



FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

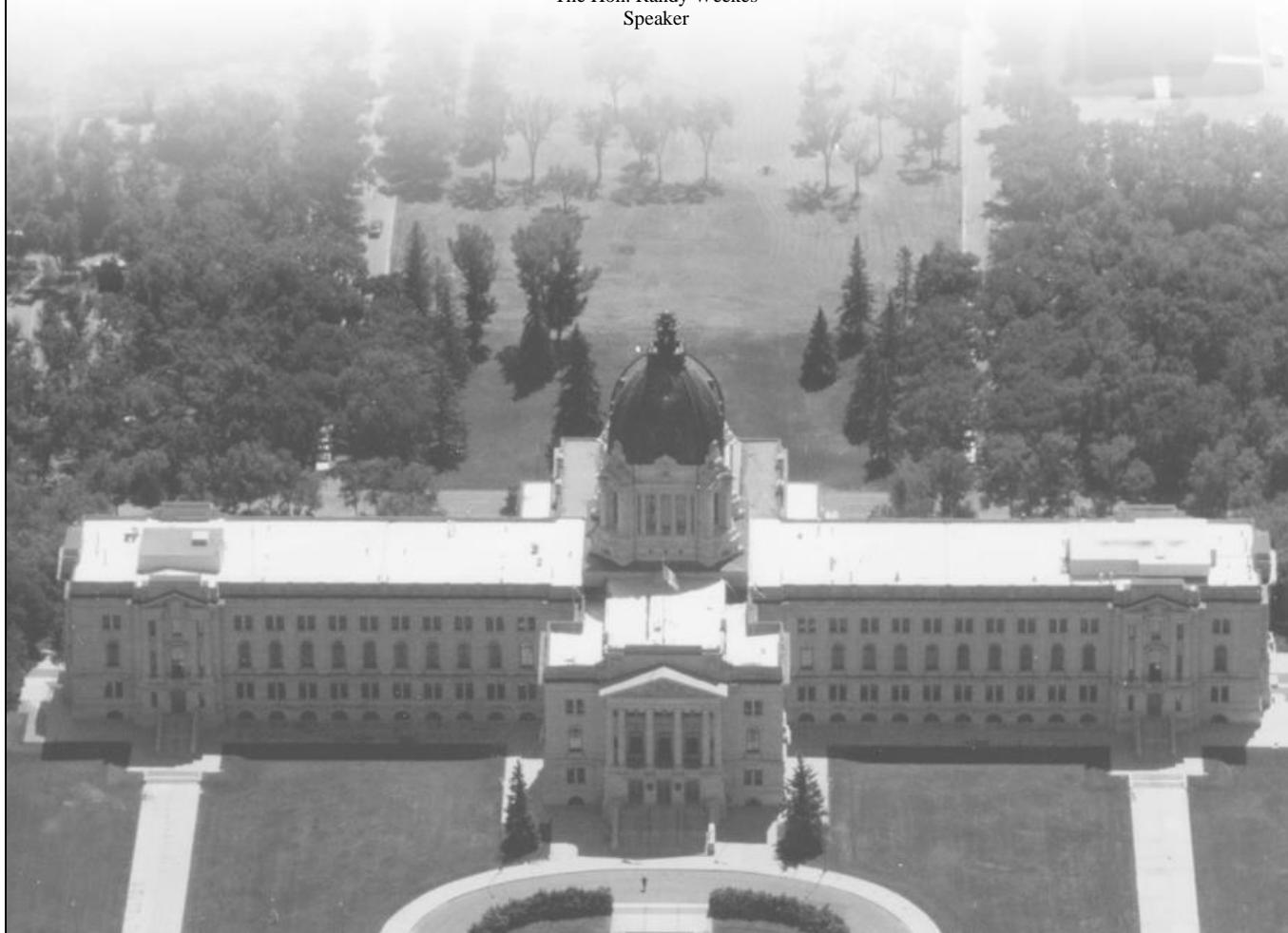
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
4th 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)	Lemaigre , Jim — Athabasca (SP)
Bonk , Steven — Moosomin (SP)	Love , Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)
Bowes , Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)	Makowsky , Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
Bradshaw , Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)	Marit , Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
Buckingham , David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	McLeod , Blaine — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Burki , Noor — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)	McLeod , Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Carr , Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)	McMorris , Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Cheveldayoff , Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	Merriman , Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Clarke , Jared — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)	Moe , Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Cockrill , Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)	Morgan , Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
Conway , Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)	Mowat , Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
Dennis , Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)	Nerlien , Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Domotor , Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (Ind.)	Nippi-Albright , Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Duncan , Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Ottenbreit , Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Eyre , Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Reiter , Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Fiaz , Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Ritchie , Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Francis , Ken — Kindersley (SP)	Ross , Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
Friesen , Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)	Ross , Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
Goudy , Todd — Melfort (SP)	Sarauer , Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Grewal , Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)	Skoropad , Dana — Arm River (SP)
Hargrave , Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Steele , Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Harpauer , Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Teed , Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Harrison , Daryl — Cannington (SP)	Tell , Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Harrison , Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)	Vermette , Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Hindley , Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Weekes , Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Jenson , Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)	Wilson , Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
Kaeding , Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	Wotherspoon , Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Keisig , Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	Wyant , Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Kirsch , Delbert — Batoche (SP)	Young , Aleana — Regina University (NDP)
Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young , Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (Ind.)	

Standings

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 44; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 14;
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Independent — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Iris Lang
Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, K.C.
Deputy Clerk — Kathy Burianyk
Principal Clerk — Robert Park

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I would like to invite all members to join me in welcoming two distinguished guests today in the Speaker's gallery.

Samantha Becotte became president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation in July of 2022. She is the seventh woman president in the federation's history. Ms. Becotte has been an active member of the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] for over a decade. She was first elected to the executive in 2015 and served as vice-president from 2019 to her elevation to the president's job three years later. She resides just outside of Lloydminster with her husband and two daughters. Ms. Becotte is a mathematician and is also passionate about promoting women in leadership.

Joining Ms. Becotte is no stranger to this Assembly. Mr. Ian Hanna arrived in this building in November of 2004, serving as director of communications for the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Hanna continued on in that post until November of 2007 when he became a special advisor to newly elected premier Brad Wall. He is currently serving as government relations advisor for the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. Please join me in welcoming these two guests to the Legislative Assembly.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with you in welcoming these guests seated in your gallery, Samantha Becotte and Ian Hanna. I've had the honour of welcoming them here on several occasions, and today on the last day of our sitting it is again my great honour to welcome these leaders to their Legislative Assembly.

Samantha has been such a fantastic leader for teachers in this province through what's been the longest teacher job action in the history of Saskatchewan. That's not something that anybody predicted or thought would happen, but she's been steadfast throughout that, standing up for the working conditions of teachers because those are the learning conditions of students.

Her leadership, I believe, has been put on display lately as 90 per cent of teachers voted to reject the last offer from this government, which shows their resolve. And that doesn't come easy. That comes with steady-handed leadership, consistent messaging of standing up for what's best for students in Saskatchewan. She's done that day in and day out in this role, and she should be very proud of the work that she's done.

Of course along with her, Mr. Ian Hanna has been a big support for Samantha and for teachers in Saskatchewan, the kind of leaders that our classrooms need and will benefit from. I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming these leaders to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with you and welcome Samantha Becotte and Ian Hanna from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to speak with Ms. Becotte directly on several occasions over the last several months. And you know, her and I agree on one thing and we'd like to get a deal done for teachers and students and families of this province. I've been encouraged by some of the discussions that have happened this week. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Ms. Becotte and Mr. Hanna to this their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a good, good friend of mine, a very good friend of mine seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Eric Schmalz. Eric is a former RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] member for, I think, 14 years. Extraordinary auctioneer, by the way; anybody's event that needs a good auctioneer, call Eric. The reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Prince Albert and they love him there. He's done a great job as the reeve of the RM, you know, and now he's moving on to new ventures. He's our candidate in the Sask Rivers riding for the Sask Party.

Mr. Speaker, Eric's been working hard at that. He's at many events. People are just helping him. He's doing lots of, like I say, events and door knocking and he's doing a great job. And I'll be out there helping him as well, Mr. Speaker, because he's a good friend and we know that he'll represent that constituency well. And he'll serve this province well as a member of the Legislative Assembly after October 28th. Thank you.

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

Mr. Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request for extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two incredible guests in your gallery. Bertha and Moises. They moved from Peru to Canada in 2005. They have been residents in Regina for 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, Bertha is a nurse with a master's degree in public health and in the intensive care unit. Currently she's working as an age-support assistant in a special care home in the centre of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, Moises is a system engineer with a post-graduate degree in e-commerce and artificial intelligence. He has worked on several IT [information technology] projects in the private, in the public sector in Alberta, in Manitoba, as well as in

Saskatchewan. Currently he's working as a software developer in an organization in the agriculture sector. They also are reaching out how to apply artificial intelligence models in the health care system to improve the quality of service in this sector.

I would request all members in this Legislative Assembly to give them a warm welcome to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would also like to extend an invitation and welcome to Eric Schmalz. I have land in the RM of Prince Albert so he is my reeve; however he doesn't live in the constituency that I live in. But I would rather he stay my reeve than sit on the floor here. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Schmalz to his Assembly. Thank you.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, in the west gallery I'd like to introduce Terri Bromm. Now Terri Bromm is going to be our candidate for Carrot River Valley. As everybody knows, I'm leaving.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Terri took pharmacy and she was a pharmacist for 25 years. And now she is working for Newsask in Tisdale. Her and her husband, Ian, both live in Tisdale. She has been in Alberta, she actually owned a pharmacy in Alberta, and they've been in Manitoba. But they came back to Saskatchewan because they saw how Saskatchewan was moving forward, Mr. Speaker. So it's really nice to have her here.

Now there's one minor little problem, Mr. Speaker. I was talking to her, and she doesn't know how to bake. So I sent her my brownie recipe and I'm going to do a video of my butter tarts because I can't do the recipe. And I'm going to give it to her so that when she is in this Chamber, then she can follow the tradition of the Carrot River Valley and keep on delivering goodies to all the members here.

So I'd like to have everybody welcome Terri to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sitting in the west gallery I want to welcome my deputy minister, Rick Burton. Rick became deputy minister of Agriculture effective in July 1st of 2016, and he has been with the Ministry of Agriculture for over 35 years in various positions.

Prior to becoming deputy, Rick previously held the position of assistant deputy minister of policy for three years of that, and then assistant deputy minister of regulatory and innovation for five years. Prior to joining the deputy minister's office in April of 2008, Rick held various positions in the ministry, including director for crop development branch and director of policy branch.

Rick has a B.S.A. [Bachelor of Science in Agriculture] in agricultural economics from the University of Saskatchewan and a master's in business administration from the University of Regina. He has completed the directors of education program, and is a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors. Rick is Chair of the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation board of directors and sits on the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership board of directors and the Global Institute for Food Security board of directors as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the privilege of having an excellent team at the Ministry of Agriculture, led by Rick Burton. And I've seen the respect that Rick has from his colleagues right across this country, and he has earned that. The experience that he has is going to be difficult to replace. It really has been a great pleasure to work with Rick over the past six years. We've travelled on trade missions together, but we've been to FPT [federal-provincial-territorial] meetings across this country together. And I've seen the work that he has done.

I want to wish Rick and his wife, Anna, all the best in his retirement. I know he will enjoy his cabin down at White Bear. And he will enjoy the golf course a lot. And I also know, Mr. Speaker, he will be travelling with his two boys to watch the Blue Jays play at every opportunity he gets.

Rick's official retirement is August 15th and, until then, he's going to have to deal with me, Mr. Speaker. I would like all members of this Assembly to give the great respect that Rick Burton deserves of serving the province of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Agriculture for the past 35 years, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister to recognize someone who has provided exemplary leadership to his province for decades and somebody who has provided senior leadership in agriculture in an extraordinary way.

This is an exceptional civil servant who has given much to this province and this very important sector. And to him, on behalf of the official opposition, on behalf of all within this Assembly, I want to say thank you so very much. We wish you and your family all the best into retirement, good times down in White Bear, and catching Blue Jays games and everything else. You've certainly earned it, Mr. Burton.

