



FIRST SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

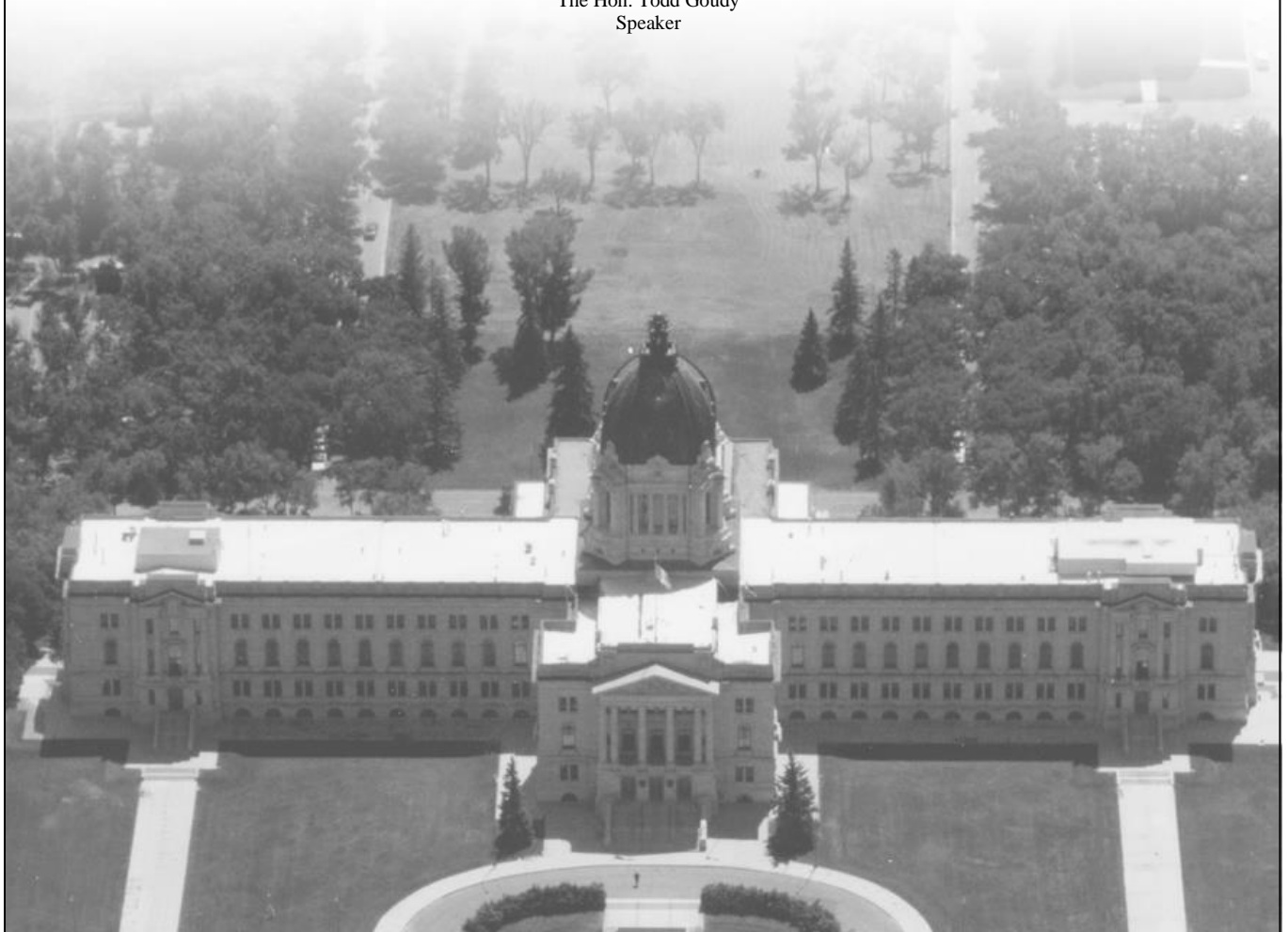
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

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The Hon. Todd Goudy
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
1st Session — 30th Legislature

Lieutenant Governor — Her Honour the Honourable Bernadette McIntyre, S.O.M.

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

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Kropf , Barret — Dakota-Arm River (SP)	Young , Hon. Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Laliberte , Leroy — Athabasca (NDP)	

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Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 34; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 27

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce 19 students from the Riverbend Colony just north of Saskatoon near Petrofka bridge. Associated with the students are a number of parent chaperones, Mr. Speaker, as well as a couple of teachers. We have Lori Woelke and Tayona Wheler that have joined the students here today and join them every day in their school located in Riverbend.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to be through that school on two occasions. One, before it was finished, when we were walking through as it was being built. And then two, I believe, with the Speaker of the day — who may also be present here — on the Speaker's classroom tour, where Mr. Dan D'Autremont and myself had the opportunity to spend the day. I believe it was with the grade 8 class at that point in time if I remember correctly as well. Beautiful school, Mr. Speaker, a gymnasium, bursting at the seams from what I understand as the population is growing at Riverbend, Mr. Speaker.

So let me, in addition to welcoming these students and asking everyone else to join me in welcoming them, I want to thank not only the students but their families and the parents and more broadly everyone at Riverbend for all they contribute back to the colony.

They've been great friends of not only myself since 1993. It was the summer that I spent in Waldheim, and that was the summer Riverbend was actually being constructed and built. If we go back a couple of decades — and I'm dating myself, Mr. Speaker — but the friendship between the Wollmans and the Grosses and the Moe family is multi-generational, Mr. Speaker. And I point to the mayor of Parkside who has been and had great friends from Leask and then Riverbend over a half a century now, close to a century actually, Mr. Speaker.

And so to all of the students and their families, I ask everyone to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Leroy Laliberte: — Mr. Speaker, requesting leave for extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Leroy Laliberte: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say welcome to some visitors that we have from the far North sitting in the Speaker's gallery here today. We have some friends that

have travelled a long ways to be here from both Athabasca and the Cumberland constituency. I want to say tînisi, ?edlânet'e, thank you for being here today.

I had the opportunity to meet with them this morning, with the Ya' thi Néné Lands and Resources — I know that, you know, my Dene's a little off. But I really did appreciate having them here today and had also a meeting with me and my colleague from Cumberland and also other colleagues of this caucus.

I want to say their names in the Assembly today as well, Mr. Speaker. It's really important to have their names mentioned in here. I would like to say welcome to Garrett Schmidt, Celeste Robillard, Tina Giroux-Robillard, Keesha Martin, chief of Black Lake Denesuline First Nation Coreen Sayazie, John Toutsaint, Madelyn Denechezhe, Mary Denechezhe, Archie Disain, Christopher Toutsaint, Claire Larocque, the mayor of Stony Rapids and good friend of mine Daniel Powder, Carol Daniels, Vina Powder.

And they also had obviously some people to take turns with them travelling. It's been a long drive for a lot of them to be here.

This morning also I would like to say that I really appreciated the conversation that we'd had with them today as well, Mr. Speaker, because they spoke about protection of their land, which is something that's really important. Something that I've mentioned quite often in here since our fall sitting. And it was to protect the land, promote the people, and to work in unity, which is working together. And that's what we do in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's something that's really important.

So with that, I want to say marci cho selot'iné. I really appreciate having you guys here. Mr. Speaker, I'm requesting all members to join me in welcoming this group from the far North, and welcome them all to their legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Travis Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the member opposite and welcome all of the guests that I absolutely cannot see at all. But they are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very pleased to introduce all of them here today.

They are from the Ya' thi Néné Lands and Resources, a very proud organization, Mr. Speaker, that represents seven Athabasca Basin communities in our wonderful northern Saskatchewan. I've had the privilege, Mr. Speaker, of meeting with YNLR [Ya' thi Néné Lands and Resources] on a number of occasions as we discuss key priorities for the communities they represent, and I learn more about their business partnerships and their culture.

Joining us here today is the executive director Garrett Schmidt; administrative and communication assistant Celeste Robillard; contract manager Tina Giroux-Robillard; YNLR Indigenous and protected area coordinator Keesha Martin; chief of Black Lake First Nation Coreen Sayazie; councillor with Black Lake John Toutsaint; councillor Madelyn Denechezhe of Hatchet Lake; YNLR board chair Mary Denechezhe; board member Archie

Disain and Christopher Toutsaint; mayor of Camsell Portage Daniel Powder; Carol Daniels, Vina Powder, Claire Larocque. And of course, Mr. Speaker, there are some very familiar faces: Jason Wall, Joel Peterson, and former Speaker Dan D'Autremont.

We had a great conversation and a fantastic meeting this morning, Mr. Speaker. And learning so much about their communities and their honest desire to create opportunities for so many young people in their home, so a great conversation, Mr. Speaker.

They're going to be hosting a reception this evening, so going to ask all members to attend. And please join me in welcoming these people to this, their Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Requesting leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I also want to join in the members here today in welcoming some members from the far North. As I said in the meeting this morning, some of them would have known me from my days as a SaskTel technician when I was climbing poles and installing phones and internet in some of their communities. And I'll tell you, the chief of Black Lake's husband is an excellent shot at archery. When I opened the door to install the phones, there he was fully drawn, making sure that he was ready for his latest caribou hunt. And by my understanding he is still just as good a hunter as he has ever been.

And while I'm on my feet I just wanted to quickly . . . As a SaskTel tech in the area, learning the names of folks was always great. And so for the folks I know, I'm going to do my best here as well: Madelyn Denechezhe, Mary Denechezhe, Archie Disain, and Chris Toutsaint, welcome to your legislature.

And I just want to say that in my remarks yesterday, Mr. Speaker, you might have recalled me saying that the richness of the North is not only the resources but the culture, and that we're a people that believe that we are one of the land, not ruler of the land. And it's clear to see that the advocacy and the passion that they bring for their home communities is there.

I was glad to . . . maybe we'll have to keep playing ping-pong with the North. We drove up there. And I'll repeat that: we drove up there on the road up to Black Lake, and my understanding is they've drove down here. So that's 15 hours, Mr. Speaker, to come to their Legislative Assembly and advocate on behalf of the citizens that they serve, Saskatchewan citizens, Mr. Speaker, from the farthest north that you can go, right to Camsell Portage, Saskatchewan. And so I just want all members to join me in welcoming them to their provincial legislature and thank them for the service that they do for their community.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I want to join not only with members opposite but the Minister of Environment in welcoming these leaders from Ya' thi Néné Lands and Resources, a development in the North. And thank you for making the trek to come to our capital city and to our Assembly here and really, in essence, host the MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] in their Assembly, Mr. Speaker, which I think speaks volumes to the democratic process that we have in this province and across this nation.

I do want to pick up on just a comment from the member from Cumberland when he referenced the far North. That is true, Mr. Speaker, and the reason that we can refer to a 15-hour drive to Black Lake, for instance, as the far North is because there is uneducated fellows like myself that come to the Legislative Assembly and claim to be from the North.

And I'll just make note of we have Dan D'Autremont, Jason Wall, and Joel Peterson with this group of northern leaders, far Northern leaders.

And Dan and I have long had the conversation. Dan had informed me that the North starts at the No. 1 Highway. I said no, that's not actually correct, Dan. I said the North starts at Saskatoon, of which I was corrected by a friend of mine, says no, actually the centre of the province is at Molanosa on the northeast edge of Montreal Lake, and so the North is beyond that. And so even myself, a four, four-and-a-half hour drive to Regina weekly, I am nowhere near a far Northern resident of this province.

And so I say that to put some perspective into the effort that it takes for our far Northern leaders, and I say that with all due respect, Mr. Speaker, coming here to Regina to host their elected members in their Legislative Assembly. And I'd ask everyone to join myself and others in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

Carla Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today and join with the Premier and the minister and the members from our caucus in welcoming this group that has joined us here from the far North, or the True North, if you will, Mr. Speaker, a trip to be here to meet with elected officials.

