

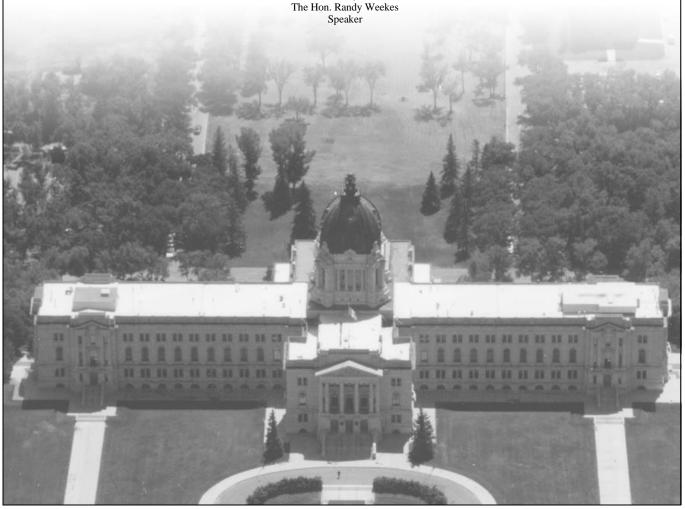
 ${\it THIRD SESSION-TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE}$

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)
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The Hon. Randy Weekes



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN 3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)
Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)
Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

Burki, Noor — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)

Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)

Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

Clarke, Jared — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)

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Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)
Kaeding, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)
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Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (SP)

Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

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Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP) **Steele**, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)

Voung, Collean — Lloydminster (SD)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Standings

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 46; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 14; Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1

Clerks-at-the-Table

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

Deputy Clerk — Kathy Burianyk **Principal Clerk** — Robert Park

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Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN October 10, 2023

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would request leave to make a statement regarding Israel.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Terrorist Attacks in Israel

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to colleagues of this House. This past weekend, as Canadians, we were very much enjoying a Thanksgiving weekend with family and friends. And at that time we were all reminded that there is evil in the world.

On Saturday, October the 7th, 2023, as many Israeli families woke up to prepare for Shabbat and to celebrate the Jewish holiday, Simchat Torah, they were instead met with sirens as Hamas terrorists launched numerous attacks throughout Israel. Four thousand five hundred rockets were fired from Gaza, and armed terrorists shot and murdered hundreds of innocent civilians in numerous locations including a music festival at a kibbutz. And at this time it's estimated that more than 1,000 people were killed, including two Canadians, while more than 2,600 individuals were wounded. Many more have been taken hostage and are still being held by Hamas terrorists, including at least two Canadians. Innocent Israeli civilians were kidnapped, raped, and tortured, and their bodies were being paraded across the streets of Gaza for no reason, other than being Israeli and being Jewish.

This weekend, as we in Canada had the privilege of gathering together to celebrate Thanksgiving with our families and friends, Israelis spent the day searching for their loved ones or mourning for those that they were already made aware had been lost. To support Israel and its fight against these crimes against humanity, our government will be providing \$100,000 to Magen David Adom. This is a member organization of the International Red Cross. Magen David Adom actively raises funds to support Israel's team of trained volunteer and professional medical responders and aides that are providing the entire nation's prehospital emergency medical needs, including disaster assistance, ambulance assistance, and blood services.

And at this time, we must show our support for Israel and all of its citizens. We cannot sit idle as interest groups proudly spread anti-Semitic misinformation propagated by terrorist organizations. Not since the Holocaust have we seen this kind of unrelenting violence against the Jews on such a profound level. There is no justification for the brutal, intentional, and indiscriminate mass murder of Israeli civilians that has and continues to take place. We must condemn this blatant disregard

for human rights and support Israel's right to defend itself.

Our government will stand united against barbarism, whether it's Putin's unconscionable invasion of Ukraine or sadistic attacks from Hamas terrorists. Today the Saskatchewan government and I would ask all members of this House to stand united behind our friends, behind our family in Israel. Am Yisrael Chai. The Jewish nation lives.

The Speaker: — Why is the Leader of the Opposition on her feet?

Ms. Beck: — I seek leave to make a statement.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Beck: — I want to thank all members for granting leave, and I join with the Premier and leaders around the world in condemning the terrorist attacks in Israel. We need to see an immediate end to these terrorist attacks and call for the immediate release of all hostages. Real and lasting peace is what's needed, and the loss of civilian life in recent days in Israel, in Palestine, is simply tragic. And I join with all members and all Saskatchewan people in condemning these terrorist attacks by Hamas and in supporting efforts towards a lasting peace.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Speaker: — I hereby inform the Assembly that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the Chief Electoral Officer a certificate of the election and return of Blaine McLeod as member for the constituency of Lumsden-Morse, a certificate of the election and return of Noor Burki as the member for the constituency of Regina Coronation Park, and a certificate of the election and return of Jared Clarke as member for the constituency of Regina Walsh Acres. I hereby inform the Assembly the return of the writs were filed with the Clerk of the Assembly on September 5th, 2023.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting Mr. Blaine McLeod, member for the constituency of Lumsden-Morse, who has taken the oath, signed the roll, and now claims the right to take his seat.