And while on my feet, as I stood up here I spotted a constituent, a good person, Alysia Johnson in the west gallery here. And I want to welcome Alysia. She works in the financial sector in the province, and she gives back in extraordinary ways within our community to support the most vulnerable. Always stands strong for human rights. And it's my honour to serve Alysia, and I'm

thankful for community leaders and volunteers like Alysia within our community. I ask all members to welcome Alysia Johnson to her Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Assembly, please welcome here today 65 grade 4 students from École Saint Elizabeth, right in the heart of the constituency of Regina Wascana Plains.

I look forward to your questions and a picture and a discussion later on today. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these fine students and their teacher. I forgot last time too. Valery Tchemebe is here with the students. Thank you so much for bringing the kids. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these fine kids to our Assembly.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[10:15]

Ms. Beck: — It is indeed a privilege, Mr. Speaker, to be able to rise in this place and welcome a number of guests to their Legislative Assembly. I welcome all the guests here, but I want to single a few out.

I want to join with the minister and the critic for Education in welcoming these leaders from the STF here today, Samantha and Ian. Always encouraging women in leadership, but Ms. Beccotte, you have put on a master class in leadership in this province over the last year. It's so important to ensure that when we lead we have the pulse, the interests of those that we serve at heart. And I think that the support that your members have shown in you is a testament of just how connected you are to the issues that your members are facing. And for that you have my respect and my thanks. And I expect that the gentleman sitting behind you had a good part in that as well, and I want to thank both of you.

I want to say a warm welcome to Bertha and Moises as well here today. Have had the benefit of meeting with you and you sharing your wisdom with us. I hope we can continue to meet again. And I just want to say how grateful and thankful we are that you chose Saskatchewan to put down roots.

I want to say a warm welcome to Alysia and thank her for her community involvement through some really difficult times. It's made a difference. And also want to offer warm congratulations to Rick Burton as well as he embarks on this new journey. As Trent said, that time on the golf course is well deserved.

And I want to point out someone who's sitting in the east gallery. I don't know if she knows I saw her sneak in, but that is Cheryl

Stecyk, someone who has served and serves our caucus in extraordinary ways. Has done so for over 15 years, 40 years of service in various roles to us and the people of Saskatchewan. Someone who knows, as has been said many times in the last few days, has forgotten more than many of us will ever know in terms of, you know, compliance and making sure the trains run on time, my calendar runs on time.

But also . . . How do I say this, Mr. Speaker? We all have access to an EAP [employee assistance program] program here. And the amount of times I've seen people in Cheryl's office being cared for, revealing their concerns, their issues with her I think is a testament to what a good listener she is, and someone we never ever doubt has our best interests at heart. That is a real testament, Mr. Speaker.

To all of these guests, to Cheryl in particular, I say welcome and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce the amazing team that I get to work with on a daily basis. So start off with my chief of staff, Dan Rozdilsky. If you could give us a wave, Dan. He has brought his wife, Colleen; Kyran, his oldest; and Nate, also known as Nate-Dawg, Mr. Speaker. And I only met Nate once but I can tell you this and I can tell the Assembly, Nate is a fighter, Mr. Speaker. He absolutely is, so I'm glad that he is able to join us here today.

I also have my two senior admins that I have in my office, Debbie Wintonyk and Michelle Chyz, who keep me on track on a daily basis, and have been acclimatizing me to my new role as Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. And I also have Hillary Pachal, who is our comms person who just joined us this spring. Mr. Speaker, I'd like all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few quick introductions in the Assembly for me here today. First and foremost, in your gallery, my wife, Leone Ottenbreit, and her sister Teri are here again today. Leone apologized to me last night. Apparently she missed the first few minutes of my closing speech because the member for Carrot River Valley usually is a lot longer speaker and he cut it a bit short. So she missed a little bit of the beginning. She caught the tail end, or she caught it yesterday on video. So I just welcome my wife and her sister Teri to their Legislative Assembly.

As well in the west gallery, once again — I'm not going to forget her today — is my CA, constituency assistant, Lauretta Ritchie-McInnes. She's at the front row there, right beside a very good friend who I acknowledged yesterday and will be my last time in this Assembly to acknowledge him in my career, is Fred Hill, chaplain of the Legislative Assembly, who we're just so blessed to have in this Assembly every day.

Beside him is a good friend, Rod Donison, who has been a friend and a support of mine over many, many years in this building and

in this role. And a little bit farther to his left, to my right, is Scott Simpkins, who also has been a great person that's worked in this Assembly in different ministers' offices. He ran for us a couple of times under the Sask Party banner, but he's continued to be a long-term friend. And I just so appreciate them in the Assembly here today. So I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

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

The Speaker: — The Premier requested an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, just a couple of comments welcoming everyone that has joined us here today, maybe starting with the leader of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, the president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Samantha Becotte. Joining her, Ian Hanna. And welcoming them to their legislature and thanking them I think for the discussion that we've been having as of late. And most certainly I think we can all be in agreement that we do want to find a way to an agreement in the best interests of students, teachers, and families, and the community. And I would say we're all diligently working towards that goal.

Many, many people here, Mr. Speaker, from the Saskatchewan community. We have new Canadians that have joined us and many leaders in their own right, Mr. Speaker. Really I think along maybe what has been the conversation the last couple of days which is, you know, change and renewal as we find our way to an election on the floor of this Assembly, although many of these today, some of them but not all of them, are associated directly with that . . . But we have with us, Mr. Speaker, we have leaders in our ministries, staff of the ministries that are moving on and I wish them all of the best. We have ministerial staff that are here, constituency staff that are here. We have spiritual leadership that have joined us here today, Mr. Speaker.

We have family that has joined us over the course of the last couple of days and family that is here today. And I just again say that without their love and support, nobody is here on the floor of this Assembly. And I would say that nobody has ever been on the floor of this Assembly without the love and support of their family.

We have candidates that are here that, you know, quite likely may find their way to the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And I would say we have students, the leaders of tomorrow, that have joined us as well. And I welcome them to their Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to single out just a couple of individuals that have joined us here today. It's Ava and Jennifer Lamontagne. They're from Warman. Ava is attending the Warman school there. She spends a large portion of her time actually not in Warman but in Blaine Lake, which is in the constituency of Rosthern-

Shellbrook, which I think is probably the best constituency in the province of Saskatchewan. I visit it every single week actually, Mr. Speaker.

Ava is a very, very interesting young girl and a leader in her own right with some of the ambitions that she has. And we had a question and answer earlier that says to me she might achieve some of those ambitions. One of her goals, Mr. Speaker, is actually to sit in this chair, Mr. Speaker, and I offered it to her today. She said it's maybe just a little bit early, but at one point in time she would like to be the premier and represent her community and represent her province in the province. And I most certainly would encourage Ava to act on her dreams, whatever they are, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes they're a lot of work and they take some focus, but don't ever back away from the dreams that you have.

She plays for the XCEL spring hockey team. She aspires to play for the university hockey team while attending law school. That would all be I think prior to sitting in this chair in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. But what her birthday wish was to come down and spend a day at the legislature and meet the current Premier, Mr. Speaker. And today fortunately that birthday wish has come true. As I said, we had a fairly vigorous question and answer that's probably more vigorous maybe even than what's going to come here in the next few minutes, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to thank both Ava and Jennifer for joining us here today. I want to wish you all the best as we go into summer, and all the best that you choose in your life, Ava. And I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me with welcoming Jennifer and Ava Lamontagne to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just to tag on to Premier's very kind words to Jennifer and Ava this morning, I've known Jennifer and her husband, Eric, for a number of years now. They're constituents of mine. And it's too bad Eric couldn't be here as well to see this, but I'm very excited for you, Ava. And Jennifer is the director of professional practice, I believe, with the Saskatchewan Realtors Association, so we've had lots of good conversations both as a constituent as well as her professional role.

And full disclosure: Ava goes to Holy Trinity School in Warman, and she is a classmate of my daughter who is in grade 4, and they get along fabulously. And I'm so happy to see you here, Ava, and happy birthday. Make sure mom treats you really well today, and we'll talk to you very soon. Please join me in welcoming Ava and Jennifer to their Legislative Assembly.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Circumstances in Rural Saskatchewan

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last six years under this Premier, rural Saskatchewan has not done well. Between 2018 and 2023 rural areas and small communities in

Saskatchewan lost 21,600 jobs. Between 2018 and 2023 the number of businesses in rural and small communities of Saskatchewan fell by 7.4 per cent — 860 businesses in total. Where is that strong and vibrant economy that the Sask Party has been referencing?

Well we shouldn't be too surprised about the job losses because at the same time, Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government was pulling nurses out of rural Saskatchewan at such a rate that there was a 21 per cent drop. And this connects directly to the 951 service disruptions in rural hospitals that occurred between August of 2019 and July of 2023 — fewer jobs, fewer nurses, and fewer hospital services.

The Sask Party just doesn't care about health care in rural communities. The news gets even bleaker when we talk about rural Saskatchewan services — a 10 per cent drop in registered nurses working in rural long-term care between 2018 and 2022, as well as a net loss of 10 psychiatric nurses.

The only thing that the Sask Party has increased over the past six years in rural Saskatchewan is the level of crime, almost 50 per cent higher than other areas of the province and several times higher than in other provinces. Rural Saskatchewan deserves better, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Newspaper Celebrates 115 Years of Serving Its Community

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, *The Outlook* newspaper is currently celebrating its 115th year in business. Its first issue was released February the 5th, 1909, just four years after Saskatchewan became a province. As a matter of fact, the paper predates the town of Outlook itself, as Outlook was declared a town in 1910, over a year after the first issue was released. This means that they have covered all but two provincial elections, countless local marriages, births, graduations, and so much more.

The Outlook has served not only as a newspaper for the past 115 years, but they have been the glue of a community and surrounding area by writing about topics that matter to their readers. Before we had 24-7 news at the touch of our fingertips, *The Outlook* was reporting on the issues meaningful to rural Saskatchewan with over 5,500 editions published.

It is and continues to be the spirit of community. Their mission is to be a part of the fabric of Outlook. And they are doing just that because even today I can't attend an event in the Outlook area where I don't bump into Derek Ruttle, *The Outlook*'s full-time reporter. The longevity of *The Outlook* shows the resilience and importance of small-town businesses here in Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, with that I ask all members to help me to recognize and congratulate one of Saskatchewan's oldest newspapers, *The Outlook*. And I encourage everyone to go out and get a copy.

Thank you.

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

Results for Saskatchewan in Happiness Study

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that everyone here is very happy to see another session coming to an end. But, Mr. Speaker, happiness is a vanishing luxury under that Premier.

This tired old Sask Party has ranked last in Canada time and time again by Statistics Canada and many other organizations that analyze economic, health, and social performance metrics. This legacy has repeated itself once again, as a recent survey has named Saskatchewan as the unhappiest province in Canada.

[10:30]

The happiness study was conducted using eight key metrics: a life satisfaction survey, a median family income, unemployment risk, average life expectancy, perceived health, perceived mental health, crime rates, and air quality. Saskatchewan has received the lowest score among several metrics, including the life satisfaction survey and crime rates. Every other province in Canada ranks higher than Saskatchewan.

This Premier's legacy is one of a province that can't supply its residents with health care, a province with the lowest life expectancy in Canada, a province with the highest rates of interpersonal violence, a province with the lowest rate of job creation, and a province with the second-worst economic record in the country.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. We can and will do better after the next election.

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

Moose Jaw Warriors Move on to Memorial Cup

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — And now for something different, Mr. Speaker.

For the first time in franchise history, the Moose Jaw Warriors are the WHL [Western Hockey League] champions. Last night, the Warriors clinched the Ed Chynoweth Cup with a 4-2 win over the Portland Winterhawks in game four of the 2024 WHL Championship series.

Leading up to the finals, Mr. Speaker, the Warriors made quick work of Brandon in the first round of the playoffs, defeating the Wheat Kings in just four games. The Swift Current Broncos were next, Mr. Speaker, and they did dish Moose Jaw its first loss of the post-season.

But the Warriors would roar back to win four straight games and advance to the first all-Saskatchewan Eastern Conference Championship since 1993. Moose Jaw then beat the regular season champion Saskatoon Blades, but it was a battle for the ages, Mr. Speaker. The teams set a modern WHL record with six of seven games requiring overtime.

