce a \$500 Saskatchewan affordability tax credit cheque that will be delivered to everyone at the age of 18 and above who completed their 2022 income tax.

Mr. Speaker, we exempted the fitness and gym membership PST, extended the reduction of the small-business tax rate, and we paid down \$1 billion operating debt that saved our Saskatchewan government \$50 million per year in interest cost.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government has no plans slowing down our strong, growing economy. We understand the backlog of surgeries every jurisdiction faces. And our government will continue to invest in health care services to reduce surgical wait time.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose any amendment to our aggressive approach in health care that with the target we set, completing 97,000 surgeries. We're working on expanding our surgical capacity in Regina and Saskatoon and in regional hospitals. We're also establishing a new partnership with publicly funded private surgical providers to achieve this target. We're very serious and provide the best health care in rural and remote areas. A new incentive program offered up to \$50,000 to health workers who accept hard-to-recruit positions, mainly in rural and remote areas.

[15:00]

Mr. Speaker, there are several capital investments in health care. I would like to highlight a few of those. The construction has started in a new urgent care centre in Regina. Construction on a new hospital in Weyburn will begin early next year. The tendering process for exception and development of Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert is moving forward.

Our government understands the pressure inflation has placed on school divisions' budget. We have responded by providing \$20 million to the school division to assist with the rising fuel and insurance cost. With this, the education budget has increased to more than \$2 billion for the first time in Saskatchewan history. Mr. Speaker, we have continued in education capital investment

with the announcement of 15 new schools. Three are now under construction: Carrot River, Blaine Lake, and in Regina. Twelve new schools are in the procurement and design stage.

Mr. Speaker, our trade office worldwide help our producers reach our international customers. Saskatchewan exports 70 per cent of what we produce. Mr. Speaker, our government has opened 10 global trade office worldwide, including one in Mexico, and we are not stopping. We will keep promoting Saskatchewan products worldwide in international market. We have offices in Europe, Asia, United Arab Emirates. All these offices connect Saskatchewan business with customers while working to attract new investment to this province.

Mr. Speaker, throughout our history Saskatchewan has welcomed newcomers to our province. Saskatchewan has always been a place of safety and opportunity for the people escaping war, oppression, and poverty. We remember that we welcomed people from Syria.

And on October 25th, 2022, I had the opportunity to join the Minister of Immigration, Trade and Export Development, and the member from Canora-Pelly and the member from Martensville-Warman and the member from Regina Coronation Park to welcome our Ukrainian brother and sisters' direct flight from Ukraine to Regina. Two hundred thirty-six people arrived that day.

I have seen the excitement on the faces of all the members that were there, especially the members from Martensville and Canora-Pelly, Mr. Speaker. And you know, all those people came. That's from infant to the 70-year old couple who came, but we have seen that, Mr. Speaker.

One thing I would like to mention. You know, it is a tough migration, Mr. Speaker, when you see clearly from those faces that, you know, there is a feeling of migration leaving the hometown, although they are in the very best place, safe place, and very good opportunity they can avail it, but at the same time having a feeling to leave their own houses from Ukraine. My family and everyone's prayer is with the Ukraine, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is on a track to reach 1.2 million people by the end of 2022. Our province is leading Canada in economic growth in this year in 2022. Investment is flowing in the province as several major projects move ahead, creating thousands of jobs. Activity in our resources are on the upswing as the demand for potash, oil, uranium, and other key commodities increases. And, Mr. Speaker, BHP is the fast-tracking development of \$12 billion Jansen potash mine, the largest single investment in the history of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, all other potash companies are working hard to reach the target of \$9 billion export of potash, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion I would like to say that in this Speech from the Throne, there are many reasons to be optimistic about Saskatchewan's future. People are coming to our province from around the world, looking for opportunity and better life. Our economy is expanding rapidly, powered by our world-class resources sector. Our manufacturers and processors offer growing technology sectors and the best workplace in Canada. Mr. Speaker, in prediction of food uncertainty, Saskatchewan is

a reliable, indispensable supplier of food, fuel, and fertilizer to millions of people around the world. Our commitment that we ensure that our economy continues to grow that everyone in Saskatchewan gets the benefit.

Mr. Speaker, more people, more jobs, and more investment in important government sectors, and this is the growth that works for everyone. Mr. Speaker, God bless Saskatchewan. God bless Canada. God save the King. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Point of order.

The Speaker: — Please state your point of order.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — The member from Rosemont stated during his reply to the Throne that this government cannot be trusted. Mr. Speaker, this is obviously unparliamentary language. The member should stand in his place and apologize.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I would withdraw and apologize for that comment.

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

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise again today to speak in support of the Throne Speech that was delivered to us last week. Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech laid out a strong reason for our government to inspire hope and optimism across our province. After several difficult years, we are ready to move forward beyond the pandemic and into the next great chapter of our province's story.

People are moving to Saskatchewan because they see the great potential we offer. Our province grew by nearly 6,500 people in the second quarter of this year. This is the largest quarterly increase in population ever recorded. Saskatchewan is on track to reach 1.2 million people before the end of 2022. This is a 20 per cent increase of nearly 200,000 people since our government took office in 2007.

With lower taxes and massive red tape reduction, Saskatchewan continues to be a global destination for workers, investors, entrepreneurs, innovators, and families. Our economy isn't just growing; it's thriving. As our Premier has stated, we have everything the world needs. With our government's commitment to removing barriers to unlock Saskatchewan's incredible economic potential, I see great advancement in our horizon.

Mr. Speaker, our province is realizing growth in the potash industry, the oil and gas sector, as well as mining. Through a surge of capital investment that has flowed into our province, Saskatchewan's recovery plan is creating high-paying jobs in every corner of our province including rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. These investments include a new potash mine, three canola crushing plants and the expansion of an existing plant, Canada's first wheat straw pulp facility, a urea fertilizer plant, an oriented strand board mill, the revitalizing of

the Prince Albert pulp mill, expanding and upgrading saw mills, and a new cedar manufacturing facility.

To achieve continued growth and prosperity, our province depends on its production for export to the rest of the world. As one of the world's top exporters, Saskatchewan ships almost 70 per cent of what we produce to international customers. We now have international trade offices in Mexico, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, India, Singapore, China, Vietnam, and Japan, all open to help connect Saskatchewan businesses with customers and to attract new investment into our province. We will soon be adding a new trade office in Germany, which boasts the fourth-largest economy in the world and is a major manufacturing capital.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan people sent this government to get the job done, and that's exactly what we are doing. Our province has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. It's been a tough few years but we have endured. Our economy is rebounding, our finances are in good shape, and I am confident that Saskatchewan's best days are certainly yet to come.

The Throne Speech highlighted some remarkable objectives outlined in our growth plan. These include the creation of 100,000 new jobs, increasing the value of our exports by 50 per cent, and the investment of \$30 billion into the province's infrastructure, all by 2030. I am so proud to be able to speak in support of these incredible goals, Mr. Speaker.

We have learned over the last few years that we must ensure that our health care system is strong and resilient for any future crisis. I am reassured in knowing that our government is investing to expand capacity in our health care system, including the recently announced health human resources action plan that was outlined in the Throne Speech.

This plan's addition of over 1,000 health care professionals into Saskatchewan's health care system will focus on staffing hard-to-recruit positions in rural and remote areas through accelerated training and recruiting workers internationally, with a focus on the Philippines. This plan includes a recruitment mission to the Philippines this fall to promote health care opportunities in Saskatchewan, a new incentive program providing up to \$50,000 to health care workers for hard-to-recruit positions, the creation of 100 new permanent full-time positions across the province, and the conversion of 150 existing part-time positions to full-time permanent positions in rural and remote areas.

Further, our government is making major investments to increasing surgical capacities and addressing backlogs across Saskatchewan, including a new in-patient joint replacement facility in Regina expected to begin operations by the end of 2023. Work is also under way on new urgent care centres in both Regina and Saskatoon. These urgent care centres will reduce wait times at emergency rooms by providing alternative care for illnesses or injuries not considered life-threatening but requiring immediate attention. They will also include care for those with mental health or addictions issues. These initiatives help ease the burden on our system and deliver high-quality patient care to every person that needs it.

Mr. Speaker, to continue to promote a healthier Saskatchewan, we are now providing coverage of the drug Trikafta. It's

considered a great innovation in the care of cystic fibrosis patients. My daughter Indu's friend in Victoria, who suffered from this disease which causes thick mucus in the lungs and digestive system, was a strong advocate to get this drug approved by the BC [British Columbia] government who does not cover this medication. Sadly she is no longer with us. Indu was thrilled when she learned that our government is providing this coverage.