The Speaker: — Congratulations. Mr. McLeod, as you take your rightful place in this Legislative Assembly, I am sure that your time here will be one that serves as a record of honour to yourself and your constituents. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly, and let the hon. member take his seat.

Ms. Beck: — I have the honour to present to you Mr. Noor Burki, member for the constituency of Regina Coronation Park, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims his right to take his seat.

The Speaker: — Congratulations. Mr. Burki, as you take your

rightful place in this Legislative Assembly, I am sure that your time here will be one that serves as a record of honour to yourself and your constituents. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly, and let the hon. member take his seat.

Ms. Beck: — I have the honour to present to you Mr. Jared Clarke, member for the constituency of Regina Walsh Acres, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims his right to take his seat.

The Speaker: — Congratulations. Mr. Jared Clarke, as you take your rightful place in this Legislative Assembly, I am sure that your time here will be one that serves as a record of honour to yourself and your constituents. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Let the hon. member take his seat.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I want to welcome all those citizens who have joined us here today, who care deeply about what this government is doing and care deeply about what is going on in this Legislative Assembly. I want to thank them for their voices and for their presence here today, and their voices on behalf of all those who could not be with us today. I invite all members to join me in welcoming our guests to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to immediately create a bipartisan committee on the mental health and addictions crisis.

These citizens wish to bring to our attention that Saskatchewan has the highest suicide rate in the country, that the suicide rate for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan is four times higher than that of non-Indigenous people, that Saskatchewan continues to break its own record on overdose deaths, that one in four youth in Saskatchewan have reported engaging in self-harm, that one in four youth have reported considering suicide in the past year, and that there are countless children waiting to see a psychiatrist in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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 immediately create a bipartisan legislative committee on the mental health and addictions crisis in Saskatchewan.

This is signed by individuals from Regina, Maymont, and Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to join with municipalities and provinces across Canada and codify a ban on conversion therapy.

Conversion therapy, or reparative therapy, is a discredited and abusive practice that is opposed by psychiatric and psychological associations across North America. This practice can lead to lifelong trauma and is in direct contravention of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. There is simply no place in our society for this prejudiced policy. The undersigned demand action on this file.

Mr. Speaker, 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 ban the practice of conversion therapy and prohibit transporting of youth and adults outside of Saskatchewan for such purposes.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories reside in Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet to present a petition calling on this government to adequately fund education.

The Premier would have us believe he's concerned about the state of education in this province. So today I rise to present this petition from citizens of Saskatoon and Martensville and Regina concerned about just that, Mr. Speaker. That's because this government, that Premier and those members introduced a budget that will lead to more cuts to the classroom, Mr. Speaker. And that's on the heel of a decade of budgets that would fail to keep pace with inflation, Mr. Speaker.

In the words of STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] president Samantha Becotte, government either doesn't understand the issues or doesn't think they are important. It's why, Mr. Speaker, we have a school in Saskatoon today that's closed because the roof is flooding and collapsing in; a roof that I observed with members of the opposite just months ago; a school where parents, 200 of them, signed a petition calling on this government to address that issue. That petition was ignored. So much for parental inclusion, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

So with that, I will read the prayer which:

Calls on this government to provide adequate, sustainable, and predictable operating funds for our 27 public and separate school divisions to ensure that schools, teachers, and other caring professionals are able to meet the needs of everyday students in Saskatchewan.

Because today, Mr. Speaker, they cannot.

The Speaker: — I'd like to caution our guests. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly, but please do not take part in any of the debate. And that means no clapping or taking photos or video of the proceedings.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the use of preferred first name and pronouns by students policy to be scrapped. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: queer and trans youth are at a higher risk of homelessness, self-harm, and suicide when denied access to safe and inclusive learning environments; the Ministry of Education's use of preferred first name and pronouns by students policy directs educators to non-consensually out two-spirit, trans, and non-binary students under the age of 16 to their parents; and this policy is in direct contravention to *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as it relates to gender identity and expression.

This policy is also in direct contravention to the Ministry of Education's framework for a provincial education plan, which was developed in consultation with community partners and educational experts. It has been denounced by the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth and was developed without public consultation from communities of educators, parents, students, or experts.

Those in the prayer that reads as follows:

Respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately reverse the Ministry of Education's use of preferred first name and pronouns by students policy and instruct the ministry to public consultation.