I understand we'll be playing some games and perhaps enjoying some food from the North as well, and it's always a great opportunity to get to sit with leaders from the far North. I want to single out Chief Coreen Sayazie. I want to say welcome to Mayor Powder and the councillors and the board members that have joined us here today. Thank you for making the trip, and I know that we all look forward to spending time with you later today.

I also want to give a shout-out to the former Speaker, Mr. D'Autremont, as well as his colleagues from GSD while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, to welcome all of the guests who have joined us here in their Legislative Assembly today. We're honoured to have you, and we look forward to conversations later today. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Canora-Pelly.

Sean Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to introduce to you up in the Speaker's gallery my friend Aaron Nagy. Aaron is a constituent and is also a very good friend who was instrumental in Jimmy's Law in 2011. He is here with his fiancée, Amanda, and his friend Gord, who just so happens to be the village of Hyas's newest resident.

I encourage all MLAs to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Mount Royal.

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[13:45]

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the member opposite to welcome a good friend and someone I've had the opportunity to work with for a number of years, Aaron Nagy, to his Assembly.

Aaron's driven here today from Canora. He's here with his fiancée, Amanda Ferrier from Melfort, and Gord Lincoln from Hyas here today.

I want to welcome them to their Assembly. I had a chance to sit down with them here today, but I want to just give a shout-out to Aaron once again. We met Aaron a little over . . . jeez, back in 2011, after a tragedy when Jimmy Ray Wiebe in Yorkton was shot at his place of work, was killed as a late-night worker at a gas station. And we met Aaron after that, who stood up and said, well there's too many vulnerable workers, late-night workers across this province.

I got to work with Aaron along with a very good colleague, David Forbes, as MLA and a labour critic. And together David and Aaron put together Jimmy's Law, which was brought to this Assembly. And it brought forward better protections for late-night workers.

Aaron is a real sweetheart. I got to get to know him real well through that time; ate way too many perogies with him up in Yorkton at one point. We spent one entire night — right through the wee hours: 2 a.m., 3 a.m., 4 a.m. — visiting late-night workers on the job, in gas stations, in convenience stores, and having that conversation. And what we learned in all those experiences was the incredible vulnerability that they all felt, and incredible violence as well that many had been subjected to. So I thank him for that leadership.

In the end there was some work across the floor to bring forward some measures to better protect late-night workers and to honour Jimmy's legacy and his life. But certainly Aaron was the front of that, and I want to welcome him to his Assembly and to remember his legacy, and ask all to join with me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now while on my feet I have two awesome guests with me here today. Two good friends, those that I've been lucky to serve with, to serve and to work with in the community. I have Chrystal Kish here today and Emma Trobiak. Give us a wave. Now these two are powerhouses in the community.

And I know every one of us can look across our respective communities and we can identify leaders like this right here. They epitomize what it means to be a community member and to be a leader. For many, many years they dedicated themselves to the Walker School Community Council and worked tirelessly to raise dollars to enrich the lives of students at that school.

I've identified it in here before, but they had raised dollars and put together that outdoor learning space that's an incredible legacy right on A.E. Wilson Park. And Walker raised over \$50,000 to do that. Their families and their partners, their husbands, are a full part of that. So Jonny Kish, a shout-out there as well. And Evan Trobiak, a shout-out to him also. And I'll be identifying some of their efforts here in a little bit.

They're now very active with the Rosemont Mount Royal Community Association, and most recently we held the sixth annual community chili night, something that these two powerhouses were the initiators of, something I've been lucky to be a part of for the last six years. And again it's just a demonstration of how these two community members lead.

To them I want to say on behalf of a grateful province, thank you, and ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in extending our thanks and our gratitude.

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

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery there is a special guest for me, Rosalee Longmore. She was president of our executive, and she worked with me for six years. So I request to the House to join me to welcome in the House.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina South Albert.

Aleana Young: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just wanted to stand and recognize an incredible group of hard-working Saskatchewan folks seated behind me in the west gallery. These folks who've joined us here today — hopefully my list is correct — but I've got my very own constituent Matt Faubert who's here; Joan Sawa, Laura Holgate, Josie Vis, Paul Sutton, Joy Ramos, Maria Meja, Carmen Benedicto, Joan Juan, Lorie Solovio, Richard Sawa, Jenaya Lukey, JJ Elliott, Rachel Friesen, and I know there's another Maria. I just can't — forgive me — remember your last name.

These folks, Mr. Speaker, are mental health approved home operators here in Regina. And for people who may not know what that is — I know I didn't when I first connected with Matt — these are folks who run homes in the community for individuals, for neighbours who might otherwise be in psychiatric care, perhaps on the streets, perhaps in the correctional system, Mr. Speaker. These are operators who have opened their homes, welcomed some of the most vulnerable into

their homes and into their families.

They do exceptional work here in the community saving lives, saving taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars, and just do incredible work. I'm proud to have Matt as a constituent, the advocacy work he's done on behalf of this whole sector as well as the people that they serve.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me and welcome these caring citizens to this, their Assembly.

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

Hon. Lori Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming all of these very valuable individuals to their House today. Working in the mental health industry is not an easy task, and those that do it have hearts of gold. And so I just truly want to thank you so much for all that you do for the community and the work that you do for the individuals that present at the facilities that you house them in. And I just want to truly extend my thank you to you. And I'd like to have everybody join me in welcoming them here today.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Chief Mistawasis.

Don McBean: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you I would like to introduce Paras Kumar, who is my constituency assistant, up in the top seat up there. So I met Paras when he was working on our campaign. And recognizing his youth and that he was new to Canada, I started asking him questions and was fascinated and astounded to learn that, you know, he'd been in the country for a few years only. He was doing a physics degree. He was already an experienced constituency assistant. You know, how did he end up in Saskatoon? Well you know, he was accepted to other universities, some in Britain, but the financial aspect of being at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] was good and apparently we have an outstanding physics department as well, physics and math.

He became my VCO [voter contact organizer]. So he, with a smile, always said I was working for him. And that was a strain on our relationship, but by the end of it, by the end of it, he asked to be the constituency assistant and he won that position. He said, "Well now I'm working for you," and I said, "No, you're working with me." And he is working with me. He's amazing, a 22-year-old whiz kid — I shouldn't call him a kid, I suppose — but I just want to acknowledge the great work that he's doing in helping myself and our team, and thank you very much. And I invite everyone to welcome Paras.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University-Sutherland.

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join the member for Saskatoon Chief Mistawasis to welcome Paras Kumar here. When Paras came to the U of S to study physics, I think the next day he joined the NDP [New Democratic Party]. So Paras was a summer organizer for our constituency in 2023. He was also an executive member for our constituency. Thank you, Paras, for

your contribution to our constituency and the NDP as a whole. Please join me to welcome Paras to this legislature.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Rochdale.

Joan Pratchler: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Joan Pratchler: — May I draw your attention to the galleries where I have the distinct pleasure of welcoming Madame Courchene et Madame Mushumanski's [Translation: Ms. Courchene and Ms. Mushumanski's] grade 4 class from École St. Angela Merici.

C'est mon plaisir de vous introduire la 4^{ème} année de Madame Courchene, aussi Madame Mushumanski. École St. Angela est dans ma circonscription de Regina Rochdale.

[Translation: It is my pleasure to introduce to you the grade 4 class of Ms. Courchene, also Ms. Mushumanski. École St. Angela is in my constituency of Regina Rochdale.]

Over the past while, these students have been learning about government here in Saskatchewan and in Canada and are now here to celebrate learning by seeing real live politicians in action.

Pendant des dernières semaines, ils ont étudié comment fonctionne le gouvernement ici en Saskatchewan et au Canada. Je vous invite à m'aider à accueillir cette classe de la 4^{ème} année de St. Angela, École Saint Angela. J'espère que vous profitez bien de vos expériences ici.

[Translation: During the past weeks, they have studied about how the government here in Saskatchewan and in Canada works. I invite you to join me in welcoming this grade 4 class from St. Angela, École St. Angela. I hope that you benefit greatly from your experiences here.]

I invite you to join me to welcome the grade 4 class and the parents and teachers from École St. Angela School to this, their legislature.

And also while I'm on my feet I would like to recognize my constituency assistant, Madame Johnson. Elle est ici pour guider les élèves [Translation: She is here to lead the students]. She's there to help keep the home fires burning while we're here in the legislature. Merci, Madame.

Speaker Goudy: — And I wanted to welcome someone here this morning as well. And you know, back when I used to sit in my chair I thought, well, the one job in this place I don't need to worry about learning is Dan D'Autremont and the Speaker's position, and little did I know that I should have paid more attention.

So just want to acknowledge the appreciation that I have to the Speakers who've gone before me and the ones who supported me

and encouraged me and helped me find my feet. So, Dan D'Autremont, welcome to your Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Erika Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to fix the crisis in health care.

The undersigned residents of the province wish to bring to your attention the following: that there were 951 health care closures across rural Saskatchewan between August 2019 and July 2023; that 407 of those closures were to Saskatchewan emergency rooms; that for the first time, an emergency room in one of our major cities shut down due to staff shortages; and that Saskatchewan has the longest wait times for knee and hip replacement surgeries; it is unacceptable that women in this province are being forced to travel out of province for routine breast cancer diagnostic care; and that Saskatchewan people deserve to have adequate and accessible health care where and when they need it.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to immediately address the short-staffing crisis in health care and work with health care workers on solutions to improve patient care.

This petition is signed by the residents of Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Terri Bromm: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present this petition today.

We the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that the province of Saskatchewan exported over 4.3 billion in goods to China in 2024; nearly 1 billion of these exports are in canola products; further, that the devastating 100 per cent tariff on Canadian-produced canola, pork, and peas by China will have a disproportionate effect on Saskatchewan producers and the province's economy.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: call upon the Government of Canada to take immediate action to remove the harmful tariffs on canola, pork, and peas that are disproportionately affecting the producers and farmers of the province of Saskatchewan; that the federal government immediately engage in meaningful dialogue with representatives of the Chinese government to eliminate tariffs that harm Saskatchewan producers.

The below undersigned are residents of Tisdale.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan calling for duty-to-consult legislation.

The undersigned residents of this province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention the following: that the Sask Party government has voted against duty-to-consult legislation; that the current duty-to-consult policy in Saskatchewan is not effective; and that the Saskatchewan government did not follow its own guidelines on consulting with inherent and treaty rights holders while drafting the current duty-to-consult policy.

The Sask Party government continues to move forward on duty-to-consult processes without fulfilling constitutional obligations set through many court cases that have shaped how duty-to-consult should be observed in present day, including multiple Supreme Court rulings; and that inherent and treaty rights holders need to be informed through their relational approach to have an understanding before the duty is triggered, therefore proponents must engage with applicable inherent and treaty rights holders before the duty is triggered.

[14:00]

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to enshrine duty-to-consult into law by enacting meaningful duty-to-consult legislation.

The signatories of this petition reside in Yellow Quill First Nation. I do so present.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Southeast.

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present the petition calling for mandatory intimate partner violence education. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: Saskatchewan has the highest rate per capita of intimate partner violence, also known as domestic violence, in Canada. Employers and employees need to know signs of IPV [intimate partner violence] and where to call for help. Education is key to changing the rates of IPV.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately mandate education on intimate partner violence be included in the orientation process for all new employees across workplaces in the province.