The Moose Jaw Events Centre, better known as the Hangar, has been a near-impenetrable fortress in the playoffs, Mr. Speaker, with the Warriors posting a stellar 8-1-1-0 record on home ice.

The Warriors will now go on to represent the WHL at the 2024 Memorial Cup in Saginaw, Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Moose Jaw Warriors on winning the WHL championship and wish them the best of luck in their battle for the Memorial Cup. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Remembering Don Light

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to recognize and remember the life of a man who was a pillar in our community, Mr. Don Light. Don passed away on April 27th at the age of 91.

Now the Light family is a recognizable name in The Battlefords. Don's grandfather, Fredrick Walter Light, was a staff sergeant for the North West Mounted Police in The Battlefords and Don's father, Fredrick George Light, was the benefactor and driving force behind the Fred Light Museum in Battleford. And, Mr. Speaker, if you haven't had an opportunity to visit that museum, it is certainly worth your time to do so.

Now Don was involved in many organizations in The Battlefords, but one of the most important was his involvement with the Northwest Historical Society. Don was proud of where he was from, and he worked hard to preserve the history of our community and to honour those who have come before us. And in particular, Mr. Speaker, many in our community remember the incredible work that he did to work on the North West Mounted Police cemetery in Battleford.

In recent years, Mr. Speaker, Don was a fixture at the Tim Hortons in Battleford, and I know that many will miss having coffee with him or just waving at him as they go through the drive-through.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing Don Light's contributions to The Battlefords, to Saskatchewan, and to offer their condolences to the Light family. Rest in peace, Don.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Northern Saskatchewan Winners of 2024 Literacy Awards of Merit

Mr. Lemaigre: — This year's 2024 Literacy Awards of Merit were awarded to several talented individuals and programs. Congratulations to all the award winners. I want to recognize two Cameco Literacy Learner and Bursary award winners from northern Saskatchewan: La Loche's own Allen Janvier, and Mary McKenzie of Stanley Mission. Mr. Speaker, these two northerners have faced their own challenges and overcome much adversity in their literacy journeys.

Allen was 62 years old when he went back to school after a 40-year career in mining. Mary is a 62-year-old woman from a large family and one of her dreams was to always finish school, and in June of this year she will be the first member of her large extended family to complete her grade 12. This story fills me

with pride as a northerner.

Mr. Speaker, recognizing Gabriel Dumont Institute, and I would like to acknowledge the work of Ernestine McNeil. She has been dedicated to literacy forever, and I remember her working in the learning centre, as a child, where she helped many young people with their reading.

Congratulations to these two northerners on all your hard work and dedication to their personal literacy journeys. You inspire us all.

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Government Successes since 2007

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Hope beats fear. Those were the first words of Premier Brad Wall in his 2007 victory speech when our government was elected the first time. Since 2007 Saskatchewan continues to choose hope.

Two billion in affordable measures for residents in each budget; the removal of the carbon tax on home heating; the removal of more than 112,000 residents from the income tax roll; and in this budget alone we're investing record amounts into classrooms, care, and communities.

Opening Saskatchewan's first portable pediatric MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] at the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, a hospital that never would have been built under the opposition; the creation of a new system to improve EMS [emergency medical services] response times; the most ambitious HHR [health human resources] action plan in the country; a new hospital is under way in Weyburn; completion of the Regina urgent care centre to serve our capital city's most vulnerable.

And we spent time attracting more private capital trade, and trade; uranium exports reached almost a billion dollars in 2023, with a 1,525 per cent increase to global exports; a motion that received unanimous support to devolve the *Firearms Act* to the province to strengthen our provincial jurisdiction. We opened the Saskatchewan DLC [Distance Learning Centre] for students to access online learning opportunities; and since 2007 we built and provided funding for 69 schools and 32 major renovations.

These are all initiatives that would have never happened under a different government and we're proud of this record benefiting our Saskatchewan residents. God bless this province and its people.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provincial Fuel Tax and Affordability

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver the cost-of-living relief that Saskatchewan families need. Fifty-seven per cent of families are

struggling to pay for groceries, and rents are rising faster here in Saskatchewan than in any other province. Families need a break now, Mr. Speaker, not after the election. How can the Premier defend the Sask Party's choice to vote against fuel tax relief?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — What the Leader of the Opposition failed to mention is that rental rates in the province of Saskatchewan are still the lowest in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to where the opposition finds their sources or does their research, I think we should all be aware of what is coming to the floor of this legislature. When we see a member's statement on the happiness, the happiness of Saskatchewan people, that is a survey that is actually conducted by an online casino, Mr. Speaker. The name of that casino is L7 Entertainment. It's based out of St. Julian's, Malta. That's the research that's coming to the floor of the Assembly by the members opposite when they quote various surveys that have been performed, Mr. Speaker.

We look at Statistics Canada, Mr. Speaker. And I'll tell you where we take the advice from. The members on this side, members of the Saskatchewan Party government take advice from the people of Saskatchewan, and after today, we're going to have a lot more time to go out and talk to them before the next election.

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

Ms. Beck: — Good idea, Mr. Speaker. I would advise the Premier to go out there and ask Saskatchewan people how happy they are about things right now.

Now for 40 days in a row we've called on the Premier and his tired and out-of-touch government to act and cut the fuel tax to provide the cost-of-living relief that Saskatchewan families need. But they continue to say no. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that tells you everything you need to know about just how tired and out of touch that Sask Party government has become, and how clearly it's time for a change in Saskatchewan, time for a government that will actually make life more affordable for people.

Is the Premier really going to force Saskatchewan people to wait until after an election before they see any relief?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has cut income taxes. This is a government that has cut the NDP [New Democratic Party] education property tax. This is a government that is not going to cut our highways budget, Mr. Speaker.

As we see, we see the NDP finally come up with one idea. Again no idea on how they're going to pay for that idea, Mr. Speaker. Are they going to do away with the graduate retention program? Are they going to do away with the seniors' income plan? Are they going to do away with the investments that are being made in health care, either capital investments or the most ambitious health human resource plan in the country?

We see the NDP after four years come up with one idea, Mr.

Speaker, and no mention of how they're going to pay for it.

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

Management of Health Care System

Ms. Beck: — Here's an idea, Mr. Speaker: cut the mismanagement, scandal, and waste that's been part of that government since the start. Now this tired and out-of-touch government has failed to deliver on the cost of living, so I guess Saskatchewan people are going to have to wait until they have a Saskatchewan NDP government to provide that relief that they need.

We're also going to need to change the government, Mr. Speaker, to fix the crisis in our health care system. In Saskatoon this week at the ER [emergency room] at RUH [Royal University Hospital] there was a total overwhelm of that system — 40 patients stuck waiting for a bed; another 21 waiting in the hallway. And that's not the first time we've seen this in Saskatchewan emergency rooms.

Why does this keep happening, Mr. Speaker, under that Premier's watch?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we have discussed many times in this House, this government is very, very committed to our health care system — \$7.6 billion in this year's budget, a 10.6 per cent increase into funding for capital, into health human resources, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to Saskatoon, I'm aware of the situation at Royal University Hospital. I've been to Saskatoon numerous times, to St. Paul's Hospital. I've been in contact with some of the front-line health care providers at Royal University Hospital and will be meeting with them very, very soon, Mr. Speaker.

This is why back in November the government provided some additional dollars to the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] to be able to put those dollars towards the Saskatoon capacity pressure action plan, Mr. Speaker, and then annualize those dollars, put those additional dollars into the budget so that we could hire more staff to be able to address the pressures we face in our hospitals in Saskatoon. And that plan is working, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, clearly the reason our health care system is in such a mess is because that Premier and that government have stopped listening to those who are on the front line.

And here's what nurses have to say about that plan, Mr. Speaker, and I quote: "They're just not being heard, and nothing is being done to deal with that. Well there's supposedly a plan. That plan hasn't done anything. It hasn't made any difference." I end the quote.

Clearly nothing is going to change in health care until we change the government. The Premier has shown, that minister has shown

that they have no plan to change. Why doesn't he just get out of the way so that Saskatchewan New Democrats can get in there and fix the problems in our health care system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the implementation of that plan in Saskatoon, in the first 30 days the SHA, through the additional funding provided by this government, has delivered a number of different initiatives to help with the capacity pressure issues in Saskatoon: the establishment of 32 community transition care beds since December of '23; 75 convalescent care beds have been added in Saskatoon to help with patient flow so that we can create more space; the addition as well of 84 long-term care beds will be added within a couple of months or so here for a total of 159 more beds in community settings; plus the hiring of 140 more full-time equivalent staff.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member talked about hearing from front-line providers. I've been doing that. This government has been doing that. We've been meeting with front-line providers, health care professionals, nurses, doctors. As I said previously, I've talked to doctors and nurses at St. Paul's Hospital. I'm going to be actually meeting with the RUH nurses as well in the very, very near future as well to be able to hear from them, and continue to work them, collaborate with front-line health care providers, support what they do so we can help with health care in Saskatoon and across this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Short-staffing problems are not limited just to the ERs in our big cities. Rural hospitals are struggling with short-staffing caused by this tired and out-of-touch government.

In Fort Qu'Appelle at the All Nations' Healing Hospital, five, five of the nine doctors will be leaving by this fall, and there's no plan to hire more. This hospital services over 30,000 people. What does the Minister of Rural and Remote Health say to all the people around Fort Qu'Appelle whose access to health care is being put at risk?

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

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again we see some pretty great exaggeration coming from the opposition, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

When it comes to Fort Qu'Appelle, this health human resources action plan is already showing results, Mr. Speaker. In Fort Qu'Appelle alone we have four RNs [registered nurse], a nurse practitioner, and a CLXT [combined laboratory and X-ray technologist] that have been hired as a direct result of our rural and remote recruitment incentive, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Health said, we are constantly in contact with our front-line providers, with our doctors, with our

nurses. And we have the most ambitious health human resources action plan in the country, and it is showing results across the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people who live in and around Fort Qu'Appelle are the ones who are worried. They're the ones who have sent a letter, and they're the ones who have started a letter-writing campaign to the Health ministers. So I'll read from their letter that they're writing to them:

The absence of access to quality medical care, and especially a lack of access to a doctor, will significantly affect the well-being of my family and ultimately will affect the choices I make about where I choose to work and live.

The mess that this Sask Party government has made of rural health care is driving people out of the province. What does the minister say to the rural people writing these letters to his office, people who this Sask Party government have taken for granted for far too long?

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

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here's a few more quotes from the communities that are benefiting from this health human resources action plan. A quote from the mayor of Wolseley:

The successful execution of the phased opening plans for Wolseley hospital is the result of extensive collaboration and hard work from the various stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health, the SHA management team, WMICC employees, your local municipal leaders, and the general public.

That's Mayor Gerry Hill from Wolseley, Mr. Speaker.

From Mayor Kyle Bennett of Shaunavon:

Thank you for meeting with us and listening to our concerns. We look forward to working with you to keep our facilities running smoothly and keeping our residents safe.

Mr. Speaker, I can go on and on with quotes from community leaders. Yes, we recognize we have challenges in some of our rural communities, and that's why we have the most ambitious health human resources action plan in the nation that is showing results, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Clarke: — Mr. Speaker, the question was about Fort Qu'Appelle and the worries about those residents.

Now we can list off a number of health care problems in Saskatchewan too. The Yorkton surgical department is closed for the next week because of short-staffing. Broadview, Lanigan, Kamsack, Wolseley all have their ERs on reduced hours.

Obstetrics in Estevan have been closed for more than a year. In the Premier's own backyard, the ER in Rosthern has been closed 24 times since December.

I can take the whole question period asking about all the communities who don't have access to the services they need today. The Sask Party broke health care in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and they're not up to the job of fixing it.

Why won't the minister just step aside and let New Democrats get to work on fixing local health care in communities across this province?

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

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I said before, the member keeps saying closures; what he means is temporary service disruptions.

Mr. Speaker, some of the disruptions that he's talking about are as little as three hours long, and they're often due to somebody's illness, an unplanned vacation. Those are temporary service disruptions.

When he says closures, they would know what closures are because they closed 52 hospitals across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They closed 19 long-term care facilities. That's 1,200 long-term care beds. That's not even touching the 176 schools that they closed or the highways that they let crumble, Mr. Speaker.