Mr. Speaker, we are also supporting a new overdose awareness and prevention campaign, and are planning for new hospital projects to continue in both Prince Albert and Weyburn, on new long-term care facilities in Grenfell and La Ronge, and on replacement long-term care facilities in Watson and Estevan. Our government will also be pursuing further opportunities to increase the number of addictions treatment and detox spaces, including partnerships with charitable organizations and third-party providers with the goal of adding another 150 treatment spaces over the next three years.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is no higher duty of government than protecting its people. The Throne Speech highlighted our government's commitment to do so by adding 60 new police positions and another 11 civilian positions to support new law enforcement initiatives and will create a new provincial protective services unit. Our expansion of the warrant enforcement and suppression team will enhance our ability to target dangerous offenders with outstanding warrants, and by enacting amendments to our province's trespass laws we will shift the onus of responsibility from rural land owners to individuals seeking to access their properties, which was effective January 1st of this year.

Our government also intends to establish a Saskatchewan marshals service. The service will support the Saskatchewan RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and other police forces in the province to enhance law enforcement across Saskatchewan. These are some of the ways our government plans to carry out this duty.

Mr. Speaker, our government is determined to build a stronger, more independent Saskatchewan. To accomplish this, Saskatchewan has taken control of our firearms program with the appointment of the first provincial Chief Firearms Officer. Our government is also committed to being a full participant in expected negotiations to achieve meaningful reformed equalization.

The Throne Speech also reiterates our commitment to focus on greater provincial autonomy. Through the introduction of the Saskatchewan-first Act, we will clearly define the province's position of absolute jurisdiction over our natural resources and economic future. This Act will be followed by an amendment to the province's constitution outlining our exclusive jurisdiction.

We will be creating our new provincial protective services and an additional 60 new police positions. We will be considering other options as well to ensure law enforcement is more effective and responsive, including a provincial police force to complement the services provided by municipal police and RCMP.

Our government will introduce legislation that would allow the province to collect its own corporate income tax. We also seek to maintain greater control by signing the Saskatchewan-Canada immigration accord and sending it to the federal government for ratification, with the aim to give our province authority over immigration. This accord will help address gaps in our labour market and to meet our economic needs.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech also highlighted something that impacts every person in Saskatchewan, and that is to make life more affordable. We have announced a four-point affordability plan. This plan will deliver a \$500 Saskatchewan affordability tax credit cheque to everyone aged 18 and older. It will exempt fitness and gym memberships and other activities from the provincial sales tax. The plan will also extend the reduction of the small-business tax rate. Lastly it outlines our goals to pay down up to \$1 billion in operating debt, saving our province nearly \$50 million a year in interest costs.

Our government, in partnership with the federal government, has also reduced child care fees by an average of 70 per cent, with the goal of reducing it to \$10 a day. And eligible residents over 65 and children 14 years old and under receive reduced rates of only \$25 per prescription. This is a huge cost savings to most families.

Our residents pay the second-lowest utility cost in Canada, including power, energy, and phone. We also provide the lowest vehicle insurance in Canada. Our province is the only one to offer the first-time homebuyers tax credit for up to \$1,050 and the home renovation tax credit which is up to \$2,100 over two years.

And for recent graduates, Saskatchewan is the only province to offer the graduate retention program, which has benefited over 75,500 graduates so far. We also offer the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship for post-secondary students with up to a maximum of \$3,000.

Last year SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] gave a rebate of almost \$400 per vehicle and this year gave \$100 rebate for every vehicle registered as of March 9, 2022.

Mr. Speaker, the speech also reiterates our commitment to education. We will help support both teachers and students with the creation of 200 new educational assistant positions in school classrooms. We will also continue work on new schools in eight different cities and another 16 school projects across the province. The creation of a new centralized online learning model will ensure all students can enrol in any course offered in the province regardless of where they live. And to allow students to study Indigenous languages, we will provide funding for the Dene teacher education program at the First Nations University of Canada and for scholarships to attend.

I am so thankful to live in such an inclusive province. Saskatchewan has such a rich heritage of welcoming everyone from everywhere and working together to make it better for all. This fall we gathered at Mosaic Stadium to celebrate Miyo-wîcîwitowin Day surrounded by children — our future leaders — from across the province. It was impossible not to feel the coming together of all our people, healing the past and looking forward to a brighter future.

Mr. Speaker, at the Regina fire protection services fire-op training this September, I was so surprised to learn how easily the jaws of life can rip open a car to save passengers inside. We had been given the option to be an observer or a participant. Not foreseeing that this would be such a warm fall day, I chose to suit up in a heavy protective gear with oversized boots, tank on the back, rubber mask and helmet, to then run trying to extinguish fires and save lives. Perhaps not the smartest choice on such a hot day as I was melting and trying not to pass out from heat exhaustion.

I have always admired the work of first responders. But this gave me an even higher level of respect for the firefighters who not only put up with uncomfortable uniforms but put their lives on the line to protect others every day.

Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to bring congratulatory greetings to Sterling Truck & Trailer Sales on their 50th anniversary in the business. I am so glad to represent constituents like the Hornoi family who have worked so hard over the decades creating employment and building our economy.

On the 75th anniversary of India's independence this summer, it was so good to see so many people from all religions and cultural backgrounds attend the celebrations.

Mr. Speaker, our government has brought focus onto average families and is making sure we fulfill our commitment to secure employment and the economy. I believe that that was evident in the speech right from the start. While the pandemic disrupted many of our plans, it's clear that our province has persevered and is back on a path of normality, balance, and prosperity.

Saskatchewan's nation-leading economic recovery, highlighted in the Throne Speech, can be felt in every corner of our province, including in a capital-city constituency like mine where families are going back to work and enjoying their communities after these challenging years.

Our government's commitment to fiscal responsibility has allowed us to continue to look after the interests of Saskatchewan residents, not just today but into the future. Mr. Speaker, infrastructure connects households across our province to high-quality opportunities for employment, health care, and education. Clean energy and efficient highways can reduce greenhouse gases.

This same economic logic applies to telecommunication networks, water systems, as well as energy production and distribution. Our government is currently on track to meet our growth plan goal to improve 10 000 kilometres of highway by 2030. We are also the first province in Canada to officially mark treaty boundaries along major highways.

To stay connected in an equally important way, Saskatchewan people need to have access to advanced internet services, for which our government has directed SaskTel to double its investment in the rural fibre initiative, which will bring fibre optic internet service to more than 110,000 residents and businesses in 131 rural communities by March 2025. Once completed, approximately 80 per cent of homes in Saskatchewan will be reached by the infiNet network.

Mr. Speaker, to power our province we are expanding our renewable energy at a lightning pace. In addition to the current 680 megawatt of wind and solar generation, SaskPower will be adding another 330 megawatts in development. SaskPower also continues to expand its natural gas power-generating capacity and is planning for the potential development and deployment of small modular nuclear reactors by 2029.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we as a government are committed to unlocking Saskatchewan's potential. I believe the Throne Speech delivered last week outlined a robust plan on exactly how we will achieve this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is always an honour to rise in this House to speak on behalf of the residents of Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood. I am humbled by the opportunity to represent and advocate on behalf of my constituents, and I remain grateful for the trust that they continue to place in me to be their voice here in this Legislative Assembly.

I would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we are located is Treaty 4 territory and the homeland of the Métis Nation. I make this acknowledgement to demonstrate my personal commitment to reconciliation; to pay respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this land; and to recognize their histories, culture, and contributions to our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to pass on my deepest condolences to the chiefs of James Smith Cree Nation in person — Chief Calvin Sanderson, Chief Wally Burns, and Chief Robert Head — over the September 4th tragedy that left 11 people dead and another 18 wounded. The unprovoked attack that occurred on James Smith Cree Nation and the nearby community of Weldon was among one of our country's deadliest mass murders. And what we heard from the chiefs and councils that day is it will take a long time for the community to heal.

First Nations are a resilient people, and the members of James Smith have shown that resilience and that strength and have come together as a community to deal with the grief, despair, and trauma of such an horrific loss. As I read the funeral programs of many of the deceased, it brought to the forefront the suffering in the community and all the lives that are affected. The leadership of James Smith Cree Nation does not want to leave behind any of their community who are suffering. Vice-Chief Alvin Moostoos said in an interview, and I quote: "Right now we're knocked down, but we will get back up and we'll get back up with pride when our community comes together."

Our thoughts and prayers remain with James Smith Cree Nation. We will be there for you.

I would also like to offer my condolences and pay tribute to the late Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II after her passing on September 8th. She lived a life of dedicated service with grace and dignity and was admired as a role model for diplomacy and international relations. Her Majesty had such love and dedication to the welfare of her people. As our longest serving monarch and the head of the Commonwealth, she provided a steady hand and reassuring presence. I would like to share part of the statement

from the Speaker of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, the Right Honourable Sir Lindsay Hoyle:

For all of us, the Queen has been a constant presence in our lives, as familiar as a member of the family, yet one who has exercised a calm and steady influence over our country. During her 70 years on the throne, she has given our lives a sense of equilibrium. While her reign has been marked by dramatic changes in the world, Her Majesty has maintained her unwavering devotion to the United Kingdom, the British overseas territories, and the Commonwealth of Nations, and her gentle authority and sound reason have been felt throughout.