The undersigned residents reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Prince Albert Med Gala Celebrates Health Care Community

Vicki Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday I was honoured to attend the Boreal Healthcare Foundation's Med Gala in Prince Albert, an evening dedicated to celebrating the remarkable achievements within our health care community. Joined by my colleagues, the members for Regina Coronation Park, P.A. [Prince Albert] Carlton, and P.A. Northcote, we witnessed first-hand the dedication and passion that drive health care excellence in northern Saskatchewan. The event, emceed by the charismatic Teena Monteleone was a testament to the tireless efforts of health care professionals.

Congratulations to the Prince Albert home care team, recipients of the Collaborative Care Award for their unwavering commitment to patient-centred care. Andy McLetchie's recognition with the Nursing Excellence Award was particularly moving. His emphasis on teamwork highlights the collaborative spirit that defines our health care system. Roses Stewart-Stevens received the Outstanding Achievement Award in health care, a well-deserved acknowledgement of her innovative approach to pharmacy and community service.

Beyond creating an elegant setting for an awards night, the Med Gala served as a fundraiser for Victoria Hospital and northern health care services. It was inspiring to see the community come together to support those who dedicate their lives to the well-being of others.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating all the award winners and in celebrating and supporting our health care heroes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

4-H Saskatchewan Develops Young Leaders

James Thorsteinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on March 22nd, 4-H Saskatchewan hosted their second annual Community Leadership Conference and recognition banquet here in Regina with their annual general meeting held the following day. Through events like this conference, the annual provincial beef show, and support at the club and regional level, 4-H Saskatchewan provides development and educational opportunities to young leaders.

For over a century 4-H has been a positive influence in Saskatchewan communities. The work done by 4-H helps make our agriculture sector what it is: a thriving industry focused on increasing public trust. Maintaining and growing that public trust in the industry starts with our young people. 4-H helps young people who come from family farms and those with no ties to agriculture learn more about the industry. They also acquire valuable leadership skills that will benefit them in their future careers.

Mr. Speaker, 4-H plays a critical role in fostering young leaders in our province, providing over \$50,000 annually in scholarships and bursaries. This investment into young leaders in Saskatchewan supports the future of our agriculture sector as we seek to feed an ever-growing global population with increased

demands for nutritious food.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank 4-H Saskatchewan and their members for everything they have done and continue to do for our youth, our communities, and our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Mount Royal.

Volunteers Make Chili Night a Success

Trent Witherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the evening of Wednesday, March 5th, the best of community was on display at the Rosemont outdoor rink as we hosted the annual community chili night. The evening offered up free chili to all in the community, and it coincided with the last practices for our outdoor hockey league teams.

It was a beauty of a warm night for some chili, hot chocolate, outdoor hockey, and conversation. Over 390 chili bowls were served this year. The community came together to visit, enjoy the chili, and watched and cheered on the hockey teams. Personally it's one of my favourite evenings, where I get to serve up chili, visit with friends and community, and hit the ice with my fellow coaches and the teams.

I want to give a massive shout-out and thanks to the dedicated, big-hearted community volunteers, leaders like Emma Trobiak and Chrystal Kish and many more, and for the full support of the Rosemont Mount Royal Community Association; as well as Pat and Meghan Doyle, owners and operators of Tim Hortons for the hot chocolate; Roots Kitchen & Bar for the incredible chili; Crawford's No Frills; Sherwood Co-op; Evan Trobiak and Evan's Delivery; and the Regina Downtowners Optimist Club.

I ask all members to join with me in thanking all those that made it happen, and such an awesome success. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Blairmore.

Call to Reinstate Federal Minister of Women Position

Hon. Jamie Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prime Minister Carney has decided to eliminate the role of Minister of Women and Gender Equality from his cabinet, a decision that is deeply concerning. It sends the wrong message to women and people who work to support and advance the safety and well-being and prosperity of women.

While Saskatchewan and other provinces have a minister responsible for Status of Women, the Prime Minister's decision leaves the federal government without a seat at the table. That is why Saskatchewan's Minister Responsible for Status of Women has written the Prime Minister to urge him to reinstate this position and appoint a new minister.

Mr. Speaker, in our province, we recently celebrated 60 years since the Government of Saskatchewan established the Status of Women. Since its establishment in 1964, the office has been the forefront for the fight of women's equality. The work being done in this remains an important priority for the Government of

Saskatchewan. Our government will continue to work across all levels of government on matters that support women.

So much has changed over the last 60 years. We look forward to continuing this work in the years ahead and the Prime Minister reversing this decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Stonebridge.

The Pyjammers Rock Hunter Village

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the Aspira Hunter Village Retirement residence. Hunter Village is a vibrant and enthusiastic seniors' community located on the corner of Hunter Road and Preston Avenue in Saskatoon Stonebridge.

The management team, led by Rahim Velji, have invited me to meet with residents on a number of occasions. A number of those residents, all over the age of 80 years old, have a band called The Pyjammers that performs in their pyjamas every week. Often I am provided with the opportunity to perform with The Pyjammers on the guitar or keyboard. Residents love to attend, listen, and sing along to some golden age gospel and country music. Some are even known to bust a move, even with their walkers. The music, regularly echoing through the building, has built pride and excitement to the residents that live there.

The Pyjammers are led by Diane Berg, Bill Haffermehl, Jack Magnell, Rina Royer, Wayne Milne, Win Loewen, Marilyn Olson, Ed Olson, and Karen Haffermehl.

I'm so grateful and thankful to Rahim and The Pyjammers for creating such an engaging environment for the residents of the wonderful community within a community. Because a person's age doesn't define one's abilities and character; a person's ability speaks for itself.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing the team and band and Hunter Village for promoting the value of music in Saskatoon Stonebridge. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Dakota-Arm River.

Rudy Council Member Spends Years Bettering His Community

Barret Kropf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dennis Fuglerud has served as a member of the rural municipality of Rudy council over the last 18 years and has served three terms as a reeve of the RM [rural municipality]. On January 12th, Dennis was celebrated for his years of service in his community. He stepped aside this past fall, stating it was time for someone else to take on the job.

The RM of Rudy is located directly east of the South Sask River Valley, encompassing the communities of Outlook, Broderick, and Glenside, and is home to just under 500 people. The land of the RM is mostly flat with light rolling hills, which creates a perfect terrain for farming throughout most of the land.

During Dennis's time in office, there were multiple different projects undertaken that helped and benefited the RM, including the installation of the Namaka feedlot, the expansion and irrigation, growth in potato and vegetable production, and the reclassification of Highway 219 to make it a nine-month primary weight and the rest of the highway to year-round primary weight.

Dennis was also an essential part of strengthening relations with the town of Outlook, being recognized in 2024 for their teamwork coming together to create the Outlook-Rudy fire and protective services, and their new fire hall is well under way.

I invite all members of the Assembly to join me in thanking Dennis for his years of effort and service in bettering his community. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Bengough.

Indigenous Communities Play Vital Economic Role

Michael Weger: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Ministry of Trade and Export Development was pleased to host the fourth annual Indigenous Business Gathering in Saskatoon.

The free-to-attend event brought together both Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses, Crown corporations, and municipalities from across the province. Since we hosted the first Indigenous Business Gathering in 2022, it has grown exponentially. Yesterday's gathering was the biggest to date, with over 1,100 enthusiastic individuals registered and over 130 trade booths.

Our province is home to many vibrant Indigenous communities, which play a vital part in our province's economy. Some recent statistics highlight just that: 41 per cent of the workforce at our northern mining operations are Indigenous; 30 per cent of our timber supply is held by Indigenous-owned businesses; and in 2024 off-reserve Indigenous full-time employment reached an all-time high.

Supporting economic reconciliation is a priority for this government and vital for the province's continued growth and prosperity. I would like to make a special mention of this year's sponsors: Athabasca Basin Development, Farm Credit Canada, Kitsaki Management, Polar Oils, STC Industrial Group, and Synergy Construction.

It was truly inspiring to see how many First Nations and Métis communities and businesses were represented. We look forward to welcoming even more attendees at next year's Indigenous Business Gathering in 2026. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provincial Budget and Response to Tariffs

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we're due to vote on a budget that isn't worth the paper that it's written on. This is a budget that completely ignores the realities that Saskatchewan people are facing today. Nothing on tariffs. Nothing on the

impact that Russian potash flooding the market will have on this province. And that so-called surplus, Mr. Speaker — well no one is buying it.

It's time for the Premier to face reality. Go back to the drawing board. When will we see a real plan to protect Saskatchewan people from the very real impact of tariffs?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We discussed this on the floor and in the rotunda yesterday. There is products that are today flowing out of Russia to other areas of the world, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately. And so that competitive market is there today.

Thankfully in Saskatchewan our products are not only sustainably produced, but they are coming from a very ethically produced part of the world, Mr. Speaker, whether it be how they are produced, whether it be who is actually producing them, the engagement of including everyone wherever you might live in the province — whether you be Indigenous or non-Indigenous — in the development of our resources, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the strength of the balanced budget that was introduced on the floor of this Legislative Assembly last week, Mr. Speaker, and which I suspect we'll have the opportunity to vote on likely tomorrow on this very floor — a balanced budget, a \$12 million surplus in Saskatchewan, a province that receives no equalization for the last 17 years or so now, Mr. Speaker.

When you compare that to every other budget across the nation, all of them in deficit, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba, for example, has just under a \$2 billion deficit. \$4.7 billion in equalization flows into the province of Manitoba. Quebec, I believe yesterday, a \$13.6 billion deficit. \$13.6 billion in equalization flow into Quebec. Even in British Columbia, where they do not receive equalization, NDP British Columbia, Mr. Speaker, a \$10.9 billion deficit in that province.

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, thankfully, thankfully, in this province we have tabled a balanced budget, and we're going to get the opportunity to vote on it tomorrow.

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

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder who it was who rolled over on the equalization lawsuit.

Now this budget has no contingency plan to address a trade war, nothing to account for the impact of Russian products flooding the market while Putin continues his illegal occupation, invasion of Ukraine. Mr. Speaker, we all hope that this all goes away very, very soon, but right now Saskatchewan people are living in the real world, dealing with the real impact of these tariffs.

Will the Premier face reality and come back with a budget that actually, actually protects Saskatchewan people?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we've debated this many times on the floor of the Assembly in the last week, out in the rotunda as the Premier mentioned. Mr. Speaker, we feel the best place we can be situating the province of Saskatchewan is from a position of strength — a balanced budget and able to weather whatever the tariffs may throw our way.

You know, I understand that the members opposite don't like the budget, Mr. Speaker. That's their job to be critical. In fact I heard the critic did a bit of a photo op this morning. He shredded the budget. I heard . . . Well I'm not sure why they're happy about it, Mr. Speaker. I heard before he was done the shredder quit working, which is kind of funny.

Mr. Speaker, it reminded me of the time that their federal leader shredded the supply-and-confidence agreement with the Trudeau government, only to tape it together the next day and continue to prop up the Liberal government. The only thing that's happening, Mr. Speaker, is it's shredding NDP integrity themselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carla Beck: — If we're going to talk about shredding integrity, Mr. Speaker, let's look. Every other province has a contingency fund. Manitoba, Alberta — Mr. Speaker, I'll say that again, Alberta — BC [British Columbia], they've all committed dollars to deal with the reality that their provinces are facing. This Premier's budget has none of that, and it isn't worth the paper that it's written on. But it is, Mr. Speaker, in keeping with his weak and meek response to these tariffs.

Will the Premier finally face reality, recognize that the world has changed and will he put that budget through the shredder and come back with a real plan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition raised that issue. Because let's look at the other provinces. NDP BC, yes, a \$4 billion contingency. What else, Mr. Speaker? An \$11 billion deficit.

Mr. Speaker, NDP Manitoba. They had two budgets which, I don't know, maybe the members opposite can explain that one. But without a contingency in it, an \$800 million deficit. If they had a contingency, it's a \$1.8 billion deficit.