When the opposition talks about get out of the way and take our ideas, those are their ideas, Mr. Speaker — close hospitals, close schools, and let the highways crumble.

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

Education Legislation and Contract Negotiations with Teachers

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, that was example A of an out-of-touch government explaining their failures to the people of Saskatchewan. There's no question that these two Health ministers are bad at their jobs and Saskatchewan people are left to pay the price. But it's clear that the Minister of Education is even worse, and he should have been fired long ago.

He has wasted untold sums of money on a bad-faith billboard campaign vilifying Saskatchewan teachers. Then he launched an unconstitutional attack on the rights of vulnerable children. Then he presided over the longest teacher job action in the history of Saskatchewan, and every time he opens his mouth, he makes the situation worse.

Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker. It's time for him to go. Why hasn't this failing Minister of Education resigned already?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the member for bringing up several of the things that we have

moved forward in education recently, including Bill 137, which is defending the rights of parents to be involved in their children's lives, Mr. Speaker.

Meanwhile we have an opposition — who in this House and out on the doorsteps in Regina — say that they would hide things from parents, Mr. Speaker. That is not what this government believes in and we will stand behind Bill 137.

But when it comes to investing in education, Mr. Speaker, we've increased operating funding to school divisions by 9 per cent; increased classroom supports funding by 15 per cent. This is a government that is investing in education, more per capita than anywhere else in the country, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to continue to do so.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, that's a minister that voted against a parental engagement strategy in this province, and he should have been fired long ago. The chaos that he's created in education today has put so much at risk. Students are worried about what might happen to grad and year-end celebrations, and parents with summer plans are worried about what happens next due to that minister's ridiculous threats. And teachers just want a deal that addresses the number one issue in schools today — class size and composition.

There is one person in Saskatchewan who can end all of this worry today, and it's that Minister of Education. Will he finally resolve this once and for all and get a deal on class size and composition with Saskatchewan teachers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Mr. Speaker, I would say over the last several days we've been working collaboratively with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation at the bargaining table, which is where a deal is going to happen. We look forward to those discussions continuing later today, Mr. Speaker.

Let me just make something very clear, Mr. Speaker. The number one priority in my job is students, the students in this province. So when it comes to the students in grade 12 in this province who are graduating this year, it is the belief of this government that graduation ceremonies need to be as normal as possible, Mr. Speaker.

We've been collaborating with the 27 school divisions, working with them to understand what they need to make sure graduations can happen. We know that 24 out of 27 divisions are going to go ahead with graduation ceremonies. We're going to continue to work with those school divisions because at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, this is about students.

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

Former Sergeant-at-Arms and Provision of Security at Legislative Building

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch

government has completely lost the plot. They've vilified our teachers through billboard campaigns and radio ads. And yesterday we learned that our former Sergeant-at-Arms, Terry Quinn, experienced similar attacks back in 2021 during the introduction of Bill 70.

That bill completely stripped the independent Sergeant-at-Arms of his role in this building. The email we learned about yesterday was described as "character assassination." Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Environment stand by what she said at that time about Terry Quinn, the former Sergeant-at-Arms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Bill 70 was brought before this Legislative Assembly by the government. It was debated, it was discussed, it was voted on, and it received Royal Assent by the members on this floor that are elected, Mr. Speaker.

We very much appreciate the people that are out there with the legislative district security unit to be able to keep us safe every day. We've seen them in action, Mr. Speaker. They have demonstrated that time and time again, and I want to thank them for their service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Terry Quinn served our country admirably with the RCMP for decades before coming to work in this building. He explains in his letter that the minister told him, "There have been a number of incidents that have happened that has led to the government to not have confidence in the SAA."

The letter goes on to say that the decision to strip the Sergeant-at-Arms of his role and authority was due to incidents that had nothing to do with his role at Sergeant-at-Arms. None of that had been discussed by the people on this floor during that debate, Mr. Speaker. None of that information was shared at the time.

In Terry's own words: "My reputation has been defamed and I have felt harassed by the statements of Minister Tell both in and outside the Chamber since the bill was introduced." Does that minister stand by her comments and actions against this man who served Saskatchewan people honourably for decades?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nobody's calling in Mr. Quinn's service. He's well respected by all, both sides of this House, Mr. Speaker.

But again, Mr. Speaker, this is part of the legislative process. We do sit down. We bring bills forward. The opposition brings bills forward. We sit down. We discuss it. This bill was been settled for years, Mr. Speaker.

The legislative district security unit that is keeping us — and the members over there that are heckling — safe each and every day, what I would ask if those members actually spent some time,

introduce themselves to the members that are out there keeping them safe instead of continuously running them down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Awarding of Contracts and Request to Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, almost every day we've canvassed the Sask Party's scandals, their waste of public dollars, their sweetheart deals with friends and insiders. And it's clear that the Sask Party hates it, Mr. Speaker.

But you know who hates it more? Saskatchewan people. Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people work hard for their money. They want to see investments in health care, in housing, in classrooms, not wasted on contracts with private businesses connected to Sask Party MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly].

Why did the Minister of Social Services allow public dollars to flow to these companies when no exemptions had been granted by the commissioner under the conflict of interest Act.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, day after day the members opposite stand up and they attack members of the Legislative Assembly. They attack former members of the Legislative Assembly. Yesterday they attacked members of Crown corporations boards. And they attack even private citizens which is probably the most despicable of all, Mr. Speaker.

If the members opposite . . . Mr. Speaker, the member opposite apparently feels that, she says that's her job to attack private citizens. If the members opposite have some evidence of wrongdoing they should take it to the appropriate authorities. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, it's just unfounded allegations.

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

Ms. Conway: — I guess they're bringing in the big guns, Mr. Speaker. That member knows full well we did bring it to the appropriate person. And he'll deliver an opinion in 90 days or less.

Mr. Speaker, it's our job to demand accountability and transparency from this tired and out-of-touch government. It's our job to ask tough questions and we will continue to do that.

We see sole-sourced contracts handed to Calgary-based owners with the right Sask Party lobbyist, more than half a million dollars donated to the Sask Party by SaskPower board members and their companies, Mr. Speaker, and companies connected to Sask Party MLAs cashing in on government contracts without the required exemption under the Act.

This is a question of leadership. Under Brad Wall, Bill Boyd was made to resign when he was in breach of the conflict of interest

Act. If the commissioner finds the conflict of interest laws were breached in this case, what consequences will the Premier mete out?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources?

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, it's incredibly disappointing. The member actually heckled from her seat that it's her job to attack private citizens. The NDP somehow feel that if private citizens don't vote NDP somehow they're not fit to serve in any kind of public position.

That's atrocious, Mr. Speaker. It's why good people sometimes avoid supporting political parties or avoid being involved in politics because of personal attacks.

Mr. Speaker, again if the member has some clear evidence, she needs to go to the proper authorities. Otherwise once again, it's just unfounded allegations.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the people of the Saskatchewan expect our Crowns to be independent. They expect this government to invest in local health care. And they expect that their public monies will not be flowing to Sask Party businesses but invested in Saskatchewan institutions.

Mr. Speaker, these conflicts of interest are serious concerns, and enough is enough. The Act says that this conduct is barred or that members with government contracts need to get an exemption from the commissioner under the Act. That was not done. No exemptions were granted for either the Minister of Education or the member from Regina Northeast.

And again this is a question of leadership. Under Brad Wall, Bill Boyd was made to resign when he breached the Act. What consequences will this Premier mete out if it is found that these members breached the conflict of interest Act?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

[11:00]

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I find it somewhat ironic that lately the members opposite in questions will praise Brad Wall. I proudly served under Brad Wall when he was premier and I don't remember them ever praising anything Brad Wall did, Mr. Speaker.

What we have here is an incident where the NDP are trying to target private citizens, members of Crown boards, anybody who doesn't vote NDP, Mr. Speaker. This is a dangerous precedent in democracy, where they think anyone is fair game and they try to bully and coerce people who don't support their party, Mr. Speaker. The vast majority of people in this province do not support the NDP.

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

Overdose Deaths and Treatment for Addictions

Mr. Teed: — Mr. Speaker, last year we set a new record for overdose deaths in our province. At the rate things are going, we're on track to beat those numbers in 2024, pass that record. Hundreds of families will be changed forever by a preventable loss. If only this government would listen to experts. We know that the policies put forward by the government will only make things worse.

Today is the last session. We probably won't be gathered in this Chamber again until after the election. So to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions: when we gather here again before Christmas, how many more people will have lost their lives to this preventable overdose crisis?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And we, as a government, extend our condolences to everyone in this province who's lost someone due to overdose. As you've heard the Minister for Mental Health and Addictions say many times, we do take this very seriously. And it's why that we have unveiled a new action plan to add 500 more treatment spaces into this province, doubling the amount of capacity of treatment spaces we have in Saskatchewan; moving to implement a central intake system to make it easier for people to access treatment; and moving to the recovery-oriented system of care, Mr. Speaker.

Overall, Mr. Speaker, I would say this: this budget and this session has been a government that has been focused on classrooms and on care and on communities, investments that are only possible because of a strong and growing economy right here in this province. This is a government focused on hope, not on fear; a government focused on optimism, not negativity; building people up, not tearing them down; and on a better tomorrow for everyone in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave to make a statement regarding the conclusion of this session.

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

End-of-Session Acknowledgements

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to colleagues for granting leave. I have a few comments, a few minutes of comments actually to make in light of the close of this session, in light of the last couple days of debate, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition will have some comments as well.

It is days like the past two days I think that bring with us some mixed emotions as we find our way to the close of the twenty-ninth legislative session, Mr. Speaker. It's also a time for renewal. And I want to really focus a few comments on three different themes. One is the team aspect of what we do in this legislature. Two is, what we heard very much over the last couple of days, is the importance and the focus of people in the work that we do. And the importance of change and the importance of renewal of the people that ultimately serve Saskatchewan residents on the floor of this Assembly.

I was jotting down some notes as we went through the last few days and I was thinking of team and I was thinking, you know, what does team actually stand for? And we talk a lot about teamwork and working together on this side of the House. And I came up with a few . . . They'll be corny, maybe not as corny as Ben Heppner's but very close, Mr. Speaker.

But first I would say that the T is for tenacious, Mr. Speaker. And we have members, private members, ministers that very tenaciously pay attention to the details of the work that they're doing on behalf of the residents of Saskatchewan.

You need energy to serve on the floor of this Assembly and to serve as an MLA, and that's what I would say the E stands for, Mr. Speaker.

The A, you need to be appreciative and humble. And if you aren't for just a moment, this place has a way of bringing you back to being humble for sure, Mr. Speaker, but be appreciative of the opportunity that you have to serve on the floor of this Assembly for whatever period of time that might be. And last and not least, I would say is to be magnanimous in your service, Mr. Speaker. Set lofty goals, but noble goals, and approach those goals on behalf of the Saskatchewan residents with a courageous spirit, Mr. Speaker.

It is about teamwork. And I would just say that on this team, and we heard this a number of times over the last two days, that each and every member has the opportunity to represent their constituents and the views that they hear on the doorsteps and in the conversations that they have. Each and every member has the opportunity to be heard, whether it be in our caucus meeting or with an individual meeting with another MLA or minister.

And each and every MLA has the opportunity to contribute — to contribute to the direction of this government, and contribute to the direction ultimately of our province, Mr. Speaker. And I would say that's actually true of all members on the floor, if you look at some of the work that has transpired over the course of the last four years. That's the team that I'm part of. And that's the team I'm very proud to be part of, Mr. Speaker.

As I said it's with mixed emotions we see some of the statements that have been made over the last 48 hours. On one hand it's sad for us to see colleagues go. Some have served for an awful long time and been mentors to many, myself included. On the other hand it's exciting to see them meet new challenges and opportunities in their life. And I'd say that these MLAs are not leaving us entirely. They are only a phone call away, and our paths will cross again on both sides of the Assembly.

Sixteen MLAs who are not going to be on the ballot this October,

and I would say that in all 16 of them, they are unique individuals in their own way, in a positive way, Mr. Speaker. As we know our differences are our strengths in this nation if respect comes to the table in each of those cases, Mr. Speaker. But we saw, you know, a variance of life skills, a variance of backgrounds that are brought to the floor of this Assembly.