[15:30]

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to another topic that has consumed our attention for the past many months, and rightly so, the war in Ukraine. It has been eight months that the country of Ukraine has withstood the unprovoked attack from Russia that has resulted in thousands of deaths and injuries. I would like to refer to a recent pastoral letter from the Ukrainian-rite Catholic bishops of Canada:

The war in Ukraine rages on with no end in sight, claiming the lives of thousands of innocent children, men, and women, with millions more on the move as refugees in search of safety, food, shelter, clothing, and medicine, in addition to the destruction of countless homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses . . .

Ukraine and its people are in crisis. Like the Holodomor genocide or the Ukrainian famine of 1932-33, which claimed the lives of millions of people in Ukraine when the Soviet Union deliberately and methodically starved as many as one-quarter of the Ukrainian population, today's war in Ukraine by foreign aggressors has as its intent to erase the identity and history of the Ukrainian people.

These are not easy times. The entire world is ill at ease. According to the latest update from the United Nations office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, there have been over 6,000 killed and over 9,000 injured that include hundreds of children. There are now more than 7 million Ukrainians displaced. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Ukrainian people have demonstrated fierce resolve in defending their homeland from this brutal aggression and a history of oppression.

Ukrainians from around the world and across our country and our province are continuing to stand with Ukraine. More than 13 per cent of this province have Ukrainian ancestry, including my mother-in-law, Kathy Lambert. Saskatchewan has welcomed more than 2,000 displaced Ukrainians who have been forced to flee their country. This government, our people of the province, and the business community have stepped up with financial donations, housing, job offers since the conflict began. Let us all pray for an end to war in Ukraine.

The James Smith Cree Nation tragedy, the passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the war on Ukraine — heartbreak events that weigh heavily on us. They are a part of our reality that must be faced and overcome.

I want to take a moment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to thank some of the people in my life who make it possible for me to perform my duties as an MLA. I've been gifted with two constituency assistants who job-share and represent me well in my constituency office. Candace Forrester and Betty Weller are professional, efficient, patient, knowledgeable, and empathetic, and I am grateful for their dedicated service.

My husband, Jim, and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary this summer with our three adult daughters, two sons-in-law, and five grandchildren. You don't reach that anniversary without a good deal of commitment, challenges, learning, growing, and compromise. The support I receive from Jim is so appreciated, both inside and outside of this legislature.

I would like to turn my remarks now to some of the highlights of our government's ambitious Throne Speech. The COVID-19 pandemic has played a major role in the current high level of inflation we are facing. We are dealing with supply chain shortages as well as labour shortages that hinder consumer demand, where the demand is greater than the supply and raises the value of goods and services.

Our government has launched a four-point affordability plan, using higher resource revenues to help people address rising costs due to inflation while also reducing the province's debt. All Saskatchewan residents who are 18 years of age or older will receive that \$500 affordability tax credit cheque this fall. We are removing fitness and gym memberships and some recreational activities from the planned October PST changes. We are also extending the small-business tax reduction rate. It will temporarily remain at zero per cent retroactive to July 1st. This will help the approximately 31,000 small businesses in Saskatchewan continue to recover from the pandemic.

Lastly we are retiring up to \$1 billion in operating debt, saving an estimated \$49 million in interest costs and allowing us to invest more right here in this province. Helping Saskatchewan people through a time of higher costs while retiring debt strikes the right balance and helps our province move forward. That is growth that works for everyone.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the good fortune of representing a high density of older adults in my constituency, in fact the highest in the province. There are a number of retirement residences and senior-preferred, multi-unit buildings in my riding. For the second year in a row, the maximum monthly benefit provided through the seniors' income plan increased by \$30 per month, and there is another \$30 per month planned for the coming fiscal year. SIP [seniors' income plan] provides financial assistance to seniors who receive little or no income other than the federal old age security pension and the guaranteed income supplement. Since our last provincial budget, the Government of Saskatchewan is partnering with the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism and the Saskatoon Council on Aging to administer a \$250,000 grant program to support seniors' independence in the community.

Another area of focus for seniors, and frankly all residents of the province, is the importance of reliable, high-quality health care. This government has recently introduced the health human resource action plan. The plan is already showing promising progress as the Saskatchewan Health Authority has received over

3,500 applications for health care positions from the Philippines and nearly 400 applications from unlicensed internationally educated professionals who live in Canada or in our province, and they may qualify for future training or employment right here. Four new health system navigators will start this month to assist in the recruitment and retention of internationally educated health care workers and help them settle in our province.

Saskatchewan will become the first province in the country to introduce an accelerated training assessment and licensing process for internationally educated nurses. The first group of candidates will begin online training this fall. And last month we added 150 nursing seats to the registered nursing, registered psychiatric nursing, and nurse practitioner education programs to increase training opportunities here. As we work to recruit health staff from around the world, with a goal of adding over 1,000 health care professionals to our health system, this plan will also retain and incentivize positions in rural or remote areas.

We're also working towards meeting a target of 97,000 surgeries in this fiscal year. That will represent the highest number of surgeries ever performed in one year. And we will work with public hospitals and establish new partnerships with publicly funded private surgical providers to achieve our ambitious goal.

Residents of Saskatoon can look forward to a new urgent care centre. The Government of Saskatchewan and the Ahtahkakoop Cree Developments have signed a memorandum of understanding to offer Saskatoon-and-area residents an alternative to emergency departments for illnesses and injuries that are not life-threatening, as well as mental health supports, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Saskatoon urgent care centre is one of two centres announced as part of this government's \$7.5 billion capital plan to stimulate the province's economic recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we honour our commitment to truth and reconciliation, our government was pleased to install new road signs to mark the Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 boundary near Bladworth on Highway 11. The signs are a first for Canada, and officially marking the treaty boundary complements treaty education in our province. They will serve as a reminder of the importance of treaties, encourage treaty conversations, and move us forward on the shared journey to reconciliation.

In an effort to support the revitalization of First Nations and Métis culture, we have recently announced that Dakota language is being added to the growing list of secondary-level Indigenous language courses. Our government has also provided up to \$255,000 to the First Nations University of Canada to deliver the Dene teacher education program.

As a member of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, there is much work to do, but the future holds promise for reconciliation. I was pleased to have the opportunity to take part in the pipe ceremony that opened this Legislative session. Another step on the path to reconciliation is that feedback received for the First Nation and Métis consultation policy framework will help to inform revisions to the government's policy on the duty to consult with Indigenous communities.

I appreciated the words spoken by the member from Athabasca last Thursday:

But let our future be of hope, opportunity, forgiveness, and strength because that is the kind of people we are in Saskatchewan, all of us in Saskatchewan. And when we work in partnership and we work together, what we're able to accomplish is unfolding before our eyes, and let's not lose sight of that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatoon's economy is leading the nation. The Conference Board of Canada is forecasting that the Saskatoon economy will grow by 7.2 per cent this year and 3.9 per cent in 2023, outpacing all other major cities in Canada. This growth will be fuelled in part by potash, uranium, and the energy sector. SREDA [Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority] CEO [chief executive officer] Alex Fallon says:

The Saskatoon economy is growing even at a time when Canadian and many international economies are slowing. Saskatoon has a specific set of strengths that makes for a strong, diversified, and growing economy.

Paul Martin and Martin Charlton Communications wrote an article in the spring 2022 edition of *We Build* that was titled "Time to think: Saskatchewan's innovation secret." He wrote about Saskatoon-based International Road Dynamics, one of the mainstays of Saskatchewan's tech sector, a tech sector sometimes referred to as Silicon Prairie. Other players in that Silicon Prairie are Vendasta, SED Systems, 7shifts, Coconut Calendar, and the list goes on and on. These firms are busy building international reputations when it comes to innovation and technology. But what was most interesting was Paul's explanation for the advantage we have here when it comes to innovation, creativity, and brain power to solve the world's problems. He identified that advantage as dryland farming:

With only a million people, Saskatchewan must compete with brains rather than sheer braun. It means that even though we have a small domestic or local consumer market, we are extremely productive so our output must find a home with buyers outside of our borders.

Canada . . . relies more heavily on trade than any other western nation and within Canada, one province — Saskatchewan — does more trade than any other. With 70 per cent of our overall economic activity related to trade, it can be argued rather forcefully that the world's most successful global traders reside here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why it is so important for this government to explore international opportunities. Saskatchewan is one of the world's top exporters. This government operates international trade offices in China, India, Mexico, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Vietnam, and Japan. And another international office will open in Germany in the coming months.