And look at Quebec, it was announced yesterday. They got 13.6 billion in equalization, Mr. Speaker. But maybe that's what they consider a balanced budget: 13 billion in equalization and a \$13 billion deficit.

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

Global Supply of Potash

Sally Housser: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Donald Trump's decision to normalize trade with Russia is a disgrace. But it is a move that industry could see coming, even if this government couldn't. This matters for Ukraine and it matters for Saskatchewan. Cheap and low-quality Russian potash flooding

the market puts Saskatchewan jobs and Ukrainian lives at risk. Royalties collected by the province could crash if potash prices collapse.

Mr. Speaker, the government's budget isn't worth the paper it's written on. Even more so with this latest news. How can the Energy and Resources minister have any faith in this budget when it is so out of touch with the realities the mining sector is facing?

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

Hon. Colleen Young: — Mr. Speaker, the potash industry is a core pillar of our economy and contributes billions of dollars to taxes and royalties in this province, which fund our priorities in this province like schools, education, and health care.

It is too early to know the effects of this announcement on the world potash market, but we are closely monitoring the situation and how international potash trade responds. We are confident in our volume and price forecasts in the recent budget, which are based on fundamental global supply and demand analysis that includes expected production from Russia. We do not anticipate any impact on these forecasts in the short term.

Mosaic, one of our major industries here in this province, has already said, "We do not expect significant impacts to the US potash market. Cost control and supply chain reliability for Canadian producers remain essential to ensuring long-term competitiveness."

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

Communication with US Officials in Response to Tariffs

Sally Housser: — Mr. Speaker, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith is on record asking the Trump administration to pause — not cancel, not reverse — but pause tariffs until a Conservative government was elected federally.

In the wake of this latest Trump insult to Canada and our allies, a constituent asked me a question that I think is reasonable, and a question that ought to be easy to answer. Does the Premier, regardless of political stripe, think it's okay to ask a foreign government that we're currently in a trade war with to meddle in our federal election? And was the Premier taking the same message as Danielle Smith to Washington, DC [District of Columbia]?

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — Order, order, please.

I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export.

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, our Premier, this caucus, this side of government, has spent every waking day engaging with everyone from high-level elected officials in the US [United States], from governors, from senators, ambassadors around the world, to ensure that this economy is strong, continues to be strong, as we go through these tariff wars.

Nobody wins in a tariff war, right? Who loses? You and I lose as consumers. That's why we would prefer that tariffs don't exist. But we're going to continue to have this measured response to tariffs, reaching out every opportunity we get to those who are most affected by tariffs, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I'm just going to make a quick statement. The people who are in the gallery are, you know, why we're here. And the young kids watching, I'm glad to have you here today. And I think we should keep decorum in such a way that they have faith in the government and the opposition. And so let's have a good question period.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Oversight of Care Facilities for Seniors

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're joined today by Colleen Lukan and Donna Fiddler in your gallery. They've travelled all the way from Saskatoon to the legislature after exhausting every possible avenue to advocate for change after the unnecessary death of their father in August 2023.

Their father, Mr. Erwin Lukan, entered a personal care home in Saskatoon on July 17th. He developed a simple UTI [urinary tract infection] there, and after only 13 days in this home, he passed away, Mr. Speaker. This personal care home had shockingly not been inspected in over three years by this government.

To the minister: how many of our seniors need to die unnecessarily before this government will address the needs of seniors care?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Seniors.

Hon. Lori Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the member opposite for the question, and I welcome the family to the Assembly today.

Mr. Speaker, long-term care is something that this government does take very seriously. And we are concerned when incidents happen in our facilities, and we take every effort we can to try and address any shortcomings that there may be. And that is the commitment that I will make is that we will continue to do those surveys of the long-term care facilities that we have. And when something does come to our attention, if there is a shortcoming, I absolutely want to ensure that it is addressed, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the minister takes this seriously, then inspect the homes more often than every three years.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lukan's family placed their faith in the government that that home would be inspected. Little did they know that this home had not been inspected in years. Also Mr. Lukan's needs were never properly assessed by this government prior to his placement in that home, as is required by provincial legislation.

To the minister: what has the ministry done to ensure that no other seniors die in homes like this?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Seniors.

Hon. Lori Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our priority as a government is to ensure that the hard-working seniors who've built this province do have a safe, reliable, and high quality of care.

Mr. Speaker, in this year's budget, we actually do have more dollars allocated so that more inspections can take place in homes across the province. That is a commitment that we are making. That is a commitment that we are keeping. And, Mr. Speaker, there is a process in place for us to do these reviews of all of these long-term care facilities that we have throughout the province.

I am aware that we are catching up on all of those, and I can assure you that all of the homes across the province that we serve, we want to ensure that those seniors are safe and have a good place to live, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Matt Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Donna is my constituent, and I've met with her and her sister Colleen on many occasions to hear their father's tragic story. Now they've exhausted every avenue. They've submitted complaints and this government sure should know about this because I've also written to the minister on their behalf, urging him to reach out to this family and provide better oversight of personal care homes, yet nothing has been done.

How many more seniors need to die? Will the new minister finally listen to this family, meet with Colleen and Donna today, and ensure that our personal care homes are safe for our parents and our grandparents?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Seniors.

Hon. Lori Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm more than happy to meet with the Fiddlers today after question period, and we can have a conversation about the measures that should be taking place and the measures that we're putting in in this budget to ensure that we have safe long-term care facilities within this province.

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

Matt Love: — Mr. Speaker, our seniors deserve safety. They deserve respect, and they deserve dignity. And their families deserve to know that they are being well cared for when they're placed in a home. Now after Mr. Lukan's passing, and after all of the advocacy that Donna and Colleen did, and after my letter to the minister, these personal care homes were still not inspected.

To the minister: how many more of our loved ones need to die before your government will finally take action and ensure that all personal care homes are providing an adequate standard of care?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Seniors.

Hon. Lori Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are making investments in our long-term care facilities, and I've talked about the additional investments that we're making in this year's budget. I'm happy to have a conversation with the family after question period. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Funding for Mental Health Care Home Operators

Brent Blakley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today we are joined by 14 mental health approved home operators. They are here today because this government continues to underfund these homes that offer essential mental health services.

Mr. Speaker, these operators save the province tens of thousands of dollars by providing a safe and stable home for folks who would struggle without their support. The increase that these operators saw in 2023-24 was \$30 per resident per month. Mr. Speaker, this doesn't even keep up with the cost of living and essentials. Will the minister commit to additional funding for these operators today?

[14:30]

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to welcome these mental health professionals to their legislature today. And of course, I would be more than happy to meet with the group afterwards to discuss what we have in the 2025-26 budget that will address some of these concerns.

And part of my work as minister, I've been doing a lot of outreach with different community-based organizations, individuals, families all across the province. And I'll continue to do this work by sitting down later on this afternoon and we'll have further discussions on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Brent Blakley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to see that the minister will be meeting with these folks after. Again just to review, these operators deal with a variety of challenging circumstances. They've shared stories about residents overdosing and passing away or going into medical distress.

Their costs have skyrocketed, and it's become challenging to stay afloat. The cost of living, groceries, utilities, insurance, and gas have all increased. Mr. Speaker, continuing operations like this is not sustainable. These residents would otherwise be in a hospital, limited shelter space available, or on the street. And again thank you to the minister for meeting with them today.

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for those kind words. And I do look

forward to meeting with this group later on this afternoon at my earliest possible moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Mount Royal.

Impact of Tariffs on Agriculture

Trent Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's agricultural producers recognize the gravity of the trade war that we're in, and they're stepping up. Crushing tariffs from China that need to be scrapped. Tariffs from the United States and more coming. Trump has warned "liberation day" is coming April 2nd, and that means more pain.

There's no plan, no plan whatsoever in this budget. Nothing. Why are Saskatchewan agricultural producers proposing solutions that could help step up, and all they're getting is crickets from this asleep-at-the-wheel provincial government?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Daryl Harrison: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to say I've been meeting with stakeholder groups steady throughout this. And into Washington, DC, met with the state ag leaders down there. And all I can say to the member opposite is his propped-up Liberal Party government in Ottawa is . . . the AgriStability announcement that was made.

The federal government announced proposed enhancements to AgriStability, knowing full well these changes cannot be implemented until after the election. The federal government did not consult with Ag ministers. They did not provide program details. There was no funding made available. There was no directions for officials to work on this program. Even if these changes were made today, that support would not fall until 2026.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Mount Royal.

Trent Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, that member knows better, and knows that this opposition has stood up against Ottawa on front after front after front. The people and producers of this province deserve a minister that gives them the straight goods and that'll have their backs, not that sort of nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

The budget before us has nothing for tariffs. No funding set aside; no supports for workers, for producers, or for our economy; no economic plans; and nothing booked fiscally in this budget. Nothing. This minister touts a so-called surplus that's already gone up in smoke.

Mr. Speaker, when I read this budget I can't help but think, delivering for who? Who does this minister think he's delivering for without a plan for tariffs and the economic attacks we face? It's certainly not the people, workers, and producers of this province.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we went around and around with this. Every NDP government that's put contingencies in

their budget, Mr. Speaker, have massive deficits. Why would we go borrow money ahead of time and start paying interest on it? We don't know for sure what the impact's going to be.

We've been very clear in the budget, Mr. Speaker. We've said it's a balanced budget; if the tariffs are on for an extended period of time, it's going to put it into a deficit situation. We've been very clear about that. But the best way to start with this is from a position of strength. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Social Housing Units

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are thousands of vacant Saskatchewan Housing Corporation units sitting across the province. Why isn't the government committing to fixing them? Thank you.

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government had a record amount of money invested in last year's budget to renovate and repair Saskatchewan Housing Corporation homes right across Saskatchewan, whether that's in Saskatoon, Regina, Weyburn, Meadow Lake, wherever.

This year we've seen another increase in the budget allocated to Sask Housing Corporation to not only renovate and repair, but also, you know, work to prioritize individuals to get into those homes.

This opposition tomorrow has a chance to vote on that budget and vote in favour of all these renovations and repairs. We look forward to seeing what they can do.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Overdose Incidents in Saskatoon

Erika Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, in March of 2024, the Saskatoon Fire Department responded to 79 overdose incidents. In March of 2025, they responded to 435 so far. Nine people have died in Saskatoon in March of drug overdose so far, and the services people rely on to stay alive are closed. And that minister is saying that things are going well.

When is the minister going to acknowledge this unthinkable ongoing tragedy? When is she going to present a real plan to address this crisis?

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

Hon. Lori Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I do thank the member opposite for the question. We are very concerned about the recent increase in overdoses in Saskatoon. At no point in time have I said things are going well. This is something that is not going well, and it is the use of illicit drugs that is causing this to happen. This is why people are overdosing on our streets.

Mr. Speaker, we actually have set up a provincial emergency operations centre, and we're working in close collaboration with the city of Saskatoon, the first responders that are addressing these issues that are happening on their streets, as well as various community supports, and we will continue to do that work. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 17 — *The Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive (Patent Box) Amendment Act, 2025*

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

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 17, *The Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive (Patent Box) Amendment Act, 2025* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It's been moved by the Minister of Trade and Export that Bill No. 17, *The Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive (Patent Box) Amendment Act, 2025* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export.

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 18 — *The Regulated Health Professions Act*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 18, *The Regulated Health Professions Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 18, *The Regulated Health Professions Act* be now introduced for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 19 — *The Regulated Health Professions Consequential Amendments Act, 2025/Loi de 2025 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Regulated Health Professions Act*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 19, *The Regulated Health Professions Consequential Amendments Act, 2025* be now introduced and read for a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 19, *The Regulated Health Professions Consequential Amendments Act, 2025* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

I recognize the Minister of Justice. Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to move a motion regarding committee membership for the Standing Committee of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Speaker Goudy: — The minister has asked leave. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Committee Membership

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would move:

That the name of Alana Ross be substituted for the name of Megan Patterson on the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

I so move.