But I would say there is some similarities as well, as all that came here, came here for a singular reason. Again this extends across the floor of this Assembly. They came to help and to represent the residents in their constituency and more broadly to improve their community and improve their province from their perspective. And what we hear in question period and otherwise is some of the differences in view of that perspective, Mr. Speaker, but I would say it is much less in Saskatchewan than it is in other parts of the world, and for that we can be thankful.

Of the folks that are not running again, we have a combined over 200 years of experience among these MLAs. That's impressive — very, very impressive, Mr. Speaker — and I think when I say that there's a whole lot of mentorship and experience that is walking out the door this election season, that is true.

But there's also opportunities — as we see candidates here today; candidates have been here over the course of the past number of weeks — there is opportunities for renewal, opportunities for fresh ideas, again, on both sides of this legislature. And I know that those ideas are going to be presented to the Saskatchewan people over the course of the next number of months, Mr. Speaker. And we can be so appreciative that we have a governance system where Saskatchewan people will determine the outcome of that election and where we will all sit after that point in time, those of us that continue to run.

So a couple of comments, and I do want to just briefly comment on a couple of opposition MLAs that are not running again, Mr. Speaker. We have the MLA for Saskatoon University, Mr. Speaker. She served . . . elected in 2020 and served as the opposition critic for Advanced Education, Innovation, the Status of Women, as well as the associate critic for Labour. And the Opposition Deputy Whip has also been part of her service, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank her for her . . . Can we use names yet or . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Names off, I have to use . . . All right. All right, we'll keep it proper, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank her for her service to the constituents, to the province, and what she has brought to the floor of this Assembly. Haven't always agreed all the time, in all fairness, Mr. Speaker. But what I can respect is that when someone does have a view, they do bring that to the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And I think that's what each of us are elected to do, and that's what the member from Saskatoon University most certainly did. And so I wish her well in all that life offers you.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland, long-serving member from Cumberland. He was elected in 2008 in a by-election in that area, Mr. Speaker. I know that constituency somewhat, Mr. Speaker, and I would also echo the fact that the member from Cumberland, he has also represented his constituency well. He most certainly is a resident of that constituency.

And I want to highlight just some of the work . . . The

collaborative work that I saw happen over the course of the last four years was really led by the member from Cumberland, Mr. Speaker, and it was the work that he did with respect to suicide prevention. An important conversation that leads us into, you know, mental health supports, all too often subsequent addictions that we see in our communities, in our families, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately at times ends with maybe an overdose or a suicide.

And, Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland, the outgoing member from Cumberland deserves a lot of credit for bringing that issue faithfully to the floor of this Assembly. And I thank him for his service, Mr. Speaker. I also thank him for teaching me how to jig. Now I'm not as good as him, Mr. Speaker. He's quite a jigger, actually, quite nimble on his feet. But I do thank him for the jiggling lesson that we got on the day we were actually doing the Sixties Scoop apology in the rotunda here, too, Mr. Speaker. Again, an important day for that particular member and many Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, as we move over to this side of the Assembly, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale. If you want to know anything about the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, know these three things: know that it is a great day to be in Saskatoon every day; know that he will always advocate on behalf of his friends and the residents that he represented in the city; and that people from Saskatoon Riversdale can know so well they have been represented over the last four years by this particular member.

And if you want to know who he is, you can go back to April the 28th of 2022 and watch the 75-minute debate. It was a debate on suicide, Mr. Speaker. We had the member from Athabasca, we had the late member from Regina Walsh Acres, the previous, late member from Regina Walsh Acres; and the current member, outgoing member from Saskatoon Riversdale take part in that debate. And I would say that it was, in my opinion, one of the most impactful debates that I've seen on the floor of this Assembly, and I thank him and all of those members, including my friend, the late Derek Meyers, for taking part in that debate.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member from Kelvington-Wadena's speech. Followed a founding member of this party into that seat. And I took, really, three points from the speech that he provided. One was the opportunity that this province has, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity that lies before for all Saskatchewan residents. And I believe it's great, and after listening to the member, I know that he certainly believes that as well.

And he talked about the people of his constituency and the role that they had played in building this nation many years ago, and the role . . . and how they had to travel across the nation in order to participate in that growth and in building the Canada that we know and love, Mr. Speaker. And he now spoke of how the people in his constituency can stay at home and build our province and our nation from their community. And that, I think, is something that has changed in Saskatchewan, is people now expect that opportunity to stay here, to build their community, build Saskatchewan, and through that, build their nation. Not have to leave to do so, Mr. Speaker.

And I would just take this opportunity to wish him and his lovely wife, Giselle, a two-day belated anniversary, 47 years.

Mr. Speaker, we have on this side of the House the first Indo-Canadian that's ever been elected to the floor of this Assembly. And so when some youngsters in the stands, some K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] students or what might be, and they ask, "what can I do," the answer is quite simple. You can do anything you want, and you can look at a gentleman like this that is breaking glass barriers in that respect.

The first Indo-Canadian person to be elected to this legislature, Mr. Speaker. Involved in his community. It's no accident that he is elected, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the involvement that he has in his community, predominantly the Indo-Canadian community, Mr. Speaker.

And we saw that this past weekend with the parade and events, probably about 10,000 people out, Mr. Speaker, but also his involvement with the Saskatchewan Cricket Association — and I still don't know the rules to that particular game, Mr. Speaker — but involvement through the Saskatchewan Cricket Association or the Canadian Cricket Association, Mr. Speaker. And most certainly as we saw, as I mentioned, this past weekend, his involvement with the Sikh community right here in Regina. And I wish him and his family and his wife, Seema, all the best in all that life has to offer them as well, Mr. Speaker.

[11:15]

The man of many suits, the box of Crayola 64, Mr. Speaker, the member from — let's call it, armed river, Mr. Speaker — Slick Scorecard. Mr. Speaker, this member, he spoke greatly about his family and how gracious he was.

And I think we see that in how he lives his life each and every day. When he has an introduction you know it's going to be a lengthy one, because he truly loves who he is introducing, and he has stories and has experiences with, you know, many if not all of the people that are here even if they have only met for a couple of minutes.

And so I particularly liked the story that this member told on the floor of this Assembly in the past — well he's been elected about four years — so in the past year or so, and it was when he was talking about telling his students that he was going to run for politics, and they asked him which party. We can all, Mr. Speaker, just think of that story as we go through the next number of months. That's a great sign of integrity and a great sign of what you need to know about the member from armed river, Mr. Speaker.

I would share one other story about how he hooked me in a golf game, Mr. Speaker, because he's likely a scratch golfer. But he wears jeans to the golf course so you might bet with him, and I would advise you not to, Mr. Speaker, because . . . And there's a story behind that, but just be careful with the man of many suits when you find him around the golf course. You will lose.

Mr. Speaker, my introductory comments around team, when I think of team and a team player there's a number of people I think about, but first among them is the outgoing member from Kindersley.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know, I don't know if I've met many people, if any, that understand the value of a team and the role that you

play on a team like this particular member. He knows the difference between what is needed in Kindersley, Saskatchewan and Coronation Park, Regina and respects the views that come from Saskatoon Riversdale.

That's a true member of a team, Mr. Speaker, is understanding and respecting the people here you're sitting at the table with, Mr. Speaker, listening to them and supporting them when they need support. And that's what this gentleman does each and every conversation that he has with his colleagues. That's why he was elected as the deputy caucus Chair, Mr. Speaker. It's because I think very many others on this side think the very same way.

With that always comes, unfortunately or fortunately, a dash of sarcasm. And with that, Mr. Speaker, unbeknownst to me at the time when we were going through a pandemic and split up, he was, if not the captain of the Hanson Brothers team, but certainly a vocal member of what was going on there, along with a couple of others that I will speak about a bit today and maybe one at a later time.

Oh, look at this, the member from Canora-Pelly. A fellow Hanson Brother, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately a Boston Bruins fan. But, Mr. Speaker, I would just make note of the member from Canora-Pelly who served in a number of different places within government. But I want to make note of one. His work as a representative for Saskatchewan-Ukrainian relations, Mr. Speaker, something that this member took very, very seriously. Very much was engaged on and was listening to the community through a very trying time.

And, Mr. Speaker, people of Ukrainian descent — not just those that have come in the last few years — make up a tremendous portion of this province. And I would say in many of the communities that were built across Canada, as were talked about earlier, and are now being built in Saskatchewan, are very much . . . the people of Ukrainian descent are taking part in building our communities and building this province, Mr. Speaker.

And in the last number of years, with what is really an unfathomable Russian invasion of Ukraine, it's been this gentleman that has been our government representative listening to the community, Mr. Speaker, working with ministers on how we could be a safe place for refugees, Mr. Speaker, from the Ukraine. And I want to thank him most certainly for his work, competent work, and ever-so-important work in this space.

I also want to thank him for his generosity. For those that don't know, and I don't know if he's still doing it, but for many years as a member, he's renowned for his shishlik recipe. But every Christmas, Mr. Speaker, him and his family will offer a lunch to people in the surrounding community and region. And they serve a lot of people. And I think when your family asks what you want for Christmas and you say, come help me for a day so we can make lunch for the community, that's a guy I want to sit with, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Carrot River Valley, who is upset with the stronger power poles that we've been putting up, jovial, a great baker. He's tough. He's edgy. He's a great singer, Mr. Speaker, but he has a big heart. And you can see that when he stands up and immediately starts talking about his family. He finds that

very difficult, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how he sings at funerals, to be honest, Mr. Speaker.

But I would say, a number . . . I could say a number of things about this individual, but one quick story. As we know he was a crop-duster. And you know, for me to get in a plane with a fellow, I want to understand that, you know, they're pretty fussy and particular with all they do. I didn't know that Fred might be that individual until we went on a northern forestry tour. And if anybody knows Fred, he drives a black Chrysler 300. And off we go on every logging road throughout northern Saskatchewan, what it seemed like, and we got back at the end of day and there's a layer of dust on that car that thick, inside the door jambs, inside the car, on the dash, everywhere else.

The member and I, we were leaving the next morning. I can't remember where we were going, but he was picking me up in Prince Albert or somewhere like that, and he was driving and I jumped in his car. There wasn't a speck of dust in it. And I looked over and I said, Fred, I'd fly with you anywhere, man. Pardon my language. I was quoting myself. I'd say to the member, I would fly with you anywhere.

Mr. Speaker, he shows that in all he does in representing the constituents of Carrot River. He shows that in all he does with his impeccable baking that I hope the recipes will be passed on. And he shows a great degree of humility in every conversation that he has. And I want to thank him for his ever so many years of service. And we will at some point in time get him to say, go Hafford Vikings. That might be a bridge too far. I'll say it once for you. Go Wildcats. Moving on, moving on.

Moving on to my brother from another mother, the member from Yorkton. Man of faith. There's no denying that. I just watch him for 10 minutes, talk to him for two minutes. Mr. Speaker, you will never meet a stronger individual and a stronger man with his personal faith than the member from Yorkton. Faith, family, friends, work — four balls, Mr. Speaker. Work will bounce back. Don't need to say any more. That says so much.

The member from Saskatoon Northwest, also a very gracious individual, much like the member from Arm River. Seldom an introduction in this House will go by without a personal story. And this is an individual that cares so deeply about people. He's kind, he's gentle, he's caring. He brings to the floor of this Assembly a tremendous amount of experience through his career and I would say also through his personal life, in addition to following the outgoing member from Saskatoon Southeast through his career path of school divisions, municipal city council, on the floor of this Assembly, Minister of Justice.

He's a father. He's an amazing son-in-law, Mr. Speaker. And I see that first-hand as he has aging parents-in-laws in my community of Shellbrook. And, Gord, I want to thank you for what you do with them. Gord talked . . . Pardon me. The member from Saskatoon . . . Where are you from?

An Hon. Member: — Northwest.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Northwest. He talked of being a very reluctant politician. And I'd say he's doing it quite well. He's doing it very, very well.

And I want to share just one story here that is not going to be helpful for this member. We often talk of . . . Many of us have passions. Some will collect stamps. Some will collect coins. The odd one will have a car or two. But we all have a toy or two that we've collected over the years. This member has been asked, you know, what his greatest fear was. He said his greatest fear was that he would pass away and his spouse would sell all of his cars for what he told her he paid for them.