Trade offices and trade missions bear trade fruit. These offices act as a hub for economic development and expansion for our province. They connect international companies and investors to opportunities in our province's agriculture, mining, and energy sectors as Saskatchewan continues to offer the food, fuel, and fertilizer that the world needs. As noted in the fall 2022 edition of *Global Ventures* magazine, I quote:

This global network is a key part of the province's aggressive international engagement strategy to keep Saskatchewan's economy growing strong and to reach the 2030 growth plan targets.

One of the many ways we keep our economy growing is to welcome immigrants from across the world to a better life right here in our province. According to the 2021 census, 12.5 per cent of our population were immigrants and it's the highest proportion of immigrants added to our provincial population on a census.

According to Whitney Jakobsen with Statistics Canada, "We project that within the coming years immigrants will make up more and more of the population in Canada and Saskatchewan." One-third of the present immigrants arrived here from 2016 to 2021. To address the growth in immigration, we need more autonomy and more flexibility, and this government will move ahead with the Saskatchewan-Canada immigration accord.

[15:45]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recently read a quote in the *Reader's Digest* magazine by Tommy Douglas, former NDP premier of Saskatchewan: "Canada is like an old cow. The west feeds it, Ontario and Quebec milk it, and you can well imagine what it's doing in the Maritimes." Well, it looks like things haven't changed too much in seven decades. There are federal governmental policies that are damaging to our province and we will defend and protect our economic future. We want a stronger Saskatchewan in a stronger Confederation. It's time to milk the old cow we feed, and we will share that abundance, that growth, with everyone in this province.

I'd like to end today with words that were written in a column by my good friend Rod Andrews, retired Anglican bishop of Saskatoon, in the *Country Guide*, April 2022 edition:

There are moments in each of our lives — things that happen, people we meet, places we go — that we remember. Some of those experiences define forever who we are. At the time they may seem strange, and we wonder what they're all about. It is as if a wind starts to blow and we feel the touch on ourselves from somewhere else. There are other moments in our lives that cripple and break our spirits. Loss of a job, sickness, divorce, death. We are tempted to say, that's it. I can never be the same again. Possibly. But the good news is there are other moments that, if we seize the opportunity, have the power to lift us up from despair to hope and possibility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, may we choose those moments that will lift us up where hope and possibility prevail. As Saskatchewan stands poised to lead the nation in economic growth this year and next, and with the lowest unemployment rate in the country, we have much to celebrate and be grateful for. At a time of uncertainty and unease in our world, Saskatchewan will step up and continue to deliver what the world needs.

May God continue to bless Saskatchewan. I will be supporting the motion moved by the member from Walsh Acres and seconded by the member from Athabasca. I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And my reply to the Throne Speech is going to be quite bland today because that's just the way I am. So I don't want . . . You know, that's just the way it is, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, first off I want to give some thanks to some people and, you know, I want to thank the good people of Carrot River Valley. And actually that's what I'm going to base a bunch of my speech on today is my good people of Carrot River Valley who put their trust in me and elected me.

And I also want to thank my CAs, Cindy and Shelley, because they do yeomen work. You know, obviously with all of us, we all think we have the best constituency assistants. But let's face it. Mine are better than the other people around here. That's just the way it is. In fact Cindy is handing out chocolate bars. Our office is right at the end of Main Street in Carrot River and the elementary school is on the far end. So all the elementary school kids come out on Halloween and they come down to our office, and we generally get probably between 120 and 130 kids in there. So I had three cases of Aero chocolate bars in there. There's 48 bars to a case, so I'm hoping there's some left because, you see, Aero chocolate bars happen to go into some brownies that I make every now and then.

Anyway, and I also, you know, I have to thank my wife for putting up with me. She's done it for quite a few years now. And you know, our family is very important, and that reminds me. That takes me back to my children. I have to brag them up a little bit too, Mr. Speaker, as I think most people know that my son Morgan is chief of staff here in Environment. And he said it's been . . . you know, he said Health was easy compared to Environment. It's something about the minister there. But anyway I won't go into that.

Our daughter just received her master's in Education last spring and she is now a vice-principal at Milestone School, so just not too far out of Regina here. So that was great news, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, I also know that everybody has been wondering here in the Chamber, because I think I brought it up maybe once or twice before, about our famous Wildcat football team. Well it wasn't a good year, Mr. Speaker. We kind of followed the Riders this year. But we do have a lot of young players coming up. We're going to have a great team next year. I'm fully, fully expecting them to win the provincial six-man title next year. But it was just one of those bad years.

Now going back to this growth that works for everyone, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, I want to talk about my constituency. We have a brand new school being built right in Carrot River as I speak. A brand new school, going to hold about 400 students, Mr. Speaker. This is good news. This is the second new school being built in my constituency since we have formed government. And there's another one just south of there in Porcupine Plain in my neighbouring constituency. A brand new school was built there. Mr. Speaker, that's growth. That's growth that works for everyone.

We also did the opening on Highway 55 here just a matter of a

couple of weeks ago. Now Highway 55 is one of the main corridors. Well it runs across northern Saskatchewan and it ends up meeting up in Manitoba. Well it joins on with 9 and then goes on to The Pas. This is a very important corridor because now what's happening, with what's happening over in Europe, Mr. Speaker, we need to utilize the Port of Churchill. And it has to be utilized more than what is being utilized right now. Highway 55 desperately needed a buildup to primary weights for not just our forest products but for our agriculture products so we can move agriculture products out through the Port of Churchill, fertilizer out through the Port of Churchill. We have to get this going.

And I was very happy to see that the federal . . . I will give the federal government credit because the federal government and the Manitoba government have been putting money into that rail line. So this is something that's very important, and this is growth that works for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, you talk about various different things that have been in our constituency. Just lately they opened a new lift station in Hudson Bay, which of course the provincial government is partners on this lift station. Now these aren't real fancy things, and they don't get seen much, but these are things that are needed. These are things that are needed out in our communities. And, Mr. Speaker, this is growth. This is growth that works for everyone.

We have new water treatment plants, both in Carrot River and in Arborfield. There again, our provincial government partnered up with the local municipalities to be able to get these new plants up and running and to keep our citizens safe with good, clean drinking water. And this is growth, Mr. Speaker, that works for everyone.

We also have regional landfills that of course are, you know, partnering with our municipal partners again both in Nipawin and Tisdale that, you know, we have to have something that is out there. And we've got a multitude of smaller landfills within the province and, you know, we have to start cutting back on those. So what we have going are the regional landfills. And of course it's a big expense to put in these regional landfills, and the municipalities just can't handle all that themselves. And so this government has been putting money along with the municipal government on cost sharing to be able to do these regional landfills. And, Mr. Speaker, that's growth that works for everyone.

Another very important one is the hospital in Prince Albert. The shovels are going into the ground this spring, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a godsend for northeastern Saskatchewan. You know, the way it happened, in order to go into, to see a professional before or to . . . We were always having to go to Saskatoon, mainly Saskatoon. Prince Albert is a lot closer than Saskatoon, and it'll handle all of northern Saskatchewan. It's going to be great for the Carrot River Valley constituency for us to be able just to pop in there. It's only an hour and three quarter drive. Well depending on your speed, sometimes you can do it a little quicker. However, it's only an hour and three quarter drive into Prince Albert. So this is something that is really going to help, and that's growth that works for everyone.

I just wanted to back up on the highway again, being former Highways minister. You know, we're on track to do that 10 000

kilometres of improvements on highways, you know, by 2030. Actually we're just a little bit ahead. Mr. Speaker, that's growth that works for everyone.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I've been speaking of Carrot River Valley. I wanted to talk about a few things. We had good crops this year. They weren't, I'm going to say, bumper crops, but they were excellent crops. You know, we didn't have the drying that we've had to do in various different years with the crops. So obviously our costing was down on producing those crops and, you know, because that carbon tax that, well, those guys and their federal counterparts, you know, kind of like to have on their . . . The costing of drying is tremendously expensive. So this was really good for our agriculture end of it.

Mr. Speaker, we also have Dunkley Lumber up in Carrot River who put great faith into moving here from Saskatchewan. It's an outfit out of British Columbia, and they thought, Saskatchewan is the place to be. They like the government's approach that we have here in Saskatchewan to business. So they moved here from BC, built the plant. They're spending \$140 million, which is going to help out everybody. It's going to be great for Carrot River. But it's not just great for Carrot River. It's great for all of northern Saskatchewan.