I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Concerns Expressed around Education Policy

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the hundreds and hundreds of Saskatchewan people who have reached out and shared their stories and their concerns with our team in the official opposition.

When the Premier announced his heavy-handed and undemocratic decision to use the notwithstanding clause to legislate his divisive and harmful new policy, the overwhelming responses from the public started to come in. We've heard from parents, teachers, students, faith leaders — people from all walks of life — how they think it's wrong for this government to use the notwithstanding clause to violate Charter rights.

Our team in the official opposition stands ready to do our part and oppose this misguided and divisive bill whenever it comes forward to this Assembly. Saskatchewan people know that it's just not right to use the notwithstanding clause to plow ahead with a policy that the Children's Advocate says violates the Charter rights of children, and that a judge said would cause irreparable harm to young people. Whose Charter rights will the government go after next?

I'd like to thank all those who have shared their stories with us and know that this opposition will be bringing your stories and concerns to the floor of this legislature in the days ahead. Thank you very much.

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

Government Investment in Schools

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to building, opening, and renovating schools across the province, unlike the NDP [New Democratic Party] who closed 176 schools while they were in government. Since 2007, Mr. Speaker, we have invested \$2.4 billion to build 60 new or replacement schools and fund 30 major renovation projects across the province.

Mr. Speaker, over the summer months members on this side of the House were proud to have attended the unveiling of a \$5 million renovation at Clavet Composite School; the groundbreaking of a new K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] school in Lanigan which we are investing \$26 million; the groundbreaking of the new St. Frances Cree Bilingual School in Saskatoon which we are investing \$46 million; the groundbreaking of a new francophone elementary school in Regina which we are investing 23.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, even in the last month we have witnessed the unveiling of a \$10 million major renovation at Holy Rosary High School in Lloydminster and, Mr. Speaker, the opening of a new K to 12 Blaine Lake Composite School which we invested \$14 million — I attended that one personally, Mr. Speaker — the opening of a new joint-use elementary school in Lakeview in Regina for Argyle and École St. Pius schools which we invested \$44 million; the groundbreaking on a new \$65 million joint-use elementary school, Coronation Park, in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud of these investments that we have made in education.

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

Need for Government Action

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, that tired and out-of-touch government has recalled the legislature to urgently pass legislation that a judge says will cause irreparable harm to young people. But where, Mr. Speaker, is the urgent action to address the real concerns facing Saskatchewan people?

Where's the action to fix our broken health care system that leaves people waiting longer than anywhere else in Canada for surgery? Where is the action needed to keep our ERs [emergency room] open when people need them the most? Where is the urgent action to keep the Lutheran care home open, to keep 63 seniors in their home and a hundred people working in their jobs?

Where is the action on mental health and addictions, where we've already seen more than 300 people lose their life to overdose this year?

Where is the urgent action when it comes to the crushing cost of living that sees our province with the highest rate of mortgage arrears in the whole country? Or where is the urgent action on job creation, where we see this Premier with the worst jobs record in Canada?

Mr. Speaker, that tired and out-of-touch lot have lost the plot — divisive and political stunts to distract from their failures. While this side, the official opposition Saskatchewan NDP and this leader focuses on what matters to people.

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

Supporting Survivors of Interpersonal Violence

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to highlight some investments the Government of Saskatchewan has undertaken to support survivors of interpersonal violence.

This spring our government committed \$876,000 in operational funding over three years to support second-stage housing including intervention and counselling services for women and their children. Over the summer the Minister of Justice and Attorney General and the Minister of Social Services announced an additional \$1 million in capital funding to YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] Saskatoon to support second-stage housing units.

These investments are just one part of the overall \$27.5 million investment in funding including: 8.9 million to assist 12 provincially funded transition houses and three enhanced residential programs that support immediate shelter needs for victims fleeing domestic violence; 1.9 million to 14 agencies to offer 16 family violence intervention programs across the province; and 1.7 million to sexual assault service providers in Saskatchewan. In addition to these investments, on July 24th our government signed a national action plan to end gender-based violence with the federal government.

This is an important issue and we will continue to work to ensure we are taking action in this province to address interpersonal violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

New Action Plan for Mental Health and Addictions

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Addictions, mental health, and related issues increasingly impact individuals, families, and communities across the country, including Saskatchewan. That is why we put forward a new action plan for mental health and addictions with three pillars of focus for concrete, near-term action.

First, Mr. Speaker, we are increasing capacity for treatment by adding 500 more addiction treatment spaces over five years in the communities across the province. This will more than double the number of addiction treatment spaces compared to what was

in place before we began this initiative. Our near-term target is now 200 spaces, up from 150, by the end of the fiscal year due to the momentum we are seeing on this initiative.