Speaker Goudy: — Do we agree with the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried. The motion moved by the Minister of Justice:

That the name of Megan Patterson be substituted for the name of Alana Ross on the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Do we agree with this motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Agreed. Thank you all.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

BUDGET DEBATE

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jim Reiter that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Trent Wotherspoon.]

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

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today again — you recall yesterday I rise also — to speak in opposition to the budget as presented by the Saskatchewan Party government. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the people who have helped me become the MLA for Regina Pasqua and all the people who are helping me now to serve my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend a thanks to you and to the staff of this Legislative Assembly. It is the honour of my life to serve as the MLA for Regina Pasqua. There are so many people I wish to thank, without whom I would not be standing here today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my family, who have been my unwavering support throughout my journey. First and foremost, I want to thank my wife, Charanjit, for always being by my side and supporting me every step of the way. My son, Gurjant Brar, has been a constant source of encouragement, and I truly appreciate how he has stood by the decisions I have made. Gurjant, a small-business owner, has shown incredible strength and understanding.

Mr. Speaker, I am also deeply grateful to my daughter-in-law Harinder Brar, a dedicated registered nurse who has been there for me during both the challenging and joyful moments. My daughters Kuldeep and Hardeep, both professionals in health care, have been equally supportive. My daughter Kuldeep, LPN [licensed practical nurse], and son-in-law Gurcharan, a small-business owner, have been pillars of strength in our family.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, I can't forget to mention my precious grandchildren. Navreet, with her aspiration to become a

cardiologist, and Japji, who dreams of becoming an eye specialist, inspire me every day. My grandson Arsh is already on the path to becoming a surgeon, and I am incredibly proud of all their ambitions. I also have lovely twin grandsons who are just four years old whose presence lifts my spirits and takes away all my stress and tiredness.

Mr. Speaker, my family has encouraged me to pursue social work without any hesitation or sense of liability, which has made a significant impact on my life. I am truly blessed to have such a supportive and loving family, and I can't express how thankful I am for each and every one of them. This is my family and they're my biggest supporters.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my Saskatchewan NDP family, starting first with Rosalee Longmoore sitting in the east gallery. She has worked on both of my campaigns, and without her I would not be standing here before you. Beyond our two campaigns though, Rosalee has played a major role in our success in Regina Pasqua. From meetings to fundraisers to everything in between, Rosalee has been a great friend. Rosalee recently finished a six-year term as the president of our Regina Pasqua NDP, and she will be deeply missed. But I know that our new president, Marla Carlson, is ready to take on the job.

And to the full executive team in Regina Pasqua, Gerry, Dion, Janelle, Faye, and Daljinder, I want to say thank you for the support, for the guidance, and for your continued work to deliver better for the people of Regina Pasqua. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Jessie and Gary, lifetime members and long-time volunteers. Jessie and Gary played a major role in the 2020 and 2024 campaigns. Between campaigns Jessie and Gary would host the monthly Tommy Douglas coffee club. Even though they are taking a step back from our executive, the Carlsons remain active in the coffee club. To you, Jessie and Gary, thank you.

I would like to thank my campaign team who helped me become the MLA: Pranav, Karissa, Amarjit, and Rosalee. Again without you, I would not be here. You worked tirelessly on this campaign and I am forever grateful for your support.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize my constituency assistant Andrea. Andrea started in my office in January and has been hard at work serving the people of Regina Pasqua. She's always there to lend a hand to our constituents and I am thankful to have her on my team.

Andrea and I are lucky to share a constituency office with the member for Regina Mount Royal sitting here and his constituency assistant Jannet Shanks. Their knowledge and guidance have made the beginning of my term as an MLA easier and I am glad to be learning from them.

Finally I need to thank the staff of the opposition caucus office. The whole team has helped me as I start this new adventure and I'm grateful for all your help and support. Thank you.

I worked in India as a journeyman technologist and electrical engineer until I was 55. In India the mandatory retirement age is 58, but I did not want to retire so early. And since retirement age is not an issue in Canada, I decided to move here in 2005 for a

better future. Here after lots of struggle, I got a journey person electrician and power engineer ticket and worked both positions. The journey was difficult at first, but I persevered to get where I am today.

I chose to stay in Canada even after the struggles so my children could have better opportunity for their future. Additionally I sponsored over 100 skilled family members who are now contributing to Canada's economy, thanks to the Saskatchewan NDP family program introduced in 2006. Their children now have access to quality education, better future prospects, and improved lifestyle.

Mr. Speaker, this budget also does not address the mental health and addictions crisis we have here in Saskatchewan. It simply is not good enough. We are in a crisis and yet the government is employing their same strategy. It is not working. Mr. Speaker, how many more of our young people — our future — will have to die before the Sask Party government takes the necessary steps to save lives?

Mr. Speaker, people are working harder and harder and yet still falling behind. My constituents in Regina Pasqua need relief now. On the doorsteps, people raise all the time the cost of living and the need for relief now. This budget does not have any real savings until 2026.

Mr. Speaker, at the time when our country is under threat, this government's budget has no plan to protect our economy or workers from tariffs. People of Saskatchewan are concerned about how Donald Trump's tariffs will impact their livelihoods and their pocketbooks, and this government has included nothing to address these concerns, and they will not denounce Donald Trump for his threats to Canada's sovereignty.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud Canadian and I want to protect this nation that I call home. Mr. Speaker, Canada is where I and my family chose to call home. We chose Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I am disappointed that the government does not want to do more to help people. I am disappointed that the government is cutting health care and education. I am disappointed that the government will not condemn Donald Trump. I am disappointed. Instead of focusing on the future and making life easier for the next generation — our children and grandchildren — this government continues to disappoint.

And this budget is no exception. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about this budget and how it is not focused on the future. It does not address any of the concerns I have heard from constituents of Regina Pasqua — things like health care, education, cost of living — and it does not address the tariff threat from Donald Trump. Mr. Speaker, this budget has no plan for our economy. It has no measures to protect the workers, the business, or industry. The constituents of Regina Pasqua made it clear they want change. This budget is simply more of the same.

Families in Regina Pasqua are in urgent need of a new school in Harbour Landing. In fact they have been in urgent need for quite some time. Our schools across the province are over capacity and underfunded. We need education funding now, and yet this government decided to cut education funding.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell you a mini-story, not a short

story. A hungry person was asked hundreds of questions and each answer he wrote, "a loaf of bread." And here I reverse it. The Saskatchewan Party government may give hundreds of answers, but my only one question will be when the Harbour Landing school will be built and completed in my riding.

Mr. Speaker, high-quality education and supports for students is crucial to our future. Our future doctors, teachers, engineers, tradespeople, and leaders are in underfunded classrooms in this province. We need to focus on the future.

Mr. Speaker, women in this province have to travel to Calgary to get essential medical care. Right here in Regina, the General Hospital was forced to employ code orange strategies due to the extreme overcrowding. Health care workers are facing huge workloads, and people in Saskatchewan are unable to get the care that they need. Why, when we are in the middle of a health crisis, did this government decide to cut health care funding?

Mr. Speaker, if we recall the last year's budget, it was also presented by the same government as surplus, but where has that surplus gone? There were no Trump tariff threats in that year. Same way the Sask Party government is sugar-coating as surplus on this budget and ultimately will go on the same path as the previous year's budget because neither they have counted the population nor inflation. Besides this, Trump tariff clouds are thundering.

The people of Saskatchewan deserve better. Mr. Speaker, they deserve a government that will lower costs for families and get our health care and education out of last place, and a government that will stand up for Saskatchewan and focus on building our economic future.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to serve as the MLA for Regina Pasqua. I thank my constituents for the trust they have given me. I am grateful for this opportunity to represent your concerns. I pledge to continue to listen to your concerns, to continue to work with you to try and address your concerns, and come into this legislature and raise your concerns.

Mr. Speaker, this budget does not address the concerns of my constituents. Cuts to education and health care, no relief for cost of living, no action on mental health and addictions, and no plan to address tariffs.

Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the budget, but I will support the amendment moved by member of Regina Mount Royal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Love to Saskatchewan, love to Saskatchewan people.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Dakota-Arm River.

Barret Kropf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet this afternoon, and I want to just bring a few greetings to some people that are really important in my life. I want to first of all say to my wife, Bridget, thank you for all you do in keeping our family balanced. I want you to know how much I love you.

To my oldest son, Jalen, and my youngest son, Jacob, I am so proud of the careers that you both are building currently. To my middle son, Josh, and your wife, Katti, and my granddaughter

Hazy, as you grow your young family, I want you to know how much I believe in you always. And, Mr. Speaker, you'll notice how I just mentioned how they are growing their family. Yesterday as I sat here at this desk, the buttons on my shirt blew off because I was sent a picture, and I'm going to be a grandpa for a second time to a beautiful grandson coming this summer. Another left-handed D-man [defenceman] to enter the hockey world. To Hazy, my granddaughter, and to my baby grandson: Grandpa loves you.

To my mom and dad, I just want to thank you for showing me over the years how hard individuals like you work. And I do all I can to emulate that in my life and so I want you to know I love you as well.

To my executive in Dakota-Arm River — to John, Darren, Patrick, Ron, Michelle, and Mike — thank you for joining and serving on my committee. And to Bree and Dawn, for your past years of service on the committee, I thank you greatly for your efforts.

Mr. Speaker, over the last five months I've had the opportunity to travel all over my constituency and put on thousands of kilometres as I've gotten out to RMs in different communities like Dilke and Craik and Holdfast, Hawarden and so many others. And the important part that, as I sit there and I thank them for their service to their community, the number one thing that I celebrate with them is the municipal revenue-sharing program. In Dakota-Arm River this year, Mr. Speaker, over \$8 million will be distributed through that program. And I'm super excited that the people in those communities get to make the decision, because they know what their needs are in those communities as well.

Last week the farm show was here in Regina. And as Thursday's session adjourned, I quickly hustled outside to meet my granddaughter and her mom, and we went to the farm show. And it was amazing to see a two-year-old fall in love with tractors and farm equipment. And she was crawling all over the tractors and being super brave to climb up the ladders and the combines and everything else and just fell in love with it. I got all kinds of pictures to remember that for the rest of my life.

But if you'll enjoy with me a tour, because I'm just going to, you know, proverbially draw a tour that Hazy's putting together. It's a 2025 budget tour of Dakota-Arm River. She's hijacked one of those trailers and hooked up a wagon to it, so I encourage everyone to hop on with me.

Our first stop on this tour is in the town of Bethune, a place where they're putting up a brand new daycare centre that will have 90 spaces available. A new Co-op Cardlock will be coming this summer. And the K+S mine, who currently does 2 million tonnes of production, will by 2040 . . . They made a record investment that they're going to double that to 4 million tonnes of production, Mr. Speaker. They do a great job with K+S investing in that community, investing in our province so great families can have great jobs and raise their family in that community.

As Hazy goes up the highway on Highway No. 11 to the town of Davidson, where my office is, Mr. Speaker . . . It's on Washington Avenue. It's where Dana Skoropad, the previous MLA, had set up shop. And he gave me a few tips and I was able

to sign two of the greatest free agent signings this fall. And I've got Lavonne Lyke and Cathareen Botha, who have become a vital part of our office and continue to serve the constituents with greatness.

Also in Davidson you're going to find the AGT arena. It's a curling rink and a hockey rink, and that arena and all the other arenas in my constituency and across the province had 100 per cent increase on their arena grant in this current budget. And I'm super excited that teams and families and parents can take their kids and enjoy the curling and hockey facilities across our province, because in Davidson this year, the Davidson Cyclones just won the senior B provincial championship.