You think, the forest industry, I think it's probably around 30 per cent Indigenous people work in the forest industry. It's a huge employer of Indigenous people. This is something that is going to be good for all of Saskatchewan and it's going to be good for all of Canada. Because of course all this stuff that I'm talking about is exporting, Mr. Speaker. So this is good news for not just Carrot River, not just Carrot River Valley, it's good for all of Saskatchewan. And that's growth, Mr. Speaker, that works for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, we also have a new plant starting up in Tisdale, C-Merak. What it does is they develop the process to take faba beans and they'll take the protein out of the faba beans and they'll make faba bean flour, which is gluten-free. Now this, they've got a big market in Europe and in Canada, Mr. Speaker. And I was there to their opening and actually I got some of the flour from them to make, and I made them a tray of brownies with their flour.

It was a little bit different. It didn't rise quite as much as I thought it . . . as your regular flour, but it did rise and the brownies tasted pretty good. And you know, since it was made from beans I was just a little curious, but I found out that really you didn't pass any more gas obviously with those brownies than the regular ones.

Mr. Speaker, we also have another plant. This happens to be back in Carrot River again. It's Ag-Vision Seeds. Now Ag-Vision Seeds is a little story that people don't really know about, which it's the largest grass seed cleaning plant in North America, and actually about three years ago it was on the front page of *Businessweek*. They ship seed all over. They ship it to Europe, well basically all over the world, trading clovers and grass seeds and alfalfas. And that plant goes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Mr. Speaker, this is a good thing to have. And that, Mr. Speaker, is growth that works for everybody.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the Canadian Energy Metals Corporation who has just started drilling up there, and they are looking at lithium. So they've been doing some various different test holes in the constituency, mainly around Arborfield and Tisdale. And we plan . . . because obviously lithium is in very short supply. This is something, Mr. Speaker, that is going to really help out there again. It's going to produce lithium, and we might get a little oil as a by-product, but it's going to be something that's going to be needed throughout the world because, Mr. Speaker, this is growth that works for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, we also have Premier Horticulture, which is a very, very large . . . What they do is they harvest peat moss, Mr. Speaker. This is important industry for our Carrot River Valley constituency. It exports seven days a week. Most of the product actually goes to British Columbia, Texas, and California. It's a very important market. It employs a lot of people.

They actually just finished an expansion on it just a matter of, I think it was three years ago where they did a large expansion. They've got a brand new bog just north of Hudson Bay for 60 years' worth of peat moss in that particular bog. Mr. Speaker, these are things that are driving our economy, and that's growth that works for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, of course with the various different things that are happening, then we have more people in our hotels. We have more people in our various different garages working on things. We have all sorts of things going on.

Fact is, Mr. Speaker, I went to get my winter tires on on Saturday. I took my car in to get winter tires on into the tire shop in Carrot River, and they are busy. Like I had to book, I think it was three days ahead, to get my winter tires on. They're just on rims, and they . . . But anyway I was a little surprised, Mr. Speaker, that when I was in there they have a new employee, a new Ukrainian employee, a fellow who just came over from the Ukraine. So we have these people coming in from Ukraine there. I know that one of the doctors up there took in a family of Ukrainians. And so we need these people out there, because with all the things that are happening here in Saskatchewan we need those people to be able to come in and fill these jobs. And that's growth, Mr. Speaker, that works for everyone.

We also, you know, we had a couple of really bad years of COVID. And now that we're getting things opened up where our tourism industry is starting back up again, Mr. Speaker, and our outfitting is starting back up. Fact is, you know, we have enough bear up there right now, Mr. Speaker, that even the member from Rosemont would be able to hit one with a rifle, you know, because they can get up fairly close. So, Mr. Speaker, you know, maybe he could get his son William to do it instead of him because I think he's a better shot from what I've heard.

But, Mr. Speaker, these are the things. That's growth that works for everyone. You know, you can take the opposition, and they, you know, they'll sit there and they will complain and whine and say we're not doing things right.

But you know, you take a look at what our Finance minister did this spring, paying down a billion dollars in debt, coming out with \$500 to help with some of the inflationary costs we have on food and gas. She did a great job. And the thing is, we know that

the resource revenue, it goes back and forth, so we have to be very careful. And she's done a fantastic job of looking after that end of it so we can work our way through and try and manage our budget. And we're on track, actually we're ahead of track to be able to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Like I was saying before, you know, the NDP, they can sit there and they complain. But when you take a look at it, you know, they go through their conventions and whatnot, they actually have no platform. They actually have nothing there of what they would come out and do. They say, well you know, we would put more money into this and we would put more money into that. But that's kind of about the extent of it. They have no way of figuring out how they are going to get the money. That's the difference between this side and that side.

Mr. Speaker, these companies put faith in the people that are sitting on this side of the Chamber. And I hope, I hope that we will continue to do that. And under the leadership that we have, under the leadership that we have, I know that that's going to continue.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing — I guess I've kind of used up my time here — I will not support the amendment, and I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne, growth that works for everybody. God bless Saskatchewan. God bless Canada. And one more thing at this time of the year, Mr. Speaker, we've got to thank our veterans. God bless our veterans. Thank you.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, perhaps before I begin, I'll start with the niceties. I want to of course take the opportunity to thank my family. You know, we all say nobody serves alone, and I'm particularly aware of that these days and deeply appreciative of the support that I get from my own nuclear family unit, as well as my extended family, through the help that we get from grandparents near and far in keeping our little unit running.

I also have to take a moment to recognize the incredible staff that we have in our office working every day to help people in the great state of Regina University and also across the province. My CA Marshall Burns, as I've said, I think, a few times on the record, is significantly cooler than I am — Juno-nominated musician, very serious paddler, outdoorsman, big Habs fan, and just a great touchpoint for our community, as well as so many people across the office touching in on areas related to my critic portfolio. So a big shout-out to Marshall.

And a big shout-out as well to the numerous volunteers as well as our office staff, as I've noted, who helped put in so much work over the course of the summer, knocking doors, getting out there in the constituency, and talking to the people that we represent. Kind of being the first, maybe more normal summer that some of us have had back, it was just an absolute privilege and such a joy to get to do day in and day out, connecting with folks in my constituency, hearing their stories — how generous they were with their time — and getting to really learn to be a better representative, which is the important work that I know all of us here in this Chamber do.

And I think with that, maybe I'll get to the Throne Speech proper. But I'm really not entirely sure where to begin, other than maybe starting by underscoring how remarkably out of touch this entire exercise has been, and what that says about a tired and complacent government. This is a government that seems satisfied, you know, to coast on the number of their members, but what's clear is that they're doing this at a cost to their own reputation as a government and also to the reputation of their members in this Chamber and of this province.

You now, I've said this before, I think. In budget speeches, in Throne Speech responses, you know, in opposition sometimes you kind of worry going into this you don't know what the contents are going to be. And I know I've sat here and thought, gosh, like what are they going to do? Are they going to put some of that Alberta money to good work and use that influence to actually do something popular and thoughtful for the province? And no. In this Throne Speech, it was a bit of a resounding no.

On this All Hallows eve, this is kind of the Throne Speech of announcements past. We had over 30 recycled announcements from the laughable four-point affordability plan, reannouncement of the Saskatoon urgent care centre, the reannouncement of the 200 EAs [educational assistant], and it goes on and on. There's not a lot of new, innovative ideas or leadership shown in here.

And what was shown to be new were, quite frankly, terrible ideas: laying off 350 people and patting yourselves on the back for it, corporate income tax collection. You know, instead of vision or a plan for the future, what we got was an uninspired and recycled Throne Speech devoid of leadership and inspiration, and you know, also a complete abdication of any thought leadership with their ridiculed white paper, and more concerningly, I think, to folks in and out of this House, the destruction of any pretense of moral leadership with the invitation of convicted wife-murderer Colin Thatcher.

You know, now I know we have a few students of history in this House, but I've also heard from others who may not be as curious. And we need to be clear, you know. I know the Premier stood and apologized today, but it took five days to get there. Five days of talking to, and I believe he said, friends and family and people in Saskatchewan. How does it take you five seconds to not clue in that that was a terrible decision that you should unequivocally apologize for? Because Mr. Thatcher was not found guilty by some kangaroo court. This was appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada.

And now I know this is a government that really enjoys losing cases at the Supreme Court, but surely the members opposite can understand that a murder conviction failing to be overturned at the Supreme Court level is a clear statement. And it appears that clear statements are something that are increasingly lost on this government.

And you know, I hope every member thought about what this said in the Premier's initial response when he said, "Me? What would I apologize for?" What a clear statement that was to the many victims, not only but mostly women and children, who have suffered from interpersonal violence. Again, it took five days. And nice words today, no actions.

For anyone who thinks that this is over and that people will be satisfied, you are sorely mistaken because, Mr. Speaker, this House has spent more money, this government has spent more money on Colin Thatcher's tea and dainties than it has supporting operational funding for second-stage shelters for people fleeing abusive situations.

You know, and we heard today again the government focusing on their record in the past, refusing to talk about the present. I believe the Justice minister talked about a million dollars for children emerging from situations of domestic violence, a million dollars in a province that spends \$20 billion every year. For a million bucks, how much has your government spent on supporting Legacy Christian? I ask you that.