Secondly, we are improving the system by implementing a central intake that people can directly contact for access to mental health and addiction treatment.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, moving to a recovery-oriented system of care will ensure that the system focuses on getting people the treatment they need to recover. The new action plan replaces Saskatchewan's current mental health and addictions action plan which was due to sunset at the end of next year.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committing to providing the support necessary for the residents of our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Remembering George Reed

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise in the Assembly today to recognize a very special person to our province and really the entire country, Mr. George Reed.

We all know George passed away Sunday, October 1st, one day shy of his 84th birthday. October 7th was proclaimed George Reed Day, exactly 50 years after the original George Reed Day was first proclaimed.

I could likely talk all day about his exploits on the field with the only pro team he played for from '63 to '75 — 1,600 yards; 137 touchdowns — still among the league leader. But I believe it's his community spirit that made him such a universally loved individual.

In 1975 he created the George Reed Foundation to assist people with physical challenges. He was part of establishing Special Olympics in Saskatchewan. Of course that building still here in Regina is named after him, the Special Olympics building. One time he was associated with 47 charitable or community groups. Not sure he ever said no to his time for anyone, including some time for a chat or an autograph.

George is someone I certainly looked up to both on and off the field. He simply set the standard for what it meant — or should mean — to be a Roughrider. I appreciate his work with the players' association. As president, he was the biggest star in the league, but his focus was on the Canadian players and their treatment, ensuring they got a fair deal.

He was a proud and serious man but who would enjoy just to laugh as much. I heard that laugh often when I got a chance to chat with him, when he would ask, how is politics going? Out would roar a laugh. George is quoted as saying, "I came. I played. I stayed." Goodness, our province is so grateful and fortunate that he did.

I'd ask all members to join me and recognize George Reed and send our deepest condolences to his wife of 62 years, Angie, and their three children Keith, Vicki, and Georgette. Thanks.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Saskatchewan Job Numbers

Ms. C. Young: — Good news for Saskatchewan once again. Job numbers came out last week and Saskatchewan's unemployment rate is 4.9 per cent, well below the national average of 5.5 per cent. More people are living and working in Saskatchewan than ever before; 13,700 new jobs were added in just September alone.

Last year our economy grew by 5.7 per cent, leading the country, and is forecast to grow again this year. What was the NDP's response to good news? Their economy critic wrote to the federal Finance minister lamenting that our economy was shrinking. If 5.7 per cent growth is shrinkage, then I don't know if she really understands how basic economics work.

And with more good news on job numbers, we saw again the NDP's love for tearing down Saskatchewan's progress. The member for Regina University posted on Twitter some astounding math. She said that unemployment year over year rose by double digits. That's NDP math.

Here are the facts: total employment in Saskatchewan, up; employment for young people, up; employment for women, up. While the NDP is only interested in tearing down Saskatchewan, we will continue to build up our economy and build our province. The only thing the NDP is building is a growing gap between their failed ideology, their negative attitude, and voters' approval.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Recall of Legislature and Education Policy

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we've been called back to the legislature by this tired and out-of-touch government, but they haven't brought us back to deal with the issues that matter most to Saskatchewan people — the cost of living, health care, the state of our kids' classrooms. They're not focused on what matters most to people. Instead we see them using the notwithstanding clause to knowingly do irreparable harm to already vulnerable kids.

The question is this, Mr. Speaker: how is that leadership? And whose rights are they coming after next?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Most certainly this is a government that is investing not only in health care, as recently as last Friday announced an update to our mental health and addictions action plan here in the province, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Saskatchewan residents.

[14:00]

We also, we're building new schools, Mr. Speaker. I've been to a number of announcements of new schools. And we continue to invest in the very operations of our education system, Mr. Speaker, investing in more teachers, more educational assistants, and ultimately in a stronger education system for our children in the province.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to policy, this government also supports, most certainly supports parents having the opportunity to be involved in their child's school, in their child's classroom, and ultimately in their child's education.

And so the question here today, the question here today, Mr. Speaker, is why do the NDP not believe that parents should be involved in their children's education?

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

Cost of Living and Affordability

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier is spewing nonsense and has clearly, clearly lost the plot. Saskatchewan people right now are struggling with the cost of living more than any other province in the country. We have the highest rate of mortgages in arrears, and families are paying \$1,608 more in utilities and taxes directly because of decisions from that government.

The Premier, we see him offering no cost-of-living relief, only more costs, Mr. Speaker, and more division. How did this Premier become so out of touch with the realities of Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the investment in our communities which I just covered at a very high level a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this government supporting parental inclusion in their child's education, in their child's classroom, this is a government that has continuously and annually invested about \$2 billion or better, Mr. Speaker, in affordability measures in the province, which have been well covered on the floor of this legislature over years gone by.