And the other point I want to make before we leave Davidson on Hazy's tour is that the high school boys wrestling team, the 3A championships in wrestling, they are the current provincial champions in wrestling, so congratulations to them.

As we head over to the community of Imperial, you'll see on the outskirts of town the Rite Way Manufacturing that was set up in 1972. They provide durable, dependable farm equipment. They create local jobs and they take advantage of our 1 per cent tax rate, Mr. Speaker. Again another community that does rural manufacturing that sends their products around the world. So we thank Rite Way Manufacturing, all the work that they are doing in our province.

[15:00]

Next stop on Hazy's tour is the community of Kenaston. And I just want to remind all my colleagues on this side of the House and I suppose on that side, that Dakota-Arm River is the heartland of hockey in Saskatchewan. And I know that my colleague across the way here from Kindersley-Biggar, I just want to remind him that it's like taking candy from a baby when I have such great hockey teams to kind of vest my interest into and win these side bets all spring long. Because, Mr. Speaker, the Kenaston Blizzard, after the fourth time, they are now league champions. And on Friday or this weekend we'll add another provincial championship, and I guess I'll take another steak dinner from my colleagues on that behalf.

Mr. Speaker, as the Legislative Secretary for Education, I'm also super proud of what's going on in Davidson with the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre. I love what they are doing because it adds value to the education pathway for students all across this province.

And in Davidson they're pretty good at basketball as well. The 2A girls just won the bronze medal last week at Hoopla, so we want to say congratulations to them.

And Hazy reminds me, come on, Grandpa, let's get the wagon going. And so we go up the road to Hanley, Dundurn, Thode, Shields. These are all communities that enjoy the playground of what we know as Blackstrap. And, Mr. Speaker, in the provincial park of Blackstrap, the Blackstrap Glamping Resort is set up by a young entrepreneur by the name of Josh Turner. And his investment partners have poured over \$1 million of investment into a world-class tourist spot. By creating these year-round domes, it becomes a world-class tourist destination. And, Mr. Speaker, they have built Saskatchewan's first wheelchair-

accessible glamping dome. It's completely accessible to people with all kinds of mobilities so that they too can enjoy the great outdoors of Saskatchewan. So much to do here in our province and I encourage people to get out to Blackstrap.

Next on the tour we go to South Corman Park. It's a region of our province that is busting at the seams and our Education minister has put into this budget \$191 million for education facility construction. And, Mr. Speaker, Corman Park is going to get a brand new K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] school to meet the need of their growing community, and I'm super excited for that.

The next stop on our tour is Whitecap. And Chief Darcy Bear and his council, they provide great leadership for their Nation. They've got a new \$52 million thermal spa that's being built and again another world-class tourist facility for our province. They also have the virtual health hub that is being set up to provide first-of-its-kind remote-presence technology into 30 rural and northern communities for us here in Saskatchewan. Thank you to Chief Bear and your council for all the work and leadership that you do.

Now I've just got a couple more stops on the tour, Mr. Speaker, because I've got to get Hazy back to her parents and I'm sure the dealerships would want their tractor and wagon back. So let's start over at Outlook and have a look at what's going on there. Because Outlook is the irrigation capital of Saskatchewan. They are ag industry leaders in production, value-add services, research, and growth. On the front of vegetables, and all the vegetables that are grown there, they were the ones that invented farm-to-table far earlier than tariffs or "elbows up" ever even existed.

Not only are they great at agriculture but they're great at sports in Outlook as well, Mr. Speaker. The Ice Hawks, which are a female junior hockey team, finished in first place in the regular season, and on Friday they're going to lay claim to that championship banner. Good luck to the Ice Hawks.

The U13 [under 13] and U15 [under 15] provincial boys are also provincial champions in that community. And LCBI, they're pretty good at basketball. They just claimed a bronze medal at Hoopla last weekend. So congratulations to all those sports teams.

As we head on our way back down to Regina, I just want to point out that we've got more lake country. We're surrounded by lakes in our constituency. And so I wanted to give a shout-out to the communities in and around Diefenbaker, Buffalo Pound, and Last Mountain, Places where you can golf, bike, hike, sail, play baseball, cricket, have bonfires, and enjoy outdoor concerts.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, allows young families and old alike to keep more money in their pockets. That \$63,200 that's our new threshold for that income tax is what allows them to then take money home, have more camping trips, have more s'mores around the campfire, and more fishing trips with their family. Because, Mr. Speaker, our budget delivers for everybody.

Now we're back at the barn in Regina. We've dropped off the tractor. So I want to say thanks to Hazy for the great tour. And hopefully everyone gets a really good chance to understand

what's going on in Dakota-Arm River.

But before I end my talk, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give a quick hockey lesson, if you may. I think I've got enough of a background to give my opinion on this matter in a professional manner.

So let's ask ourselves, what makes a successful team? Well you start with a trusted coaching staff. You bring scouts and recruiters, equipment managers, marketing and game-day team. You get strength coaches and therapists. And all of them are on your team because they're going to perform with excellence because they know the job that they have to do.

The next thing you have to do to make a successful team, Mr. Speaker, is you have to add players. You have to draft them possibly. Maybe you recruit them. Maybe you sign them like a free agent. But what separates them to make that final cut? It's a great question. Are they a good skater? Can they pass, shoot, defend? Are they resilient? Can they be disciplined out on the ice when it gets chaotic? Are they a team player? Are they willing to block shots?

And once you know all the players that you've recruited to your team, you have to actually then know who do you want to pick to make sure that they're part of that strong team. So you need a great game plan and choose players to fit that game plan. And when you do that, Mr. Speaker, your team has a fantastic identity to have success with.

I'll tell you what doesn't make my teams. And I've coached for 32 years at the professional level so I know very well of the players that I would cross off my recruiting list, players I would trade, players I would get rid of. It's players that are undisciplined, players that chirp at the ref. When the ref tells them not to chirp anymore and they continue to chirp and I saw that, I would cross their name off of the list because I don't want on my team whining and chirping and complaining. I don't want athletes that lack responsibility and blame others. I want to make sure that they take responsibility for their efforts on the ice.

An example of this, Mr. Speaker, was just recent, the 4 Nations championship that we saw competing between the four nations of Finland, Sweden, Canada, and the USA [United States of America]. The pundits asked questions such as, why this player? Or why that coach? And why would we employ that strategy? Well Hockey Canada, in their wisdom, they chose a team staff that was experienced and poised. They chose players who were goal scorers, play makers, penalty killers, who were fearless and disciplined.

Their coach, Jon Cooper, was a master strategist who has a calm presence and is unfazed under pressure. Their captain, Sidney Crosby, is known as Captain Calm and Cool. He also is poised in chaos. And in his mindset the team was taking a business trip to Boston.

The media gave Canada zero chance to win, Mr. Speaker. The Americans, they said, were young and they were fast and they were too talented for the Canadian team. All the chaos of game 1 with all the fights and all the chaos in people's minds were boiled into that final game, and nobody gave Canada a chance because they said Canada was too old and out of touch.

Mr. Speaker, we know how that game went in Boston. A gold medal victory for Team Canada. We won that game, raised a banner in Boston, and sang our anthem on US soil because our head coach, Jon Cooper; our captain, Sidney Crosby; and teammates committed to the plan and followed it with excellence.

Brings me to today, Mr. Speaker. This Saskatchewan Party. We have a head coach we never knew we needed. Ten days after the Saskatchewan residents drafted this Team Saskatchewan to form their government and follow the game plan of our head coach, the USA started to be bullies.

But Mr. Speaker, our Premier, the head coach, he is a master strategist, a veteran bench boss with poise. He believes in our province and our people. He chose our captain and our team based on his expertise. Who is our captain? Captain Finance. He just delivered a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker.

Who is our first line all-stars? The ministers who have networked, negotiated, innovated, and provided leadership for all of Saskatchewan around the world for the last five months. Who is our fourth line grinders, Mr. Speaker? Us backbenchers, who we block shots, we take hits, we kill penalties and give our topline captain more opportunities to perform.

We all stepped up. We continue to step up. Just like at the 4 Nations when media and pundits and Americans gave Canada no hope and respect, our coach's game plan instantly became a game plan for success against the bullies from USA. Even when the opposition and the media here want us to panic and stray off course by creating chaos, we say no. We will stay focused and we will stick up for our game plan, because you know and I do too, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan is a land of opportunity.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, delivers for everybody. It allows us to fly the Canadian flag. It allows us to fly the Saskatchewan flag and lift this championship budget above our heads to celebrate.

Mr. Speaker, I support this balanced budget presented by Captain Finance. And as the opposition's amendment skates across centre ice with its proverbial head down, I reject it with a bone-crushing open-ice hit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Southeast.

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with urgency regarding the 2025-2026 provincial budget. This is not merely a set of numbers and fiscal allocation. This is about the real lives of people in Saskatchewan. This budget represents a profound failure to prioritize the needs of Saskatchewan's people.

Before delving into the critical issues in this budget, I would like to share that I turned 31 today, which means that in 2007, when there was last a Sask NDP government, I was in grade 7 and only 13 years old. Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the members opposite me that when they bring up decisions that the NDP government made in 2007, myself and a number of my colleagues were ineligible to vote. Mr. Speaker, it's evident that the Sask Party government is grasping at straws when they discuss the NDP government's history.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank my fellow caucus members for bringing an array of opinions and perspectives to the table. I'm proud to serve in a caucus made up of MLAs from an array of backgrounds, ages, genders, sexualities, ethnicities, and religions — truly a caucus that represents the diversity of Saskatchewan, allowing us to develop policies that reflect the needs of the entire province.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and thank my constituency assistant that works tirelessly to ensure that my office serves the people of Saskatoon Southeast. Matthew Hildebrandt has been an indispensable resource, providing invaluable insight and support. I'd also like to thank the remarkable staff in our caucus office who support us day in and day out. Their expertise, organizational skills, and research are the foundation upon which we can do our work.

Of course none of this would be possible without the unwavering support of my friends and family. My friends Maggie, Zach, Regan, Stephen, and Jeff are always available to talk and provide me with invaluable advice. My best friend, Meghan, and her kiddos Holden and Jack allow me to step away from my responsibilities as an MLA and play hide-and-go-seek and build forts, and they always keep me grounded.

I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to my family. They have supported me in every endeavour and have always believed in me. Thank you to my mom, sister, and brothers. I'd like to extend a special thank you to my grandparents, Rose and Dale. They've gone above and beyond by looking after my cat Sloth during my time on the road.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents have shared pressing issues with me that I am here to highlight today, issues that have not been included in this budget. Mr. Speaker, one of the most critical areas where this budget has failed is in supporting women. While I acknowledge the work done by the Justice department in developing the domestic violence death review, I am profoundly disappointed that this government is not taking its own advice.

The no. 1 recommendation in the DVDR [domestic violence death review] report is to provide education and raise awareness about healthy relationships. This is a life-saving preventative measure. If implemented, it could drastically reduce domestic abuse and human trafficking, and create a safer, more supportive environment for women.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, the statistics speak for themselves. Saskatchewan has the highest rates of gender-based violence and interpersonal violence in Canada, more than double the national average. We also have the second-highest rates of sexual violence and the third-highest rates of human trafficking in the country. And yet despite these devastating realities, this government has failed to provide the necessary resources to combat these issues. The government's announcements of some minor investments in second-stage housing sound promising, but when you look at the details, these efforts fall short of what is required. Is this really an increase or just a minimal adjustment in the face of overwhelming need?