I ask those members if they've ever darkened a door at a women's shelter, especially to the newer members who, not two short years ago, were backslapping, patting themselves on the back about taking bystander training offered by the YWCA here in Regina. If you see something, say something. Right? That's what they teach you. I'm sure these are some of the same members who will stand up and say very moving things on December 6th. You know, to those folks who maybe think they're the progressives amongst the progressive conservatives, your neighbours and your friends see you and they see your silence.

My leader was running a women's shelter. My leader has sat with beaten women, with women who have lost family, lost babies to domestic violence. That is real strength and that is truly standing up for Saskatchewan. It doesn't take five days to figure that out. And you know, this has reverberated across the province and across the world. Not a single person has defended this except for members on that side — that Premier, his members, and his Corrections minister who clearly doesn't understand the justice system in a way that is evident and deeply, deeply concerning to all.

[16:15]

You know, I'll take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to read a couple choice quotes from an editorial from Shachi Kurl, a national columnist, former political reporter, and leader of the Angus Reid Institute who said, and I quote, "Worse, however, have been the diffidence and nonchalance of the government on whose watch this miscarriage of common sense and affront to justice occurred."

She goes on:

Not to be outdone, Public Safety Minister Christine Tell told reporters on the day of the event, "It doesn't matter."

"He has a right to be here like anyone else. He is a free citizen."

No, Ms. Tell. It does matter. It matters very, very much. And he's not free. Sentenced to life, Thatcher is on parole until he dies. Your words are weapons, Ms. Tell, wounding every victim of domestic violence. It's hard to know how to feel safe in Saskatchewan with you as public safety minister.

And what should be concerning to all of us is not just how

thoroughly eviscerated those choices have been, but also to members opposite, the fact that your colleague was prepped for that interview. That should be of grave concern to every member on that side doing media or carrying water for their out-of-touch and unapologetically divisive leadership. Because this damages us here in Saskatchewan, the victims, the people in this province, the people doing the good work day in and day out, and it also damages our reputation nationally and internationally.

And you know, speaking of reputation and this tired and recycled Throne Speech, again we saw a doubling down on things that are dragging the people and the reputation of this province through the mud. And I'm talking now, you know, about their separation agenda which was outlined in an utterly laughable way.

You know, speaking of laughter, I heard the member from Walsh Acres, who thinks he's a funny guy, in his response to the Throne Speech. I think he was trying to talk about the economy. And you know, we are an export-based economy, certainly. Seventy per cent of what we produce here heads across our borders. Our supply chains, our producers, our innovators, our manufacturers, our reputation — that is everything to us here in Saskatchewan.

So that member from Walsh Acres, I believe he was quoting the Premier. And I've got *Hansard* here, and it says, "We are a province of traders." And you know, I look at that and I think, gosh, is that what the member from Lumsden-Morse heard when he set out on his summer tour? Because honestly, I'd really encourage him and his buddy, the Wexit, to check the spelling on that one. Because during a war, during the worst economic crisis of a generation, this government has spent time, money, and political capital on the Allan Kerpan comeback tour and, I don't even know what to call it, the Lumsden-Morse-Moe economic manifesto. Because let's be clear. Saskatchewan has a proud, proud and remarkable history of contributing to provincial rights across this country. And you know, these folks, they don't care to contribute to a proud history or a stable future. Their Throne Speech agenda in fact outlines some pretty underwhelming actions.

You know, let's start with the legislation. And I'm not a lawyer, Mr. Speaker, but my understanding is that pieces of the Constitution that this government wants to restate in provincial legislation, potentially, are pieces of the Constitution crafted carefully and diligently by former NDP premiers Allan Blakeney and Roy Romanow. And I mean if this government wants to use their Throne Speech and House agenda to highlight the work of New Democrats in standing up for provincial rights, I mean power to them, but it seems passing strange to me.

Because you know, with their four points outlined — and I guess between health care and separation, four points is about all that they can keep track of — outside of this and a provincial police force by another name reporting to a minister whose lack of awareness is well documented, the main substantive action for really making Saskatchewan more economically independent and autonomous seems to be creating — and I'll use the term loosely — the opportunity for Saskatchewan businesses and industry to file corporate income tax twice.

So the details on this are pretty scarce at this point. But you know, three questions I think that are important to ask is, is this going to make things more complicated or expensive for business if

they have to deal with two tax systems, one federal, one provincial? Does it make it more complicated for foreign companies? That investment and investors, does it make it more complicated for them to invest in a province when it uses a unique tax system, and it's also quite a small province with some of the least competitive power rates in the country? You know, and again I'd ask kind of in a restatement of the first question actually, is this going to make it more complicated and more expensive for small-business owners? And the feedback from folks in the know out there is a resounding yes on all three questions.

So growth that works for everybody, creating more economic autonomy for the province of Saskatchewan. To this government, their priority seems to be those of us who run small businesses now paying our service providers potentially twice to file two sets of corporate income taxes, to file with the feds and to file with Saskatchewan. And their growth that works for everybody is eliminating 350 SLGA jobs across Saskatchewan and potentially replacing them with what? Tax collectors in Regina? I mean this is what the people want to know, Mr. Speaker. It really seems like drawing a line is less of a line and more of, I don't know, a Spirograph?

In a summer with a generational cost-of-living crisis, when people are struggling to put gas in their car to get to work, when people are struggling to keep the lights on because they're being cut off left, right, and centre by this government, they wasted the summer with the member for Lumsden-Morse and the former Wexit leader being paid with caucus dollars, by their own admission, to travel the province and look for a solution. No attention to the affordability crisis. No plan, no action, just more money spent on Colin Thatcher than on shelters, and more money being spent on a summer separation tour than on a generational cost-of-living crisis. And what's emerged from that? A plan to collect taxes twice? What kind of conservatives do we have in this province, Mr. Speaker?

There's no mention of Indigenous people, no mention of treaty rights. The Premier can't name a single First Nation or, heck, Indigenous person who was consulted. And this is a Premier who wouldn't walk across the lawn to meet with Tristan Durocher but invited a convicted wife murderer into the building for tea.

You know, calling a provincial consultation when they didn't consult any further north than Paradise Hill, like, what did actually result from this summer separation tour? The Lumsden-Morse-Moe manifesto. It's been utter condemnation. And not just from me having fun in a response to the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, not just from me. It has been condemnation from people across the country. Not just economists in Alberta, an economist who called this insane and completely incredible, but from Conservatives so conservative that they were deputy chief of staff to former prime minister Harper.

And again, Mr. Speaker, you know, I do not have enough arrows in my quiver for all the things I want to talk about. So I think I will leave it to Howard Anglin. And I'll really start with some of the higher low points here. And I quote:

Drawing the Line is a new low in political communications in Canada. It is doubtful that any government in the history of Confederation — federal, provincial, or municipal — has

published something so badly written.

He goes on, "The text is not so much spoiled by errors as composed of them and the run-on sentences meander more than the South Saskatchewan River."

You know, again, Mr. Speaker, this isn't, you know, some pointy-headed Laurentian elite hanging out in Montreal. This is Stephen Harper's former deputy chief of staff. And he goes on, "At times the report reads like the original draft in Finnish was run through Google translate and at other times it barely reads at all." He continues, "If the Government of Saskatchewan wants its ideas to be taken seriously, it should start by expressing them in something more than pidgin English."

Like, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anybody can be meaner or more accurate than Howard Anglin. And that level of condemnation and critique is universal. There's not a single credible economist, political commentator who looked at that and said, gee, there's some great solutions for our province.

And you know, I suppose it doesn't matter to the members opposite, but it matters a whole lot to the people of the province. It matters a whole lot to small-business owners, to families, to people trying to build lives and invest their time, their memories, and their money here. They do not want their province to be the laughingstock of the country. Or speaking to the more recent Colin Thatcher absolute fiasco, they don't want their province to be a global pariah. With all your trade offices, when was the last time you made *The Guardian* for a good reason? Still waiting. Never?

But no matter. This government, they've outlined their agenda. They've outlined their priorities. Firing 350 people in profitable stores across the province, you know. And I ask, what's the plan to replace those 10 jobs in La Ronge? And you know, we heard the minister take to her feet and talk about how, you know, we can't afford to invest in some of these stores. You know, it's too costly to invest in, you know, refurbishing or bringing them up to snuff, to where they should be to compete.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that just spent \$170 million renovating SaskPower's head office; \$7.5 million renovating the SaskPower offices on Powerhouse Drive; \$67 million on the SaskPower building at the Global Transportation Hub; another \$18 million in renovations; and a \$4.5 million purchase price for another SaskPower office building on Scarth Street. A grand total of \$267 million on office renos. And that small part of it, 4.5 million, on a building purchase here in Regina.