Measures, Mr. Speaker, I would say that first and foremost include, when you do a tax comparison, how much a family of four in this province is paying in provincial income tax and PST [provincial sales tax] from today back to 16 years ago when we had the honour to form government, Mr. Speaker.

That family of four with a household income of 50,000, they're paying 2,499 less dollars today in tax than they did in 2007. If that family, same family of four finds their fortunes to be \$100,000 in annual household income, they still would remain paying 2,443 less dollars each and every year in provincial income tax and PST, than they did under the members opposite.

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

Support for the Health Care System

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we recently had some by-elections in northeast Regina, and the voters in those by-elections sent this government a clear message: he's failing on the cost of living, failing on health care, and he's clearly tired and out of touch. They're not listening.

There's nothing new from this Premier to fix the crisis in our

health care system. We see nothing to fix the chronic understaffing in our health care system — leaving ERs closed — and nothing to address the longest-in-Canada wait times for knee and hip surgery. Why is this Premier instead using the notwithstanding clause against kids instead of acting now to fix what is a broken health care system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Well, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the legislation ultimately that will be introduced and notwithstood, that's about preserving the right for parents to be involved in their child's education, something that the NDP can now explain to parents as to why they do not support that parental inclusion in their children's education.

When it comes to investment in health care, Mr. Speaker, unprecedented investment in health care, up to and including commitments that are on the floor of this legislature and across this province, Mr. Speaker, significant investments in the most ambitious health human resources plan in the nation of Canada, that is landing additional nurses, health professionals in each of our communities, Mr. Speaker, the incentives that are being provided to ensure that those individuals are arriving in the positions where they are most needed.

We're seeing investment in new and innovative ways to offer services to Saskatchewan residents, like urgent care centres, one being built on north Albert here in Regina, one being built in partnership with Ahtahkakoop First Nation in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, offering not only urgent care but mental health care and addictions services, leading to that single point of access, meeting people where they need ultimately their care.

We are doing a record number of surgeries in this province, all publicly funded surgeries — some in our public surgery centres and some in private surgery centres — all funded by the public, by the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. What you can look to see in the future from this government, Mr. Speaker, is more investment in health care capital, more investment in health care services, and more investment in the actual individuals that are offering those health care services in community after community across the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, with all the bluster from that Premier, you would think that everything is just fine with our health care system. But here's the thing. This summer we learned that in Saskatchewan we had the largest, the largest drop in life expectancy of all the provinces. Put clearly, under that Premier's watch, Saskatchewan people are living shorter lives and they're dying sooner. The question is, where is the emergency action to fix that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier indicated just now, there's been significant steps that have been taken by this government. We take this issue very seriously when it comes to improving and enhancing the access to health care right across this province whether it's through capital investment in new hospital facilities, new long-term care facilities, and more

importantly, Mr. Speaker, also in the staff to make sure that we have the staff that we need across a variety of health care designations to ensure that people have access to the health care that they need, when they need it.

Mr. Speaker, we're not saying that there are not challenges. There are challenges that we face here in Saskatchewan — not unique to this province; challenges that many other provinces across this county face — but we do have a very aggressive four-point plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain health care workers, with significant work that is happening and positive work that is happening to fill these vacancies and to train more people and have more people hired to work in health care right across this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Condition of Saskatoon Elementary School

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, there's zero action from this tired and out-of-touch government on health care and on the cost of living, and there's more. Earlier this morning I joined parents at a school in Saskatoon whose children's school has a hole in the roof. When it rains, water pours in like a waterfall. The classrooms and the daycare are closed there today while parents scramble.

Now this Premier wants to talk all of a sudden about the involvement of parents in schools. Mr. Speaker, we think parents should know what's going on in their kids' schools. What does he have to say to the parents that I met today in Saskatoon whose kids' school has a hole in the roof?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Our ministry has been in touch with the CÉF [Conseil des écoles fransaskoises] and the reality is that the roof repair project was under way, unfortunately hit a snag over the weekend, and some more water came into the building. But, Mr. Speaker, we are working actively with CÉF to have the project resume.

But, Mr. Speaker, this speaks directly to the record that our government has when it comes to investing in education infrastructure. I hear members opposite heckling about PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal]. There was no PMR funding under the NDP. But, Mr. Speaker, in this budget year there's nearly a million dollars of PMR funding directly for CÉF. We're going to continue working with that division and that school to make sure kids are back in the classroom there. Thank you.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this morning I stood with parents in front of that school in Saskatoon. Parents were concerned that even after the Minister for Advanced Education and the member from Saskatoon Riversdale came to see their school — they saw first-hand the tarps hanging from the ceiling; they saw the rotted walls on the second floor; that was in June — there is still no help coming from this Sask Party government.