Mr. Speaker, let's not forget that the DVDR report made it clear

that we need to focus on prevention to better equip police forces with specialized training. Yet we see this government funding an unclear and undefined police service that is supposed to support rural communities, without clarifying whether that will translate into specialized support for women facing violence. This government's failure to implement the DVDR's recommendation is not only negligent; it's downright dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, everyone has the right to a world where sexuality can be experienced as a pleasurable and positive choice, free from sexualized violence. Yet this budget does nothing to address sexual violence. Survivors of sexual assault require specialized support, but there is nothing in this budget to help them. It is as if their needs, their suffering, and their trauma don't even matter.

And let's not forget the looming threat of tariffs. If Trump's tariffs come into effect, it will exacerbate the struggles of women already facing economic barriers. Increased costs will make it harder to leave dangerous situations. This government's failure to have a contingency plan for such a crisis speaks volumes about its inability to protect the most vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, this budget does not support women, whether they are in unsafe situations or simply seeking basic health care. It falls short when it comes to services like HPV [human papilloma virus] testing, access to abortion, birth control, and mammograms for women with breast cancer. Instead of prioritizing women's health, this government has made cuts to health care.

It is disgraceful that women in Saskatchewan must travel to Calgary to access mammograms. Women who urgently need mammograms are being sent out of province to receive care that should be readily available right here at home. Mr. Speaker, this is not the United States; this is Canada. Saskatchewan is supposed to be the home of universal medicare, but this budget does not invest in health care. It cuts health care.

Not only that, it completely ignores one of the most pressing issues facing women across the province — affordable child care. Saskatchewan remains one of only two provinces that haven't signed the \$10-a-day child care agreement. Without affordable child care, women are being forced to choose between their careers and their families. And for many, the economic reality is that they can't afford to stay in the workplace. The \$10-a-day child care deal would support working mothers, boost our economy, and help ensure that child care remains a public service for the future. This budget is holding back women and hurting our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I have travelled across the province, meeting with countless community-based organizations that provide vital services to Saskatchewan. These organizations fill gaps where government supports fall short. I've seen first-hand how these organizations are helping the most vulnerable in our society. What I consistently heard across the province is a clear and urgent need for increased funding and multi-year support.

A mere 3 per cent increase in funding to organizations that are already struggling is simply not enough. I've heard about the challenges these organizations face, including difficulties in retaining staff due to short-term, one-year contracts, which are a result of reliance on single-year funding agreements with salaries

that aren't competitive due to funding shortages. High staff turnover is inevitable.

Many CBOs [community-based organization] are required to resubmit proposals, investing countless hours in the hopes that their efforts will pay off. Mr. Speaker, when I met with these organizations, I asked them about their biggest concerns. For many, the answer was clear — the looming tariffs imposed by Donald Trump. They fear that their operating costs will skyrocket; their funding will be reduced; donations will decline; and their clients, already marginalized, will face increased discrimination, fewer opportunities, and higher demand for their services. Their workloads will grow but the resources to meet those demands will remain stagnant at best.

It's not just community-based organizations that are suffering from insufficient funding in this budget. I've heard countless teachers, educators, and parents talk about the growing challenges within our education system. When we should be prioritizing investments in education, this government is making cuts that are directly harming children. And it's especially impacting kids with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, children with complex needs require additional support in the classroom, yet I've spoken to parents who can only send their child to school part-time because the necessary supports aren't in place. This forces parents to take time off of work to care for their children, which only increases the financial burden on families that are already struggling.

Education is a fundamental human right. By failing to adequately fund our education system, this government is depriving children with disabilities of their right to an equitable education.

While the government claims to be making record investments in the Saskatchewan assured income for disability program, they are still falling short. The increase to SAID works out to less than \$25 a month for people already struggling to make ends meet. People simply cannot survive on SAID.

With the rising cost of living and an affordability crisis, the support provided through SAID is woefully inadequate. On top of that, this government continues to require people with disabilities between the ages of 60 and 65 to withdraw from their CPP [Canada Pension Plan] rather than access provincial supports.

What I find even more troubling, Mr. Speaker, is the lack of any contingency plan to address the impact of tariffs. Tariffs will hit people with disabilities in ways this government hasn't fully anticipated. Already transportation is a significant issue for people who require specialized vehicles. The cost of these vehicles has already more than doubled, and when tariffs are implemented, those costs will rise even further.

But that's not all. Some specialized medical devices used by people with disabilities are manufactured in the United States. If tariffs are imposed, there is nothing in this budget to help cover the increased costs of these essential devices.

The people who need support the most right now, the most vulnerable, are the ones being left behind by this budget. It is these individuals who are being neglected in favour of short-term

financial gains that benefit few at the expense of many. Mr. Speaker, this is a budget that fails Saskatchewan's people. It is short-sighted, neglectful, and indifferent to the needs of the most vulnerable members of our society. Whether it's women facing gender-based violence, children with disabilities, or the organizations that provide essential services, this budget is a slap in the face to those who need support the most.

The people of Saskatchewan deserve better. They deserve a government that prioritizes their needs, that is focused on the future, and that ensures that no one is left behind. That is why I will not be supporting the budget as proposed by the government. I will be supporting the amendment made by the member of Regina Mount Royal.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

David Chan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I open my speech by acknowledging the Creator, Yeshua, my King. I am grateful again to be on Treaty 4 territory and to stand in this House speaking to this Assembly on behalf of my constituents in Yorkton in response to this year's budget.

Mr. Speaker, a strong economy is the bedrock of a flourishing province, and our government's history of responsible, reliable, sound fiscal management ensures that our province has the framework to see long-term, sustainable prosperity for generations to come.

There are many things to talk about with this budget, and over the next 20 minutes, I will. But let me start by saying that we are facing extraordinary, challenging, and uncertain times. We have the threat of US tariffs looming over our province. We have 100 per cent Chinese tariffs placed on some of our province's primary exports: canola, pork, and peas. We are now in a federal election, and previous to this we had a federal government that over the past 10 years has been unsympathetic and unsupportive of our industries, communities, and our reality of life here in Saskatchewan.

There are many challenges that are compounding, and I regret they seem to be converging on our great province and, quite significantly, on my constituency, Yorkton.

Yorkton has three of Saskatchewan's largest canola crush plants that employ hundreds of workers in our region: Grain Millers, Richardson, and LDC [Louis Dreyfus Company]. Together these companies have invested hundreds of millions of dollars into our region and helped put us on the map as an agri-food economic powerhouse.

Mr. Speaker, the targeted and punitive Chinese tariffs threaten our industries, our livelihoods, and our community. If prolonged, these tariffs will be devastating to our farmers, producers, and workers and to the local businesses that rely on a strong primary and secondary sector to generate the spending that keeps them open.

And do you know what the rub is, Mr. Speaker? I've heard it over and over from many a frustrated constituent. The rub is that these Chinese tariffs — or counter-tariffs, more accurately — are there because our federal government unnecessarily provoked China, one of our largest trading partners, with 100 per cent tariffs on

Chinese EVs [electric vehicle], all to protect a heavily subsidized, virtually non-existent EV industry in Canada East. And who is paying the price? Saskatchewan farmers, Saskatchewan businesses, Saskatchewan workers and families.

On this Ottawa has been silent and apathetic; hardly an article in the news about it either. To this I ask and my constituents ask, where is Team Canada? Team Canada is a wonderful-sounding catchphrase. It evokes feelings of pride and patriotism. It evokes sentiments of unity and togetherness. Yet for many of my constituents who are keenly aware of how our federal Liberal-NDP government has remorselessly targeted and penalized Saskatchewan's way of life, the use of the words "Team Canada" doesn't have quite such an appeal.

Mr. Speaker, as a nation we need to get our own house in order. Donald Trump did not invent the abuse of power. Long before he took office, long before US tariffs loomed large over our province and nation, this Saskatchewan Party government was taking on abusive policies and rhetoric from our own Prime Minister backed by the NDP I might add, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should look in our own backyard here in Canada if we want the Team Canada rhetoric to have more meaning.

For many of my constituents, when Ottawa or news agencies or even our own official opposition — who are on record opposing Saskatchewan-first policies — when they use the words "Team Canada," what many of my constituents hear is "Team Canada East."

Now it's not that my constituents are not patriotic. Far from it. These men and women are some of the most patriotic people you'll ever meet. They're farmers, truckers, business owners, blue-collar workers, moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas. They know the meaning of a hard day's work, and it is in their DNA to help their fellow man. When they give and share, which they always do, it's not because they've had it easy. It's because they've had it hard and they know the value of generosity.

Mr. Speaker, these are the people I've spoken with who feel that in the past 10 years Canada has forgotten them. There is a strong sentiment that Canada, or more accurately Canada East, has long been negligent and indifferent to the Western provinces. And to add insult to injury, the insinuation from any politician, east or west, the insinuation that if we don't wholeheartedly and unquestioningly agree to have our province, our industries suffer disproportionately higher, that we are somehow not a team player, that we are not patriotic. Mr. Speaker, I reject that outright and I resent the notion.

So while it's heartwarming to see the official opposition donning jerseys and cheering Team Canada, it's also more than slightly insulting to hear them parroting CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] talking points. Mr. Speaker, am I saying that they're disingenuous? Far from it. This opposition has been cheering the federal Liberal-NDP's antagonistic vision of Canada for years now.

But it begs the question, and I do wonder, are they on Team Saskatchewan? Where were the cheers when our government advocated for Energy East, Keystone XL, and Northern Gateway pipeline projects, projects that would have been a boon to our economy, to our nation, something that would have benefited so

many Saskatchewan families and workers?

[15:30]

Where were the chants when our government, showing prudence and foresight, opened trade offices abroad that diversified our export markets, putting us in a stronger position to face what we're facing today? Where were the elbows when our government stood up for Saskatchewan homeowners against the Liberal-NDP carbon tax?

Oh right, Mr. Speaker, they were opposing us every step of the way. They voted against these projects, opposed our market-expanding initiatives, and criticized our efforts to protect our own. Where, I ask, Mr. Speaker, where was the unity when it was Saskatchewan on the line? Crickets, Mr. . . .

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — Okay. He is making statements that get everybody stirred up, but let's listen carefully. I appreciate the chatter, but please continue on, Member. Let's keep it — otherwise I'll have to call it — so let's keep it fairly quiet so everybody can hear, please.

David Chan: — Where was the unity when it was Saskatchewan on the line? Crickets, Mr. Speaker. No cheers, no chants, no elbows or jerseys, no noble notions of unity. Not when it was Saskatchewan we were fighting for. Again, let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. This government, our government has been fighting for and championing Saskatchewan from the very first day we occupied this side of the House.

I said it during my campaign and I will say it here: I am in this role to put Saskatchewan first. I am part of this government to put Saskatchewan families, Saskatchewan farmers, Saskatchewan businesses, and Saskatchewan workers first, first, first.

Mr. Speaker, it is within this context and against this backdrop that I give my response to this year's budget. Remarkably, this is a balanced budget. Yes, Team Saskatchewan, and I would perhaps invite the opposition to show their support for Team Saskatchewan by coming and wearing blue and declaring that they will vote for a government, a conservative government that will actually support the pipelines and industries that they now claim to support.

Mr. Speaker, this is a strong, fiscally responsible budget by a strong, fiscally responsible government. At a time of great uncertainty and challenge, we in this province find ourselves in a position of economic and fiscal strength. It is why we have the second-highest credit rating among the provinces. Why we can boast the second-highest rate of growth. Why we have the second-lowest net debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product] ratio. This is no accident. We are in this position because of our government's strong, reliable track record of sound fiscal management.

Now let's talk about a piece of that last indicator for a moment — debt. This year's budget includes debt, as has been mentioned. Now I don't want to assume that everyone listening to me understands budgets. Alas, I make no claim to be an expert

myself, Mr. Speaker. However I did take finance in my undergrad. And so for the benefit of those who could use a refresher — and perhaps most especially for the member from Regina Mount Royal — I invite you to return with me to first-year university, finance 101.