Now that's not in the history of this government. We could go back to the sky palace they were planning on building, but this is just between 2019 and today. And who knows maybe costs have gone up. But they managed to find a quarter billion dollars to invest in office space for SaskPower. I know some of that was for asbestos remediation. That's good work. But you can find \$267 million for office space renovations and you can't, you know, shuffle through the couch cushions and dig out some change to actually help profitable government Crowns stay profitable?

This is a government whose growth plan, whose growth that

works for everyone is killing jobs instead of creating them. And it's not just Crowns. It's small businesses. They are pleading with the government. The CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] is pleading with this government, and I quote, "Just 42 per cent have returned to making normal sales and the majority are still facing significant debt, supply chain challenges, and the pressure of inflation." At the same time they're dealing with multiple costs that will be piled on Saskatchewan small-business owners this year with the reintroduction of the business corporate tax rate, which I know is going away but zero per cent of zero is still zero; increases to the minimum wage, WCB [Workers' Compensation Board] premiums, and SaskPower rates; and the expansion of the PST to include admission and recreation fees. Shameful.

This is a government that is actively making things worse. And people are leaving — second-last in population growth and retention. And you know, in case you're being spun internally, to the members at least pretending to pay attention, let's use a metaphor. If you're at war and you're throwing yourself a parade because you've got the highest number of recruits, but you've also sustained the highest number of losses, guess what. You're probably not winning.

[16:30]

This is a government who talks about wanting more control over immigration. They want to be like Quebec. Well we've had months to find out, what does that actually mean? Because looking at the Quebec immigration system, the key feature, the key differential is that Quebec is actually able to screen their own immigrants. So you know, my question, Mr. Speaker, to this government is, what do you want to screen immigrants for when you can't even screen invited guests to the Throne Speech? Maybe don't focus on greater control. Maybe focus on keeping the people that you have here because, again, we have one of the worst retention rates in Canada. People are coming and people are leaving.

Families, farms, small businesses, big businesses are clamouring for relief from the skyrocketing power and heating costs. Families will be paying 8 per cent more in perpetuity, you know, and aside from the privatization of jobs and power production, and you know, no acknowledgement of the inflationary pressures that households are facing. And you know, members, a high-flying Finance minister might be able to shrug off an extra 20 bucks here or there for people, or maybe like the Premier say, hey, it's just a couple bucks in gas, right. But families are struggling. And heck, for big business, big businesses like those cited by the member for Carrot River, they are paying hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars more every year to operate in Saskatchewan.

And for a government that has slavishly pinned its reputation on private investors, one must hope that there's a plan for growth that relies on more than just our fixed resources. Because like the 10,000 young people who have left this province under that Premier's watch, we cannot afford to have employers fleeing for more stable and less chaotic pastures.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think I'll wrap up. I've probably really blown my load here. And aside from the complete abdication of moral leadership, the complete abandonment of conservative

principles, I mean you've . . . Mr. Speaker, they've tripled the debt, they haven't balanced a budget, and they can't get a dime out the door in affordability relief to Saskatchewan people. All the while, food, fuel, and fixed costs are going sky high.

I think it is safe to say I will not be supporting any of the principles, if one can call them that, outlined in the Speech from the Throne. And of course I will be supporting the amendment by my good friend and colleague, the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to rise again today and speak to the Speech from the Throne. It's a bit of a challenge obviously to follow that. The hatred, or I'm not sure what word to use but the disdain that the people opposite have for the people of Saskatchewan, for our economy, for the work that's going on by private sector, for the work that's going on by investors to really grow the economy, to build the economy, to really move Saskatchewan forward, and the words from the member from Rosemont and the member from Regina University, I sometimes think I actually live in a different province than they do.

And frankly I struggle to understand how you can get up in the morning, every single morning, with such a vicious hatred for this province. And you look in the mirror and you figure out how are you going to talk down the province today. I don't understand that. I don't understand how you can get up every single morning and figure out how you're going to talk down the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to get into a few things today, but first I want to say thank you very much to my family, my wife, Giselle, who's very, very supportive. And I always appreciate her words and her support. We have three children and unfortunately they don't live in Saskatchewan. We're working on them. We're constantly working on them, but they were all born outside of Saskatchewan.

Our oldest daughter, Angela, is married, lives on Vancouver Island. But she is a hazardous waste manager north of Edmonton and is doing exceptionally well and we're very, very proud of Angela.

Erik and his fiancé, our middle son, live in Coquitlam, and he is an audio-video tech sales manager in the hotel and convention industry. And they have blessed us with two grandchildren, the youngest of which was just born about five months ago. And we happened to be there just at that very moment, and so we were very proud to welcome our second grandchild home.

And our youngest, Mitchell, lives in Calgary and works for Gregg Distributors and is doing exceptionally well as a regional manager in his role there. And we're so proud of the work that all three of them are doing.

I want to thank my constituency assistant Chris, who does an exceptional job working with the constituents of Kelvington-Wadena. She has a heart of gold. She's a great listener. She works very hard to respond to the concerns and questions that the constituents have. She has been with me since day one, and I am

very, very pleased and proud of the work that she does.

I obviously want to thank my constituency, the folks in my constituency, for their constant feedback. The conversations we have are always enlightening and I truly appreciate that. And obviously I want to thank my executive for the work that they do to support the constituency.

Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity this summer — and the first in a couple of years — to actually go out and engage with our communities. And each and every one of us on this side of the House was out across the province speaking to all of the constituents across the province. And I had a particular opportunity this summer to work with the Premier on a tour of the constituency, and we stopped and visited a number of businesses. We met with municipal leaders and we met with a variety of citizens across the province and stopped in at some new businesses in the communities.

And we also had a public forum that we invited the population of the constituency to attend. And it was an extremely good, proactive engagement with our constituency, and it went very, very well. A lot of feedback on a lot of issues and opportunities within the constituency. And I truly want to say, thank you again to my constituents who came out and engaged with the Premier and myself. And it was a tremendous opportunity.

I want to talk just for a second about one of the things that is probably a little less known about our role as MLAs, but we have an opportunity all the time to engage with stakeholder groups. And we do that through a variety of mechanisms, whether it's through committee work, obviously through our constituency offices. We engage in meetings with municipal leaders or with CBOs across the province.

And those elements of feedback are always brought together in our work with the ministries and I think gives us an awful lot of opportunity to share the questions and concerns of constituents but also the opportunities that are out there. And I think we lose sight far too often of those opportunities that are constantly being brought forward by the folks in our constituency.

So, Mr. Speaker, the theme of the Throne Speech is "Growth That Works for Everyone." And I want to talk just a little bit about a couple of things. The reality is that Saskatchewan, the province, is moving forward at a record pace. We have record investments by private sector businesses in this province in the last year. It's been well canvassed, over and over and over again, the investments in agriculture, in technology, in mining, in potash obviously, in oil and gas. You know, for all intents and purposes the province is performing on all cylinders. And that's very good news in the short term and in the long term. And I think we constantly need to keep that front and centre in our minds that we have much to be pleased with, much to be happy with as a province.

And the important thing about that growth is that it provides us an opportunity to provide the services. The financial aspect of growth is that it gives us the opportunity to provide the services that our constituents need and want. So we've also had record investments in health care and in education and in the social infrastructure, and in fact in the physical infrastructure as well this year, and actually over the last few years.

So we can't have that — we can't have that investment in those services — without growth, without the opportunity for businesses to succeed. And the obligation of the province of Saskatchewan, the government, is to facilitate those opportunities and, frankly, to get out of the way. Let businesses do what businesses do.

And I think that's a very, very important element that is completely lost to members opposite. Completely. They want government to be engaged in every aspect of people's lives. And we're saying, facilitate the good and get out of the way. And let business, let communities, let people do the right thing, and we will be much better off.

Mr. Speaker, change is difficult. Change is very, very difficult. And it's noticeable for all of us that the challenge in dealing with change is . . . We all deal with change in our lives. We deal with change in our personal lives, in our business lives, in our communities. But I wanted to just talk a little bit about change from a little different angle than perhaps some of the other folks might do. And I want to address it by talking about a book that was written a number of years ago by an MLA from Alberta. Doug Griffiths wrote a book. And this was brought to mind a couple of weeks ago at a meeting I was at, and I started thinking about this. The book that was written was called *13 Ways to Kill Your Community*, and it was written by Doug Griffiths. And I'm going to take a little bit of editorial liberty with the work that he did, and I hope you'll forgive me in so doing.

But I want to talk . . . So what basically he was doing was saying, here's 13 things that communities typically do to themselves that cause communities to struggle. I'm going to reverse that. I'm going to talk about things that communities are doing today that are positive things, things that are going to move communities forward, move the province forward, move Canada forward. We have incredible opportunity in front of us, and we should be taking every possible advantage of it. And communities and people in Saskatchewan are doing that today.