Now this government has said that they've recalled the legislature because they care about parental inclusion. Well how about they start with including the over 200 parents who wrote that Premier and they can't even get help fixing the roof over their school?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know my colleague had addressed the question in his first response. But the members opposite are criticizing a bill that they have not yet seen. The bill hasn't actually been tabled in the Assembly but that could change, Mr. Speaker. With their consent, we will move after question period that we abridge the notice period such that every member of this Assembly can see the bill right now today, that every member of the gallery can see the bill right now today, and we can have a debate on that bill. Will the NDP give leave? All they have to say is yes, Mr. Speaker, and we could be debating and viewing this bill today. All they have to say is yes. Will they do that? Yes or no?

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you to that Government House Leader for providing us the best example we could possibly get of how out of touch this Sask Party government is. We've got a legitimate question about a waterfall in a school and he sits down his brand new Education minister to talk about things that don't matter to those parents who have asked the Premier to take action, 200 parents who want to be included.

So I'll put it back to that Education minister: if you want to include parents, why don't you find your feet and talk to those 200 parents who wrote that Premier looking for action?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member opposite missed my first answer where I mentioned the project is under way. It's funded as part of our \$50 million preventative maintenance and renewal funding, Mr. Speaker. We've made commitments as a government to CÉF. We have a school under construction right now in Regina. We have schools committed in Saskatoon and Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we'd love to debate about parents. That's why we're asking the NDP to grant leave after question period so we can debate the parental bill of rights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, we have serious problems in schools today, and this government is more interested in stunting around the Assembly about things that don't matter to those 200 parents who just want a safe school for their kids. Teachers don't have the resources and supports that they need. Students in overcrowded classrooms across the province, and a school in Saskatoon with a gaping hole in the roof with winter just around the corner. Where is the urgent action from this government to fix the real problems in education, the real problems in our kids'

classrooms? Where is the urgent action to fix the roof at the school in Saskatoon?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that member may have trouble hearing the answer. The roof project is being done and it is being funded through preventative maintenance and renewal. Mr. Speaker, we're answering an urgent action. I don't know how the CÉF would respond if, under the NDP, there was no money for preventative maintenance and renewal.

Mr. Speaker, this government, as I said, we have made numerous commitments to capital all across the province — 90 projects that we have done, major projects since 2007. We've got projects committed with CÉF, Mr. Speaker. The Premier and I were just at a number of school openings. Mr. Speaker, our government is investing in education and we're going to continue to do so. Thank you.

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

Education Policy and Use of Notwithstanding Clause

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government has completely lost the plot. We're seeing it right here today. They called us back to the Assembly for an emergency session to ram through a bill that takes rights away from already vulnerable kids, all while a school in Saskatoon has a gaping hole in the roof, water pouring in, and no plan or help to fix it. This is what our schools look like under this Sask Party government.

Why won't the minister scrap his divisive plan, get back to work on the basics, things that matter to Saskatchewan parents, which is fixing our kids' classrooms today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that member opposite talks about listening to parents. Well I can tell you one thing: I've heard and members on this side of the House have heard from tens of thousands of people from across this province, parents across this province that want to be more involved in their child's education.

And to be fair, Mr. Speaker, we've heard from people on both sides of the issue. But you know something that unites everybody who contacts us on this issue, Mr. Speaker, is they want to be more involved in their child's education. The piece of legislation that I hope to bring forward this week — hey, maybe even today — that piece of legislation is all about getting parents back involved in their child's education where they belong. We know that a child's growth and development is best when a parent is involved, Mr. Speaker.

Again the question goes to the members opposite, Mr. Speaker: why not debate this bill today? Thank you.

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

[14:15]

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, let me be crystal clear. Of course we want parents involved in their children's education. We know that kids do best . . . I know that as a parent to three school-aged children and I know that from being a public school teacher for a decade. Of course.

But this policy, this policy has been widely criticized by parents in this province, widely and loudly. It's also been criticized by the province's Advocate for Children and Youth. She said in her most recent report, she said the following on this policy: "This policy would likely violate *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code.*"

Why is the minister pushing ahead with a policy that the independent Children's Advocate says will violate human rights in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the member opposite for the question.

Mr. Speaker, why are we pushing forward with this policy? Why are we pushing forward with this legislation, Mr. Speaker? Because as I've said, we've heard from tens of thousands of parents across this province, parents who want to be involved in their child's education.

Mr. Speaker, we have a Leader of the Opposition that one day she says parents need to be involved in their child's education, but then the next day she says only some parents should be involved in their child's education.