And a true friend. This member and I were having a discussion sometime after a leadership race that we had both ran in. And I remember things had gotten pretty tough with a number of events. They were pretty tough here in the province and across Canada and globally. And he looked at me and he said, "You know that leadership race? That's the best thing I never won." But I want to thank you. I want to thank you for your friendship, and it doesn't end here.

There's a number of things that you need when you lead a party and lead a government. I can remember a conversation I had about four years ago with an individual, and what really it came down to is, I said, you know what I need is, I need three things. I need clean air, I need clean water, and I need four more years out of you. Well, Mr. Speaker, we got them out of the member from Weyburn.

I would start off by saying the decision to be an MLA in grade 2 on a visit to this Assembly, that is in no way normal nor should it ever become normal. But, Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments that I'll probably talk about at the end about this member. And it has to do really with some statements he made about, you know, what it is we do here, who we work for, who we work with, and who the people are that are closest to each of us.

But I would say prior to that . . . Well let me start with this. This member, he's had university education. He has a history degree, which is really a pre-law degree. So I believe in his office he has a pre-law K.C. [King's Counsel], or pre-law degree. And I don't know if he has a pre-law K.C. or not. I don't know if he made that particular list. He's still on the waiting list for that.

But you know, this member and a few others have taught me one thing about members that maybe don't live in our capital city and need to commute here. The dedication that they have to their family — and this again is irrespective of which side of this Assembly you sit on — it's pretty tremendous. The Deputy Premier spoke a little bit about, you know, the early days of her elected career. It's pretty tremendous. And the dedication, love, and commitment to his family is most certainly always on full display with this member, in addition to his competence in any and all of the files and the work that he has done here.

And I think he has most certainly, despite his young age, 29 . . . He was elected at 26, and he's been here 18 years. But despite his young age, Mr. Speaker, he most certainly is wise beyond his years in life and is a mentor of mine and a friend.

The member from Batoche, the historian of the party. The historian of the party, the auctioneer of the party, and you will . . . second historian from Weyburn, aspiring historian. We have the historian and the aspiring historian. He hasn't quite made any comparisons to Louis Riel coming to Regina yet; however I did hear yours.

And I would just say this of this member: seldom did you go to a meeting — and the first time I learned this was actually at a school division meeting in the community of Prince Albert — where to close the meeting we have a Winston Churchill quote. And you most certainly did not disappoint in your farewell speech. As you said, and I quote, "Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all of the other forms that have been tried from time to time." Winston Churchill.

I want to read a Winston Churchill quote in honour of you. It's titled "Linchpin of the English-speaking World":

Canada is the linchpin of the English-speaking world. Canada, with those relations of friendly, affectionate intimacy with the United States on one hand, and with their unswerving fidelity to the British Commonwealth and the motherland on the other, is the link which joins together these great branches of the human family, a link which, spanning the oceans, brings the continents into their true relation and will prevent in future generations any growth of division between the proud and the happy nations of Europe and the great countries which have come into existence in the New World.

[11:30]

Really puts into perspective what we are doing here in this Legislative Assembly, across Canada, and in North America. That was Winston Churchill at Mansion House in London on September 4th, 1941, at a luncheon in honour of one Mackenzie King, the prime minister of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I would just close with this on the member from Batoche, is to quote him in my closing, "If you'll pray for me, I'll pray for you." Thank you.

A couple of comments on the member from Indian Head-Milestone. When I first came into this Assembly, I sat there. He sat, I believe, here and took most of the questions every day as he was the Health minister. That was in 2011. And I sat back there and I was watching — and I've shared this story with him many years ago — and it was a fat-stacks-of-cash scandal, waste, and we heard it all. Lean was just coming in at that point, Mr. Speaker, and he was up for many, many, many questions in this Assembly. But I also always noticed that he answered them quite competently.

And so the first question would come, and he would get up and he would, you know, be very respectful with the answer and answer the question. And the second question would come, and he would start off that way. And we saw a little bit of this in his speech theme as well; maybe didn't deteriorate but got stronger as he went along. He'd start off that way, and then he would start to do . . . And I said really what I saw is you're putting the ball on a tee. And then the third question would come and then all of the politics would pour out across the floor of the Assembly. And I was quite impressed with all of this.

And so when I explained it to him and I had a question, and I said, so if I've figured this out — and I've been here weeks or a month or two — why don't they just ask two questions? He looked at me and he said, I'm not sure but don't tell them.

Anyway the story I think, you know, after 25 years of service — 25 years of service, two and a half decades of service, Mr. Speaker — is I would compare the member from Indian Head-Milestone to a fellow by the name of Bill Missal. Always there to help. Never lets you down. Will work with you for six campaigns if necessary.

He very much was a part of me forming some of my thoughts and, you know, how I would conduct myself in this Assembly in the early days. And he always took time to explain to me . . . I remember one individual, one story is, you know, if you ever find yourself on the front page of a newspaper, and it might not be the most flattering story — and all due respect to the media because it is this way — he said, don't worry too much about it because they're already looking for a new story for tomorrow. And the moral of that is not so much about what he was saying, but don't take yourself too seriously in this place. Things change. Time changes, and that's why we're here today.

I did not know that he answered his phones as the Minister of Health in the early days. And I would advise the current ministers, and my advice to other ministers during the pandemic was, to not do that, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd just say, the advice I also heard in this member's speech was, you know, change happens. Nothing stays the same. Despite the efforts of the CACPAC [citizens against Conway political action committee], change does occur, Mr. Speaker. And I thank this member for his service. I thank him for, again yesterday in his outgoing speech, helping us, helping Saskatchewan residents find their way to what will be a very important ballot question as well. Thank you.

But if the best part of being an MLA is about the people, well then the member from Saskatoon Southeast is a cut above the rest. Dangerous no doubt if you're going to leave your phone around unlocked or your computer unlocked. And he has been known to hand out pink slips and all sorts of nefarious things. His judgment really can be called into question on many occasions. And I would say that with this member leaving this building, the building is going to be much, much safer, much safer, Mr. Speaker.

Again when I think of team, this member comes to mind. If you ever need anything, you give him a call and he will be there. He was the first official agent for this party. He ran in 2003 and started his career on the floors of this Assembly. But he was the first official agent for this party when it formed. He was the only guy that would do some free legal work for us to form the party. He must not have been too busy.

He was on the original steering committee for the Saskatchewan Party. He was on the original in 2003 when he ran the Win Saskatoon committee that we had with the member from Saskatoon Willowgrove and the former member, I believe from Saskatoon Sutherland at the time, if I'm not mistaken.

Mr. Chair, what this individual teaches us is to work hard. Don't take yourself seriously. Keep your telephones and computers locked. But always have fun and enjoy everything you do, because it is only for a period of time that you are going to have the opportunity to do it. Thank you.

The Deputy Premier. The proudest moment . . . well, we'll get to that. When I was going to run for this position, I had an individual — sits to my left — tell me, what are you worried about? It'll be easy. That's worse advice than the member from Saskatoon Southeast is giving. And I don't think anybody in this Assembly believes that Donna Harpauer cried for the first six months that she arrived. There isn't a chance. Not even after she had a tree stolen from her from the former premier, which I think we should all take a lesson from is, just don't mess with her.

She subscribes to the emotional school of feelings and empathy that I think Reg Downs has, and that's two feelings: the first one is rage and the second one is indifference. But I say that jokingly because my friend, the Deputy Premier, our Minister of Finance, I know her to have a tremendously large heart. She's loyal. She's a loving friend, and one that I can certainly — at least so far — have always been able to count on. And I say that because we fight every day. We haven't agreed on one thing yet. But we find the best place, Mr. Speaker.

Humility, as I said earlier, is important. Not taking yourself too seriously, but humility and understanding who you serve. And I listened intently when I heard after 25 years of service the member for Humboldt-Watrous said one of the most proud moments she had was the introduction of the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program, for all the reasons that she had indicated. Out of all the files and all the commitments and all the service and all the successes, that was the proudest moment of this individual.

And so I would say it is with deep sorrow, actually, that we see all of these members and the Deputy Premier leave. But to their families, it warms my heart to know that they are coming home to spend much more time with those that they love and those that love them.

In closing . . . There was an article here, and I think you could have a similar analogy to the formation of this party many, many years ago. But there was an article that was written here. It was by the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] on August the 31st of 2017.

So at that point in time, former premier Wall had announced that he wasn't going to be running again. There was a leadership race that was formulating, and there was some astute academics — one is no longer with us unfortunately — that had put forward some predictions on what would happen after a leadership race. And here I quote: "The leader presumably will want to put a fresh face on government, so we'll see another shift probably at the end of January or early October." Goes on to say, pointing out that "Donna Harpauer, the newly appointed Finance minister, may not even have time to prepare or table a budget," as she was newly appointed as the Minister of Finance.

Well I'd say, in her speech, the Minister of Finance had said that she was also an unlikely politician. She'd also said that she had always felt somewhat underestimated in her career. Well I would add one more piece to that, is she also found herself, after so many elections, unbeaten, Mr. Speaker. Unbeaten in her constituency. I think you can find stories that would be very similar to the formation of this party.

Mr. Speaker, change is not easy. It's not easy in our families; it's

not easy in our careers. In fact, over the last two days I'd say it felt a little bit abrupt, as we've been working together. I've been a part of this caucus for over 13 years now, and it just seems like we are losing so much for myself personally and I think losing so much of our caucus and, in fairness, losing so much from the floor of this Assembly. We're losing people with such historical knowledge. They have experience. They're incredibly competent individuals, and they have a memory and an ability to keep things in context as to what the work is we're doing here.

But I would say, and I would add to that that we are, we are losing so much, but there's much coming. Over the course of the next number of months there is much coming. Since 1905, as the member from Batoche had mentioned, there's been 776 MLAs serve on the floor of this Assembly. That's an average of 26, changing each and every four years, as we are closing out the 29th legislature. Ourselves as a party . . . And when I was elected, there were 16 new MLAs that arrived on the floor of the Assembly, and I believe one across the way at that point in time; 2016 was 17. This last election was a few less — because I pulled the clean air, clean water thing, Mr. Speaker — was 13 and we have about 16 I believe retiring from the floor of this Assembly today that we're aware of.

I would say that we were all new MLAs at one point. I'm reminded of a story Bob Bjornerud told of his early days in 1991 I believe where he came bounding up the steps with an empty briefcase, walked into the front doors of this beautiful building and the security said to him, who are you and where are you going? He says, well I'm a new MLA and I'm here to find my office. And he said he let me in, and he said I was lost in that building for two weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all had that experience of the awe of walking up the steps of this building and then ultimately being lost in the building for two weeks. And then really sitting in this Assembly and watching and learning and allowing ourselves to be mentored, and fortunate that there are people that would mentor us.

Some of the most significant files that have been held in government by, I would say, leaders — traditional leaders, historical leaders of this province — I think obviously of our former premier Brad Wall. But I also think of Roy Romanow. I think of Tommy Douglas. I think of Woodrow Lloyd, associated with the Douglas government. I think of Walter Scott, who commissioned the building of this beautiful building. They were all part of a renewal process at some point in time.

The average length of service of an MP [Member of Parliament] or elected member across the nation of Canada is about eight years. So despite the CACPAC's comments yesterday, things do change. They don't stay the same, even if they seem like they do. The renewal of any organization, including a political party or collectively all of us in how we serve on the floor of this Assembly, it's difficult at times but it's necessary, Mr. Speaker.

I want to close with a couple of comments on people. And I would say that renewal is all about people. First, the people we work for, our constituents. Collectively we represent every Saskatchewan resident on the floor of this Assembly. And I would say, I'd like to think that we represent them well. And I do think we represent them well, Mr. Speaker.

In the case of retiring members, we're losing 200 years of experience of that representation. And I would say that in doing so, each of us understand — and certainly our families understand — this isn't a nine-to-five job. It certainly is not a nine-to-five job, in particular if you're living away from the capital city. And the member from Cumberland would know that, the member from Humboldt, and you're raising your children.

Being an MLA, I liken it to a personal relationship actually, to bring it back to people. It's a relationship though that isn't with one person; it's with so many people. And this is what we heard about over the course of the last two days. And I would say that you get out of that relationship exactly what you get out of any relationship — it's what you put into it. And we are seeing a whole lot of people walking out this door that have put in so very much. And we heard about that and their relationships over the course of the last couple of days.