So I'm going to go chapter by chapter, real quickly because I don't have a lot of time. But I want to talk about sort of how the chapters reflect what we are doing today.

So chapter 1 was titled "Forget the Water." So basically what he was saying is that if you don't have good water, you're going to struggle as a community. And I'm going to say, as a province, if you don't look after your water, you're going to struggle. But what I'm going to say is, importantly, we have taken that on a different angle and said, let's focus on infrastructure. Let's focus on getting our communities' infrastructure back into good condition.

[16:45]

So with the work that we've shared with the federal government and with municipal governments across the province through programs like ICIP [Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program], we've been able to reinvigorate an awful lot of infrastructure across the province. And in particular, I want to highlight a few things.

And I'm not going to get into each individual community because there's just too many to talk about. But I do want to talk about,

one of the other pieces to this is municipal revenue sharing, which we put in place which helps communities to have consistent flow of funding to facilitate their operations of their infrastructure.

And then again in terms of more global infrastructure, some of the other things that we've been doing this year in my constituency: highway improvements on Highway 349, Highway 38, Highway 23. And my colleague from Carrot River Valley talked about Highway 55, which was extremely important to our constituency and to the North and will make a significant difference going forward.

And one of the things that seems to get lost a little bit is the extraordinary value of passing lanes across the province. It saves lives. It means a great deal to the travelling public in Saskatchewan, including our tourists and to their safety and to their lives. So I just wanted to mention that we have not forgot about the infrastructure.

Chapter 2 is titled "Don't Attract Business." So what he was talking about there is, you know, as communities, you want to protect your businesses. And I'm going to reverse that and say, you've got to do everything possible to attract business. And there's an old phrase that comes to mind: a rising tide lifts all boats. And I think that's something important that we should keep in mind is that every new opportunity we have in the province, every new business, every new . . . Everything that comes into the province comes in and builds an infrastructure around it.

Think about it from the perspective of a new shopping mall, for example. If you land the right core tenant, everything else builds up around that. All of the service businesses, all of the supporting infrastructure builds up around that. It's true with a mine. It's true with an oil and gas facility. It's true with a forestry facility. Everything requires those support mechanisms. So I think that's extremely important.

The third chapter is titled "Don't Engage the Youth." Well, Mr. Speaker, it's obviously extremely important that we engage the youth. And we're doing that in so many different ways with our various education programs, our various support programs that we have in place. And I just want to highlight one particular program in that area. Today there was a University of Saskatchewan announcement creating a new Bachelor of Science in food industry management, which is reflective of what we're doing as an economy. We're focused on agriculture. We're focused on mining. We're focused on things that are growing the province and moving forward. So I think that's an extremely important indication that the education system is in tune with what we're trying to do.

Chapter 4 is titled "Deceive Yourself," and that's about recognizing who and what you are. And I'm just going to say, knowing who you are is fundamental to your success. And I would say that we have truly, truly identified who we are in recent months, in recent years. We are a province that has everything. We have — and I'm going to come back to this again in a minute — but we have all of the resources. We have all of the tools. We have everything that is necessary to be a leader in Canada and in the world. And members opposite just cannot understand that. They just can't for a second believe that we

could actually lead. And I've said it all earlier.

Chapter 5 was titled "Shop Elsewhere." And I'm going to say again, the position of members opposite is, well let them do it; don't worry; let them grow; let them build; let them. And then we don't have to worry about the challenges that come with that. We assume the responsibility. We take on the challenges. We're moving forward, and we're excited to do it.

Chapter 6 is entitled "Don't Paint." Like the NDP, live in the negative. Live in the negative. Go ahead, folks, keep doing it. Live in the negative. You're fine. We're happy for you. Go for it. But on this side we're talking about building, growing, and investing and being the Saskatchewan that we know that we can be.

Chapter 7 is titled "Don't Co-operate." I'm saying that we are looking for every opportunity to co-operate with our partners across the country, to co-operate with other provinces. I noticed just . . . I think it was late last week that the Premier of Alberta has reached out to talk about infrastructure and trade corridors. I think that's an extremely important conversation. I've been somewhat engaged in that myself for a while, and I think that's a critical conversation that we need to have. We're working with our partners to grow and build Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, and Canada. And let's not lose sight of that.

Chapter 8 is "Live in the Past." Well that's those folks over there. Yeah, what can I say? And I'll just move on.

Chapter 9 was titled "Shut Out Your Seniors." So the gist of that chapter was, you know, don't listen to your seniors. They're okay. Just let them carry on. Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we do an incredible amount of engagement with our communities, and seniors in every community are fully engaged with us, and we reach out regularly to the various advocacy groups and work with seniors' issues. We have a minister that's responsible for senior issues. What more could I say about that?

Chapter 10 was titled "Reject Everything New." What can I say, what can I say? So I think what we're saying, and I think what you're seeing in Saskatchewan today, is that we are embracing new technology. We're embracing new industry. We're embracing new ways of doing things. We're very, very excited about what's in front of us as a province.

Chapter 12 is "Become Complacent." Well members opposite would have us not rocking the boat. Just sit back, just don't, you know, don't do anything and nobody will get hurt, right? Well we're not buying that for a second. We are going to step out and we're going to get recognized for what and who we are. And we're going to be very, very proud of our citizens, of our businesses, and we're going to celebrate their successes.

And I want to talk just for a second about one particular piece that I'm particularly excited about, and that is our trade office that we just opened in Vietnam. And I'm particularly excited about Southeast Asia. I've been there a few times and I think that area of the world has incredible opportunity — Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines. I can't think of the others, but there's a couple of other countries in that immediate area that we frankly haven't had a huge trade relationship with in the past. But I can tell you from personal experience, from

touring the countries, from being there . . . And my daughter lived there for four years so you know, I have some familiarity with that area of the world. I can tell you that there is incredible excitement, incredible opportunity in that neck of the woods, in that part of the world, to grow and to build.

And we, Saskatchewan, have the resources that they need. We have the resources they need. We have the rare earth elements. We have the potash. We have the oil and gas products. We have agriculture products, obviously. We have much that they need and they have much that we need. We can share with them on so many different things. We have sharing agreements with them already on education, and science and technology issues, on carbon capture, and a number of other things. And so we're already working with countries in that area in a lot of ways, but we're also very, very excited about the trade opportunities with our products and services.

So chapter 13 of that particular book says, "Don't Take Responsibility." Well I think we've accepted responsibility very clearly for who we are as a province. We're stepping forward. We're dealing with the infrastructure deficit. And there's much more work to do; there's no question about it. You know, Saskatchewan's a growing province. Much of the corporate or core infrastructure was built out 40 years ago, 40 to 60 years ago, 1960-some, I can remember. Well I shouldn't say that, but in the '60s, you know, a lot of the small-town core infrastructure was built. And in fact in my office here, I have a little piece that talks about I think the water system in my hometown. Porcupine Plain was built in the '60s.

And you know, all of that needs replacement. All of that needs work, and we are doing it. We're working on things like the addictions treatment centres, new long-term care homes, new hospitals moving forward in Weyburn and Prince Albert.

So why does that matter to the people of Porcupine Plain or to the people of my constituency, Kelvington-Wadena? Every new facility we build, every new piece of infrastructure we build across the province matters because it takes pressure off from somewhere else. And that we have to always keep that in mind.

We're talking about urgent care centres. We're talking about the accelerated recognition of international health care credentials, the conversion of part-time to permanent full-time positions in the health care system that we've just announced, the recruitment mission to the Philippines, and active engagement with other countries.

Mr. Speaker, as you know but I want to advise the members opposite because they probably don't know this, Saskatchewan.ca actually has sort of news every day, and there's announcements of all the things we're doing. You might want to pay attention to that.

I want to take a couple of minutes to talk about something that hasn't been brought up in this House before but I think it's extremely important. Bill C-235 is moving through committee at the federal level. We've talked about the challenges that we have in dealing with the feds on so many different things, from carbon tax to Bill C-69 and C-48 and so many others, but this one is scary. This one is scary.

You know, it sounds innocuous, *An Act respecting the building of a green economy in the Prairies*. Great, sounds wonderful, but interestingly it sets up a whole new level of bureaucracy. And they're going to tell us how we need to engage with the Government of Canada and the NDP-supported Liberal government — let's not forget that. Anyway Bill C-235, pay attention, folks — critical. I had much to say about that, but no time.

Anyway, I just want to say in conclusion, of course I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne that was delivered last week, an incredibly important document for all of us in Saskatchewan, and I certainly, absolutely will not be supporting the amendment put forward by members opposite. And I think we can be very, very proud of the work that our Premier, the ministers have done. And thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time.

The Speaker: — As it is now 5 p.m. we stand recessed until 7 p.m. Got that? I'm not coming back, though.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

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