Again we understand this is an important piece of legislation to people on both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker. Why not debate it today?

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

Mr. Love: — I'll be clear again for that minister, Mr. Speaker. We are not going to shred the rule book so he can shred the human rights code. Mr. Speaker, he's got no answer to my question, so I'll do what a lot of teachers do. I'll give him a redo.

The Children's Advocate said that following through on this policy, "would likely violate *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*." How can the minister justify using the notwithstanding clause to violate the human rights of already vulnerable children?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my previous answers — and I'm going to continue saying this in this House and outside of this House — we have heard from tens of thousands of people who are supporting this policy, from parents, from educators.

Mr. Speaker, in our education system there are numerous instances where parental consent is required: to go on a field trip, to be administered medication. We believe that these important

discussions around changing a pronoun or changing a name, that should also require parental consent, Mr. Speaker. That's why we're moving forward with this piece of legislation, and I'm not going to back down just because that member asked me to. Thank you.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, that minister is free to share the tens of thousands of people that he so-called consulted with. Let's be honest. This is not the track record of this government. This is a government with a track record of not consulting with people, ramming through policies and legislation without the proper process.

Why is this minister maintaining a process that he knows skirts around the normal process for developing legislation? Thorough consultation with all stakeholders — school divisions, teachers, and especially public and open consultation with parents in Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Mr. Speaker, this policy and this piece of legislation was given the input of thousands of parents around the province. Parents who were seeing policies in school divisions that explicitly excluded them from important conversations, policies from school divisions that were opening the doors to wider third-party involvement around sex education and other controversial issues, Mr. Speaker.

We've heard from thousands of parents, Mr. Speaker, that want to be involved, and we believe that the default position of government should be that parents are involved. That's why we're moving forward with this piece of legislation. I hope the NDP will allow us to debate it today. Thank you.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, it's becoming more and more clear that this government is not listening to parents and they're also not listening to the Children's Advocate. But that's not all. We've heard other folks raise concern about how this policy violates human rights. Justice Megaw wrote in his decision on the injunction:

On the whole of the evidence, I am satisfied that those individuals affected by this policy, youth under the age of 16 who are unable to have their name, pronouns, gender diversity, or gender identity, observed in the school will suffer irreparable harm.

A justice of the Court of King's Bench says this policy will cause irreparable harm to young people. What is the minister's response to that?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — We've always been clear, we've always been clear that we would use all available tools to defend parents'

rights to be included, informed, and involved, Mr. Speaker. This is about providing clarity. Mr. Speaker, the notwithstanding clause is part of the law. It's part of the Canadian Constitution. Provinces, including Saskatchewan with Allan Blakeney, fought hard for the inclusion of the notwithstanding clause in 1982.

And it was Mr. Blakeney who said that the clause does not amount to a "suspension of rights," Mr. Speaker, that the rights enumerated in the Charter are not more important than other rights, that the Charter should not be regarded as creating a "hierarchy of rights," and that there would be instances when "rights collide." This is one of those instances.

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

Mr. Love: — I can assure that minister that Premier Blakeney never envisioned the notwithstanding clause being used to trample the rights of vulnerable children in our province.

I'll give another redo to that brand new Education minister. What does he have to say about ignoring the voices of parents, ignoring the voice of the Children's Advocate, ignoring the voice of our independent court system — a pillar of our democracy — to move forward with trampling the rights to cause irreparable harm to Saskatchewan children? That's to the Education minister.

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, 16 times, 16 times is the number of times that Quebec has invoked the notwithstanding clause, and that does not count the hundreds of times that Quebec invoked it through an automatic legislative override, Mr. Speaker.

The Charter and its notwithstanding clause are part of a sophisticated balance between legislative and judicial, federal and provincial. And as Allan Blakeney put it, Mr. Speaker, the clause ensures that "the state could, for economic or social reasons, or because other rights were found in the circumstances to be more important, choose to override a Charter-protected right."

Mr. Speaker, that was Mr. Blakeney. We agree.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this government is ignoring the real problems in our classrooms. We've got more kids than any province going to school hungry every day. We've got a mental health crisis with our young people going unwatched by this government to focus on things that don't matter. We've got crowded classrooms. We've got complex needs of our young people going unmet in our schools every single day.

And they've recalled the legislature, and they're using the notwithstanding clause to do irreparable harm to young people, to our children in this province. Now those aren't my concerns and words. Those are taken right from the decision from Justice Megaw.