The people you work with, that's our elected members. I talked about team a little bit earlier. And I think beyond colleagues, we become friends, even maybe across the aisle at times, Mr. Speaker, as we collectively represent Saskatchewan residents. Yes, each of you. Actually there was a comment made, again from the member from Weyburn. He talked about how you might be forgotten when you walk out those doors. That's true to some degree with all politicians. And I think it's not cliché. I think there is a part to that. And I would say that it's on us to not let that happen. It's on us to keep those relationships strong. It's on us to realize that we get out of this relationship exactly what we put into it.

[11:45]

I want to just mention — and again irrespective of who's in government — another group of people that we work with, and that's the entire public service and what they do. And I often say, and I don't just say it, we have the strongest public service in the nation of Canada. And I tell that to them when I meet them, each and every time. They can be proud of the work they do, and that's irrespective of who's sitting on this side of the Assembly.

Another group of people, but individuals — and we heard about this over the course of the last couple of days many, many times — is the staff that work in this building, whether they be part of the operations of this place or whether they be the ministerial staff. And I encourage everyone to say a thank you as you find your way into summer and into election season, because they are our colleagues as well. And they are every bit as committed to what's happening on the floor of this Assembly and committed to improving their community in their province as any of us are. And the friendships that we form with them, and you heard about them, are very, very real.

And then the people closest to us, our family and our friends. This includes our colleagues and staff as they become, as the member of Kindersley often says, extended family. But we are all part of a family. We're a son or a daughter. We, you know, may have a spouse or a partner. We may be parents. And as I say many times, and I think it's important — that's why I stand up and say it — is I don't believe there's ever been a member that's served on the floor of this Assembly that hasn't had the love and support of their family. And my goodness, has that been evident in the speeches that we've listened to the last couple of days.

I heard this from a number of members, that they really . . . You know, as they prepare to not run again and leave this Assembly, they'll take the memories of each of the individuals that they have worked with, and they're going to take a piece of that with them. It really is forming, in some ways, who they are. Well they should know that each of us that remain or hope to remain, we're also taking some of you. And this Assembly, I would say, is taking a piece of you as we continue to work that you can proudly say you were a part of.

So I want to personally thank each and every one of you for stepping up and serving, whether that service was short or historically long in some cases. So to Jennifer, to Gary, Dana, Ken, Marv, Terry, Hugh, Gord, Doyle, Fred, Greg, Dustin, Delbert, Don Morgan, Don McMorris, and Donna — thank you. Saskatchewan is a better place for your service.

A couple of final thank yous, Mr. Speaker, before we depart and close this session out, find our way to the election trail. Mr. Speaker, I want to just take a moment to thank you and your staff for the work that you do in the operations of this place, the table officers, all of those that work in Legislative Assembly Services. Your work is equally challenging and your dedication to bettering this province and bettering the environment of where we can debate, and previous- and post-elected members will debate as well.

To the legislative security, to the Sergeant-at-Arms, I say thank you. To those that are working in Hansard and broadcast services, I say thank you for what you do. The cafeteria staff, the custodians throughout the building. And everyone else who keeps this building working and functioning really on a day-to-day . . . It's a beautiful, beautiful building, Mr. Speaker, but I think it's an equally impactful building when you consider the work that happens here, has happened here for over 100 years. And it's only because of everyone that keeps this building functioning that that is the case.

The media in the press gallery, I will once every four-year cycle say thank you to you. But I do thank you. Part of what happens here in a democracy — and it's, as Winston Churchill said, an important part of this — is the work that the opposition does in capturing your eye and making that statement, that front-page story that the member from Indian Head-Milestone had told me to not pay attention to very much because you're likely making another one for the next day. But I do thank you for your work in communicating to the Saskatchewan public. I don't always agree with it. And if you ever want to run your stories by someone for just a little bit of editing, I always would make myself available. But thank you for your work.

To the opposition members and all the staff that are over there, the work that you do is important. I don't like it, and I don't agree with it, but it's so important. In the scope of a democracy, you need to hold the government in account. That is the job of the opposition, Mr. Speaker, and I would say that you do it competently. You do it very well, and in particular to the Leader of the Opposition that I know is serving in this Assembly for all the right reasons — everyone is, Mr. Speaker — but I want to single out the Leader of the Opposition for the work that she does.

It's not easy work, I know. Well I don't know, and I hope I never

know. But I know leading a party, Mr. Speaker, on the floor of this Assembly, and working with everyone and coming to points of agreement, points of direction is not . . . I wish her not luck but all the best over the course of the next number of months as we find our way to vie for — not buy, vie — for Saskatchewan votes over the course of this summer.

This place doesn't function without our House leadership teams. It just won't. And so for all of that might watch on Hansard and think that the members on the government side and members of the opposition never, ever speak, I'm here to inform them that some of them speak every day. And this House wouldn't function without those conversations. And so I want to thank both leadership teams on both sides of the House.

And last but not least, I want to thank all colleagues, all MLAs on the floor of the Assembly for your service. And it hopefully will be continued service for those that are running again. You can be very proud of the work you do on behalf of your constituents. You can be very proud of the work that I think we collectively do on behalf of all Saskatchewan residents.

And sorry, that wasn't the last one. The last one is this: to your families, through you, please say thank you to your spouses, your partners, to your children, to your parents. I know we aren't here without their support. And I would just appreciate if you would thank them on behalf of myself for allowing and supporting you to do the work that you do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Request leave, Mr. Speaker, to make an end-of-session statement.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested to make an end-of-session statement. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a privilege and an honour to be able to rise today on this last day of not only the spring session, but the last day of the twenty-ninth legislature and enter in some remarks. And I thank the Premier for his remarks.

And you know, looking back to the start of the twenty-ninth legislature, 2020, we've all . . . We've been through some things, certainly some that I think we all might care to never go through again. I think of COVID, the loss there, the changes that were necessitated. We've seen protests; we've seen barricades; seen a lot of people coming to their legislature and bringing their needs and their concerns forward.

In the last couple of days we've heard a lot of members who are not seeking re-election give what they know to be their last speech in this Assembly. And to all of them on both sides, Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you for your service. I probably listened to an unhealthy amount of them at times. You know, as the Premier has noted, there will always be disagreement, but we don't have a healthy democracy if we don't have the ability to debate and to debate freely.

I am going to single out a couple of members. I will say I've got a couple fewer who are leaving, but some important and valuable team members and experience nonetheless.

Say first of all to the member for Saskatoon University — I wrote in first names in my notes, Mr. Speaker, so I'm going to endeavour not to use them — someone who ran in 2016 and lost by a slim margin, but she was not deterred. And I think anyone who knows this member would not be surprised by that. She kept at it and won her seat in 2020.

And in her maiden speech she talked about the many people who helped her win this seat, as we all owe a debt to those who put us here. But I want to quote something that she wrote about her mom:

[She] . . . impressed upon me the value of service to others, especially those who are less fortunate in our society. She also taught me to always consider other people's perspectives, which showed me the value in listening to others and striving to [listen to others] . . . and understand their needs. I hope these lessons will serve me well in public office.

And, Mr. Speaker, indeed they have. The rights of workers, the rights of unions, the economic and reproductive rights of women, rights of gender and sexual-diverse people in our province — this is a member who consistently shows up on the side of those oppressed and less fortunate. And the member has never failed to find the courage to speak up, even when it's hard and even when it's uncomfortable. And, Mr. Speaker, that is an important trait. And I have no doubt that she will continue to speak truth to power, and I wish her and Brian every happiness in their future.

Mr. Speaker, a few words about our friend and brother, the member from Cumberland, someone who had a big week last week, celebrating both a birthday and a 29th anniversary — he and his wife, Sandra — and he gave his last member's statement as the MLA for Cumberland. And we will miss him as well.

Someone who was elected in 2008 in a highly contested by-election, already a respected town councillor, school board trustee, and business owner, he fought doggedly and won that nomination. And I think during that nomination he already showed the kind of heart and tenacity that have characterized his time in this Assembly.

That same tenacity and that heart was on full display many times, but especially when he brought forth the Saskatchewan strategy for suicide prevention. Now anyone who knows this member knows that he is not much for political theatre. He sought nothing other with this bill than change, because he knew and he knows how high the stakes are for the people that he serves.

And I think we all know this bill failed not once but twice, but that did not stop him. And I don't think that surprises anyone either. And I know how hard, and it's been mentioned by the Premier, how hard he fought both on the floor of this Assembly, but in conversation with people — other members and community members — to bring this bill forward again, a bill that finally passed in June of 2021.

And that was a good day. A victory, but speaking plainly, not the

one that he wanted because he didn't just want that bill to pass, Mr. Speaker. He wanted people in his community to stop dying. He wanted the grief and the funerals and the loss of life to stop. And to my brother from Cumberland I say, please know that we will continue to take up that work for you in here and out in the community. And we owe that to you and to the families that you fought so hard for.

Now I had a number of opportunities, chances to do a few road trips with the member from Cumberland — along Hanson Lake Road, out to Creighton, and up to Sandy Bay and Buffalo Narrows. And a few things. On those trips it was really hard to tell . . . He has a great sense of humour, and it was really hard to tell when he was joking. Sometimes he would string me out for half an hour at a time before I realized he was telling me a joke — one memorable plane ride up to Hatchet Lake.

[12:00]

But another thing about those trips is that when you're travelling with this member, it was clear how much he loved the people in the constituency he served, and how much they loved him in return. And, Mr. Speaker, if we can say that at the end of the day, that's something to be very proud of. I know how hard he worked to gain and maintain that love and trust, and I know he won't stop. And I wish him and Sandra all the best.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't have remarks prepared for all of the members on the government side that are leaving, but I do have a few remarks to put into the record. First of all, to the member for Riversdale, we wish you all the best with your health and everything that is coming up for you and your family in the coming days and months.

To the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy . . . He's got socks on today, Mr. Speaker. You know, recently I had the opportunity to sit down with the member and his oldest son, Jack, and we talked some baseball. And that always wins a lot of love, Mr. Speaker. But yesterday when he talked about his kids in this Assembly . . . I don't often cry when members on the other side are speaking — not certainly out of any sense of other than anger perhaps — but that was a very touching moment. And I wish you all the best.

I'm wondering who I'm going to pick on next. To the member for Saskatoon Northwest, someone I served against, opposite on the Education file at a very, very difficult time. And I told this story behind your back so I might as well tell it here. The fights are real. People want to know, when you're in there and you're angry, are you really angry? Yeah, I really, really am sometimes.

But you know what? During that time, a time when none of us had a handbook, I thought a lot about grace and extending, extending that to ourselves and all of us in here and the people of the province, the medical professionals who were doing their best, those in schools. You know, Mr. Speaker, I had the member's phone number. I try not to overuse it. But when I picked up the phone and brought forward concerns, it didn't happen on the floor of this legislature. Those concerns were taken into account and I'd like to think that that collaboration made a difference. And I want to thank you for that.

To the member, briefly, from Saskatoon Southeast, yeah, don't leave your phone out around him. That's good advice. And yeah,

some of those dust-ups we had, especially in committee, I don't think I've ever been more — and you should ask my husband how angry I can get — I've never been more angry sometimes. But you know what? Also I've heard you talk about the importance of safety. You've won the respect of people who I have a great deal of respect for, and I can see your shoulders a bit lighter these days, as I remarked to you recently. Sincere best wishes for you and for Sandy and everything that you're going to take on in the hope . . . maybe more trips to Jollibee's, I'm not sure. But wish you all the best.

Very briefly, to the member for Indian Head-Milestone, my home constituency. I don't know if folks know that I knew Mickey way back — and I guess I get to say nicknames — way back when I was a kid and he played for the Lang Knights. I will say this about that member. When you introduced my mom and dad in this Assembly you put me to shame. It's probably the nicest introduction that I've ever heard of them. And if you're okay by my parents, that's not nothing. And thank you for your service.

To the member for Humboldt-Watrous, the longest serving female cabinet minister in the country: as a woman in leadership you're owed that respect. And you know, watching you look up at little Joy in the galleries, I hope you get to spend a lot of time with Joy and all of your grandkids.

And that extends to all those members, all members who are not seeking re-election. This is a difficult job, and I sincerely thank you all for your service and wish you success and happiness in whatever you take on next.