Again to the Education minister: what is his response to the fact

that a judge's ruling has warned his government that this policy will do irreparable harm to vulnerable children in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're moving forward this piece of legislation because we've heard from Saskatchewan parents. We're heard from Saskatchewan parents that want to be involved in their education.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite comes back to a couple words in the judge's decision: "irreparable harm." Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the policies that were already existing in numerous school divisions around the province mirror what this policy is. So is the member opposite saying that there was already irreparable harm occurring, Mr. Speaker? That's something that maybe that member should think about.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I keep coming back to the question in my own mind is, why do the NDP want to shut parents out of education? In this government, Mr. Speaker, our default position is that parents should always be involved, especially when it comes to big decisions or controversial issues. I hope the NDP give us an opportunity to continue that debate today.

The Speaker: — Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask leave for the Minister of Education to be able to move first reading of Bill No. 137, *The Education (Parents' Bill of Rights) Amendment Act, 2023* right now.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Leave is not granted.

I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Cost-of-Living Relief

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Requesting leave to move a motion under rule 61.

The Speaker: — Will the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion?

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Saskatchewan people are facing crushing cost-of-living increases, and that Sask Party government has made matters worse, indefensibly, Mr. Speaker, with more taxes, more bill hikes, and more costs. I'll read the text of the motion:

That the Assembly call upon the government to take urgent action to offer cost-of-living relief to Saskatchewan families.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Leave has not been granted. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Support for Health Care System

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek leave to move a motion under rule 61.

The Speaker: — Will the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion?

Ms. Mowat: — The crisis in our health care system has continued to worsen over the summer. The result is shuttered facilities and unavailable health care services, including mental health and addictions care, ambulance care, surgeries, ERs, and family doctors. If granted leave, I would move the following motion:

That the Assembly calls upon the government to take urgent action to increase staffing and address the crisis in health care.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has requested leave to move without notice a motion of urgent pressing necessity under rule 61. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Leave is not granted. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Support for Education

Mr. Love: — To seek leave to move a motion under rule 61.

The Speaker: — Will the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion?

Mr. Love: — Gladly, Mr. Speaker. We know that the major concerns with Saskatchewan classrooms are related, for many years, to classroom size and complexity. The previous Education minister said so himself in committee last spring. Those are the most pressing issues in our 27 public and separate school divisions and our French school system in Saskatchewan. If granted leave, my motion is:

That the Assembly calls upon the government to take urgent action to improve supports for students, teachers, and school staff in Saskatchewan schools.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Leave is not granted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership of the Board of Internal Economy

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, pursuant to section 67 of *The Legislative Assembly Act*, 2017, I hereby inform the Assembly of the membership of the Board of Internal Economy effective August 29th, 2023: Hon. Randy Weekes, Chair, Speaker; Hon. Jeremy Harrison, Executive Council nominee; Hon. Tim McLeod, Executive Council nominee; Terry Dennis, MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], government caucus nominee; Alana Ross, MLA, government caucus nominee; Matt Love, MLA, opposition caucus nominee; Nicole Sarauer, MLA, opposition caucus nominee.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: — Members of the Assembly, pursuant to rule 44, it is your duty at this time to elect a member to serve as Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committee of the Whole Assembly. I now ask the Clerk to initiate the proceedings.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, pursuant to the procedures specified under rule 43(1) and 46(4), the following member has declared his intention to stand as candidate for the election of Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committee of the Whole Assembly: Hon. Mr. Fred Bradshaw, Member for the Legislative Assembly for Carrot River Valley.

The Speaker: — Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my duty to inform you that only one candidate has declared his intention to stand for the election of Deputy Speaker: Mr. Fred Bradshaw, the Hon. Member of the Legislative Assembly for Carrot River Valley.

[14:30]

Members, I present to you Mr. Fred Bradshaw, the Hon. Member of the Legislative Assembly for Carrot River Valley, as your Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committee of the Whole Assembly . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No speech. Just bow to the Speaker.

 $\textbf{The Speaker:} \\ -- \text{I recognize the Government House Leader.}$

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At orders of the day, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved to adjourn the House. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till 1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:31.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe Premier President of the Executive Council Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Lori Carr

Minister of Highways

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill

Minister of Education

Hon. Dustin Duncan

Minister of Crown Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. Joe Hargrave

Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement Minister Responsible for the Global Transportation Hub Authority

Hon. Donna Harpauer

Deputy Premier Minister of Finance

Hon. Jeremy Harrison

Minister of Trade and Export Development Minister of Immigration and Career Training Minister Responsible for Innovation Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Hon. Everett Hindley

Minister of Health

Hon. Gene Makowsky

Minister of Social Services

Hon. David Marit

Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Tim McLeod

Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

Hon, Don McMorris

Minister of Government Relations
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the
Provincial Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Paul Merriman

Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

Hon. Jim Reiter

Minister of Energy and Resources

Hon. Laura Ross

Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for
Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation

Hon. Christine Tell

Minister of Environment

Hon. Gordon Wyant

Minister of Advanced Education