One more, Mr. Speaker. I want to say a thanks to you. As all members on the floor of this Assembly, our job is to represent and uphold the interests of our constituents, and that goes for all of us. But you've got an added role as Speaker. In addition, you have the responsibility of upholding the rules and traditions of this Assembly. And taking on this role at the height of the pandemic I know this has been challenging, but it is important and I want to thank you for your leadership of this Assembly.

The rules and the traditions of this Assembly exist to uphold our democracy and to serve to instill and protect the confidence of people in this institution, and that is a big responsibility. I want to thank you and all of those in your office. I saw Nulee up here. To Sheila, Twyla and that new baby, I want to say thank you to all of you.

I want to say thank you to Iris and the Clerks and the procedural staff for serving us so well, Hansard and broadcast services, the Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall and John — the LDSU [legislative district security unit], the cafeteria with a special shout-out to Linda who always takes such good care of us, and all those who work in this building — too many to name.

And I too want to thank the media for their role in covering the proceedings. The role of the media and informed voters is crucial to our democracy. The accountability that that provides, even if it's uncomfortable for us, it is a very important role and I want to thank you all for serving.

I want to say thanks to the staff in both caucus offices, all those who work in the constituency offices, and party staff. All of these

roles are crucial. I want to say a special thank you to my chief of staff who we dragged back from thinking he'd left this building. It could happen to one of you. I don't know. To Mitch and Brock and Cheryl, who I introduced earlier today, to Jannet, to Landen, to Chris, one of our newest members, to Zoé, Kelsey, Emily, and Ron, you serve us very well.

And speaking of serving well, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a special thank you to this team, this team of Saskatchewan NDP MLAs for not only how you serve in this building but more importantly how you serve and you connect out in the community. I think that is evident with the trust that you've built with people right across this province. Now there aren't very many members opposite who've served in opposition, and you don't know until you know, how hard they work, a disproportionate effort and a disproportionate impact that belie the smaller-than-we'd-like numbers.

But you know what? I think this province has always liked a good underdog story. You guys, as our House Leader said very, very well, there's been so many moments that have made me and this team proud. But during the emergency debate — I might be paraphrasing — after 40 hours of debate, standing up for the rights of some of the most vulnerable in this province, something that I still hear remarked upon time and time again, I believe the House Leader said thank you because what has happened here is this team found its feet, found its voice, and it solidified us. And I want to say thank you again to each of you for doing the work that you do. I'm very proud of you all.

And I want to thank the Premier and all of the MLAs for their service. As I've already said, the differences sometimes are very real, and it's the reason we have different political parties. It's the reason we have a democratic system. And we all have a role to play in this democracy, holding each other . . . being accountable to the people that we serve. And I know we all pay a price for that, especially time spent with family. I want to say thank you to the families of all MLAs who provide support and forgo time with their loved ones so that they can serve.

And today as we wrap up this session and get out across the province ahead of the next election, I want to say how excited I am for that time. Because that truly is the best part of this job, getting out across the province and connecting with people, hard-working, wonderful people who call this province home. And I think we have agreement there. There is opportunity and hope in every corner of this province, and it is the people of the province ultimately who will decide and it is who we all ultimately serve.

I want to say thank you again to the Premier, to all colleagues here, and I want to wish you safe travels home and safe travels over the summer. Thank you.

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As leader of Sask United Party, it is with a heart full of gratitude and a spirit brimming with hope that I stand before you today, because change doesn't happen for no reason.

Thank you to the residents of Saskatchewan that we are privileged to serve in our beloved province. As we must

remember, we are the servants to the people and the causes that matter to them, each and every one of them.

I have many people to thank in this building for their dedication. They've been a pleasure to work with, from the cleaning staff, House services, procedural services, libraries, building staff, Sergeant of Arms, cafeteria ladies, Ray the mailman, security who welcome me into the building every day with a bright smile, the Clerks, the Pages, the ministerial staff who work well with my constituent assistant, the information technology gentlemen who occupy the space beside my office and welcome me every morning with a smile as well, the people in Hansard, the wonderful media — I do appreciate you.

And to you, Mr. Speaker, thank you. Thank you for your years of service and dedication to the province of Saskatchewan.

To my Assembly colleagues, thank you for lessons learned and friendships formed and given. Good luck in future endeavours. May you all find fulfillment and peace in your next chapter of life. Thank you and God bless this beautiful province and the people that we are privileged to serve.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Session Adjournment

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That when this Assembly adjourns at the end of this sitting day, it shall stand adjourned to the date and time set by Mr. Speaker upon the request of the government, and that Mr. Speaker shall give each member seven clear days' notice, if possible, of such date and time.

I so move.

[12:15]

The Speaker: — Before I ask for approval of that motion, I have a few comments. As we close this spring session, there are many people that I would like to acknowledge: the Clerk's office, Iris Lang, Ken Ring, Kathy Burianyk, Rob Park, Anne Drake, Danielle Humble-Selinger, Miranda Gudereit, the Pages, the staff of the Legislative Assembly. Thanks to you all for your amazing teams for extraordinary work that you do to serve the members.

Special thanks to Lyall Frederiksen, Sergeant-at-Arms, and his staff. To Steve Bata and his team, we very much appreciate what you do, always on call to respond and accommodate the building needs of the members and staff at any time.

To Hansard team, broadcast services, the committees branch, we appreciate your many hours of recording, documenting, and facilitating the legislative process. Not always an easy job, especially during heated debate.

Thank you to my staff: Sheila Sterling; Twyla Wilson; Nulee Menegbo; the summer student, Danica Rodenbush; for their support, especially during session when things can get chaotic.

Thanks for keeping things running smoothly in the office.

Thank you, Janet, my constituency assistant, for your diligence and hard work for the last 12 years. We have travelled many miles, serving the constituents of Biggar-Sask Valley. Thank you to my constituents for having faith in me as your MLA, electing me six times. It has been an honour and a pleasure to serve.

I would like to thank my wife, Cindy, and my family for their ongoing support for my role as an MLA and a Speaker. Our families make great sacrifices so that we may serve the citizens of the province. Thank you.

When a member is elected by his peers as Speaker, they give up their voice in the Assembly. They take an oath of impartiality to serve the needs of all members and parties. I would like to read the oath that I took when I became Speaker:

Members of the Legislative Assembly,

I wish to express my gratitude, thanks, and humble acknowledgement of the high honour an Assembly has conferred on me. While I leave the floor of this Assembly to take the Speaker's Chair, I leave behind all political partisan biases in order that I may discharge with impartiality to all and to the best of my ability the various and important duties pertaining to the high office of Speaker.

It will be my aim and duty to uphold the principles and traditions of the Assembly and secure for each member the right to express his or her opinions within the limits necessary to preserve decorum; to recognize the rights and privileges of the hon. members, the political groups, and the Assembly itself; to facilitate the transaction of the public business in an orderly manner; and above all, to seek to be fair and impartial in the decisions you entrust in me.

I carried out my duties despite the behaviour of the government leadership, which I will now take this opportunity to explain the challenges that I've had as Speaker.

The signs of inappropriate behaviour by the Government House Leader took place with a former Speaker. The Government House Leader, MLA for Meadow Lake, bragged that he could get the Speaker to rule in any way that he wanted. There's plenty of evidence that did take place. The Government House Leader would text the Speaker how he should rule on a regular basis. The Speaker resigned and ran federally.

Speaker Mark Docherty would not bow to the intimidation from the Government House Leader. Mark said he'd just shut off his cell phone. While I worked with Mark on the Board of Internal Economy, the Government House Leader was talking about having the Speaker Docherty removed.

When I became Speaker, the intimidating and harassing text messages began immediately, trying to influence my rulings. My experience with the Government House Leader in the Chamber includes threatening gestures. Whenever I ruled against him during session, he would start yelling at me and stand up and flash his suit jacket and storm out.

An example of inappropriate behaviour and attempting to

influence me as the Speaker is one of the hundreds of text messages the Government House Leader sent. The example of one of these text messages was sent on March 22nd, 2023, and I quote, “That’s an absolute bullshit ruling. Completely wrong and Iris will tell you that.” Iris, referring to the Clerk. I’ll say it again. March 22nd, 2023, from the Government House Leader concerning a ruling that I made: “That’s an absolute bullshit ruling. Completely wrong and Iris will tell you that.”

It soon got back to me that my removal as Speaker was discussed on a regular basis in the government caucus. Last fall the Government House Leader stopped sending inappropriate text messages to me, but continued sending them to the Clerk. The Government House Leader handed over the duty of texting me to the Deputy Government House Leader, MLA for Estevan. She especially harassed me during the emergency debate on the parental rights motion. And I would like to read into the record a series of messages from the member from Estevan during that debate.

On Monday the 16th she texts, “Should she be speaking to the motion in front of her, sitting hours? Just curious what leeway she had, or has. Thank you.”

“She is not on the motion. She will have an opportunity to speak to this when she actually speaks to the bill.”

“Once again if you want MS to speak to the bill, we will have a chance but he needs to be speaking to the motion of extended hours and rules. Thank you.”

“State of health care. This is nothing to do with the motion. Sorry to keep harping.”

On October 17th she texts, “It’s been pretty good today. Can you ask her to talk to the bill, please?” I replied once. I said I did. And then she replied, “But she is not listening. This is not about health care. The bill, please. This has nothing to do with the bill. Can you please bring her back to the bill?”

Thursday, October 19th she texted me, “Are you going to bring her back to the bill? Think about this. You going to bring her back to the bill?”

That’s when I got up, as I’ve done many times, and handed the Chair over to the Deputy Speaker. And as I went out that door and went down to the end, I’m going to go out by the government lounge — like I do because it’s the shortest route to my office — there was a staffer, a government staffer sitting in a chair. The only person out there.

And as I went by the government lounge, as I passed the government lounge, Reg Downs, special advisor to the Premier, came out of the lounge and lunged at me, nearly hitting me and stamped his feet very aggressively.

It was obvious there was communication between the Government Deputy House Leader, the government staffer, and Reg Downs who was waiting inside the government caucus lounge. This was not the first time I was threatened like this. Another MLA rushed me at a party function and came very close to head-butting me.

The Government House Leader, the MLA for Meadow Lake, showed signs of inappropriate behaviour from the time he was first elected, misleading statements and out-and-out lies. He’s been called out numerous times. He expects his staff to go to his home, pick up his clothes. He has trouble keeping staff. There’s a revolving door of staff coming and going.

But more disturbing is his obsession with guns and his use of intimidation both verbally and physically. His desire to get permission to carry a handgun in the Legislative Assembly is particularly disturbing. Another incident reported by a former special constable was when the Government House Leader flaunted the rules concerning weapons when he brought a hunting rifle into the Legislative Building. He owns many weapons including a .223 AR-style 4-shot clip lightweight which looks like an assault weapon. Weapons like these can be easily converted to more than four shots.

As I stated before, my experience with the Government House Leader includes threatening gestures whenever I rule against him in the Assembly. He will start yelling at me and standing up and flashing his suit jacket. As the gestures and behaviour became more aggressive, I worried that he might be carrying a handgun. My concerns over his mental stability and his obsession with guns was only confirmed when he heckled after the passing of the motion to devolve all relevant parts of the *Firearms Act* to the province. He twice yelled, open carry, open carry next.

Many people have asked me what I plan to do after politics. I have an opportunity to participate in international electoral observation missions around the world. But first before I travel thousands of miles to support democracies facing challenges worldwide in recent decades with the resurgence of populism and the increase in popularity of leaders with autocratic tendencies, I’m going to carry out the remainder of my term as Speaker right here in Saskatchewan, championing the electoral process and continue being the custodian of this institution and defend and protect our democracy.

Saskatchewan is blessed with wonderful people, whether they are Indigenous or descendants of immigrants or newcomers who have only been living in Saskatchewan for a few years. Saskatchewan is also blessed with rich agricultural land, vast natural resources, and a first-class entrepreneur spirit. Saskatchewan deserves a government that reflects those values, our province’s values of honesty and integrity.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands to the call of the Chair. I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — The Deputy 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: — This House now stands to the call of the Chair.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:27.]

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. Gene Makowsky
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Education

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

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. Tim McLeod
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

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

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

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

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Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Energy and Resources

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

Hon. Laura Ross
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for
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Hon. Everett Hindley
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Hon. Gordon Wyant
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