The first thing you learn is that not all debt is equal. There is good debt and there is bad debt. Let me break it down for you a little more. We know this from our personal lives. Most of us know that credit card debt is bad debt, but what about borrowing to purchase a home? This type of debt would be considered good debt. Why? Because we are borrowing from future earnings, yes. Why? To acquire use of an asset in the present. And if you have strong credit and sufficient stable earnings to service your debt, well that's called investing.

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what this government has done. We've invested. We've invested into assets that the Saskatchewan people need right now. Just as you and I most likely did not wait until we saved up 3 or 4 or \$500,000 before buying a house, so too this government recognizes that building health care centres, long-term care homes, urgent care centres, highways, and schools, that work needs to start now.

The people of Saskatchewan cannot, should not, and need not wait for the province to save up the entire amount before benefiting from access to critical infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, utilizing serviceable debt to invest in capital projects is good fiscal management. Again I say this is a strong, fiscally responsible, balanced budget by a strong, fiscally responsible, and reliable government.

Now to the good stuff. There are so many good things in this budget. As with all budgets, the goal is to try to do the most for the most for the most — the most possible good for the most possible people for the most important needs. And let me say, this budget delivers for the people of Saskatchewan and for the folks in my constituency.

At a time when affordability remains a top concern for families, seniors, and young people, this budget delivers real relief. The largest personal income tax reduction since 2008 will benefit every single taxpayer in Saskatchewan. This means more money in the pockets of families and individuals trying to get ahead.

Mr. Speaker, it's here I want to take a minute to tell you about Alexis, one of my constituents. Earlier this month I had the privilege of delivering remarks at a Habitat for Humanity key ceremony, and I was so pleased to learn that the recipient of this new home was a wonderful deserving single mom who my wife and I know because our daughters play together.

With three beautiful daughters of her own, Alexis is an incredible courageous woman. She's a dedicated mom and a hard worker. And I have her permission to say this: she's been to hell and back. So that day to see her standing up there — still standing, I should say — still here, still fighting for herself and for her kids, and to see her get those keys to her new home, it was a moment that I'm so grateful to have been part of and a moment that recognized that Alexis is not only a fighter, she's not only still standing, she is winning.

Why do I share this, Mr. Speaker? Because budgets aren't just about numbers; they're about people. It's people like Alexis that we are here to serve, and there are so many stories like hers, stories that matter. That's why we are cognizant, Mr. Speaker, that when we build these budgets, it's for people like Alexis. These are her hard-earned tax dollars and this budget delivers for her and the many people like her, each with their own unique lives.

So what can Alexis expect from this year's budget? First she will see a reduction in her provincial income tax. She'll be able to claim a higher exemption amount for herself and a higher amount for each of her three children, saving her hundreds on her taxes. Now let's say maybe Alexis wants to put her children in recreational activities this year. Maybe dance or soccer. Well with the active families benefit she can now get back \$300 in tax credits for each child. That's double what it was last year. And for Alexis with three children, the active families benefit could mean up to \$900 back in her pocket.

Mr. Speaker, Alexis also put herself through school to become an LPN. And if she hasn't done so already, she may qualify for our graduate retention rebate program, a program that reimburses post-secondary graduates for a portion of their tuition through tax credits when they continue working in this province. For Alexis, if she were to receive this tax credit on her two-year program, it could mean as much as \$7,680 in her pocket.

Let's see what else there is. Alexis is also a new homeowner and her home is a new build. With our PST [provincial sales tax] rebate on newly built homes, Alexis and Habitat for Humanity could potentially have saved up to 42 per cent on the PST of the cost of the construction, which would equate to about \$5,000 assuming average home prices in the area. That's \$5,000 Alexis would not need to amortize.

Also, as a first-time homebuyer, Alexis might qualify for the first-time homebuyer tax credit. This year's budget sees a 50 per cent increase to that amount going from 1,075 to 1,575. That's \$1,575 that first-time homebuyers like Alexis can get back through their tax credits. This is money back in your pocket, Mr. Speaker.

And there's more. This year's budget decreases the education property tax mill rate on all property classes including residential like Alexis's new home. This means Alexis will pay less in property tax this year over last year, all things equal.

These are some of the direct benefits the budget delivers to individuals and families like Alexis. When you add that all up, it starts impacting the tens of thousands in tax relief. That's real relief, Mr. Speaker, that's meaningful for a single, working mom.

Mr. Speaker, going through this budget, I'm starting to feel like it reads like the thank yous at the Grammy Awards. There's a mention for everyone. I'd like to mention SIS [Saskatchewan income support], SAID, disability tax credit, caregiver tax credit — increase, increase, increase, increase.

Oh, who else am I missing? Oh yes, I'd like to thank the budget for raising the seniors supplement amount by 500. Seniors personal care home, I didn't forget you. You're going up by 1,000 to \$3,500. Long-term care homes, I know you're going to

like that one. It makes you more affordable to seniors and helps stabilize your occupancy.

And how can I forget small businesses? Your tax rate is getting locked in at 1 per cent, so you can keep doing what we know you do best — being the backbone of our local economy and indispensable members and contributors in our community. Small businesses, we couldn't do what we do without you.

Also got to give a shout-out to health care — \$8.1 billion. Wow, what a record. Look how far we've come. From so many locations closing down before we started to now six new hospitals and over 15 new long-term care homes. And now this: record-breaking investment even over last year's record-breaking investment. And I've got to tell the folks who didn't catch that, that's a budget increase.

This is where people can applaud, Mr. Speaker, as I get rushed off stage, but there's still so much more. How about the Flash CGM [continuous glucose monitor] monitors, vital for individuals living with diabetes? Well that's now covered for everyone aged 25 and under, and aged 65 and older.

Want to renovate your home? You can get a \$420 tax credit for that and even more if you're a senior. Go ahead, renovate your home and help stimulate the economy. We'll do our part and cut back your taxes if you do.

Municipalities, we're going to share even more of our PST revenues with you this year because that's how much we love you, and we know you spell "love" F-U-N-D-S. Sincerely, Mr. Speaker, we know how much this program matters to our municipalities, townships, and RMs. This year Yorkton will receive over 4 million from our provincial government, no strings attached.

Parents, we're going to invest in K to 3 [kindergarten to grade 3] literacy to give your child the best start he or she can get, because we know literacy levels are an early indicator of future success.

Mr. Speaker, there is so much more in this budget, it's impossible to unpack in this short time. But before I finish I must return to health care, because I know how much it matters to so many in my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, this year's record investment into health care is aimed at providing the people of Saskatchewan with better, more timely access to acute and emergency care, team-based primary care, and continuing care services. A key focus of the spending will be on reducing surgical wait times, and there's also investment under education to increase residencies and train downstream professionals in therapeutic fields, an area many constituents have told me is crucial for recovery in aftercare.

We also see funding for 60 new training seats for nurse practitioners, bringing the total to more than 900 seats overall in this province. This investment is a great move for our province as more and more people are learning and experiencing the incredible quality care nurse practitioners provide.

Furthermore a 7.4 million investment will allow the College of Medicine to add more in-province training seats for family medicine, anesthesia, and other specialties, bringing the total to

150 provincial seats. This integration between post-secondary and health care helps create the efficiencies Saskatchewan residents want to see.

Mr. Speaker, this budget delivers on the needs of everyday Saskatchewan people. It supports families, strengthens our businesses, expands access to health care, enhances community safety, and much more. It is a strong, fiscally responsible, balanced budget by a strong, fiscally responsible, reliable government.

It is a budget that delivers for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting the budget and I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Rochdale.

Joan Pratchler: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin my budget response I'd like to offer a few thank yous. Thank you to the people of Regina Rochdale who I serve, the businesses and the organizations and the child care sector that are counting on me to advocate for them and for those they care for.

[15:45]

I'd also like to thank my riding association executive who work year-round to make connections with neighbours in our community. I'd like to thank my constituency assistants, and of course my family who do all so much to keep those home fires burning. Thank you.

As many of you know, I have some experience in my careers that's serving me well these days. As a former principal, one having many skills, one of them would be a healthy skepticism — especially after recess when the stories of incredible boyhood innocence are first presented — and the patience of Job to help some find their way after they've burned every semblance of relationship with credibility, and help them return not only to the group, but more importantly return to themselves, strengthened.

As both an educator and administrator for over 30 years and as a registered nurse, we are trained and experienced looking for root causes, for patterns, for triggers. We investigate to look past and sift through the excuses to make sense of what challenges are placed around us. And as teachers — we know many of them are here, our colleagues — we know that being in these professions, before we can get to any details, we had better get the basic fundamental building blocks right first.

I appreciate the thoughtful responses of my colleagues on both side of the House regarding the details of various parts of this budget.

My response to the budget will revolve around women and the economy. After all, economic issues are women's issues, and women's issues are economic issues. Being the majority of the population, women have every right to have a budget that works for them and those they care for.

I taught math for many years, and that morphed into finance. But the best training I've ever received came from a nun, Sister Claire. She had one phrase that held its own after all these years.

And I can tell you, by the way, that behind closed doors, poring over financial records and teaching a greenhorn, I can tell you that nuns are no pushover when it comes to finances. They were as precision as they were astute, and learn from them I did.

Every budget I've created and every budget that has come across my desk to review since then goes through her same review process. Her voice still reverberates in my mind as clearly as the first time I heard it. She said, "Joan, show me your budget and I'll tell you your priorities." And this budget tells me a few things about this government's priorities. And to be blunt, this budget is not good enough for women, and so it's not good enough for the economy of this province.

So how about we all chew on this budget a bit, shall we? Let's begin. And we're going to do it this way, just like a seasoned teacher would do, by starting with a list of vocabulary words before we begin. I hope to be referring to some of them in my budget response. Feel free to check them off as you hear them.

Actuals — and it's easy to remember this because this aptly rhymes with "factuals." Sideways funding, like special warrants. Bamboozle. Situation audit. Anticipated expenditures. Hoodwinked. Contingency fund — it's a fancy word for just in case all hell breaks loose. And lastly, multiplier effect.

I'm particularly speaking through a women's lens on this budget, to any women who might be taking this in who might be wondering, how does one analyze a budget? Well let me give you some advice. Sometimes you might feel that you are hoodwinked into thinking this math is hard and that finance is too complicated, and fall into that sense of being bamboozled by all the fancy words and numbers. Pish posh — it's not that hard.

Before you even begin to do a budget, you need to gather data. That would be called a type of situation audit. You have to honestly ask yourself, what are the factors that will impact your money requirements and spending? What can you reasonably expect as anticipated expenditures to properly prepare for a reasonably accurate budget?

Well in Saskatchewan today we are on the verge of a trade war. You would expect there'd be some kind of contingency plan for all sectors and be braced — whether it be a small, a medium, or worse, a large hit — to avoid having ourselves bleeding money like water out of a culvert with a heavy spring runoff.

Well that didn't happen with this budget. No contingency plan and no fund. And I ask you, what would it hurt to have made a plan? Because what if, just what if you had to use it? And if you had it ready, you could pull the thing off the shelf and be ready so you wouldn't be scrambling at the last minute during a crisis nonetheless.

You'd also probably plan for the costs of addressing the money you owe to education and teachers, the majority of which are women. You'd probably want to address and rebuild for the future to backfill for all the needs that are going to continue to happen after COVID. Well that didn't happen, because on page 27 there's a budget number that is less — less — than what is forecasted in education. Less.

You also might even want to plan for a nurses' contract that's

coming up, and that's going to be a doozy. That budget line on 27 is also less than last year's forecast.

And when your budget is off because you anticipate expenditure more than you budgeted, or whether by surprise or poor planning, and you don't have enough money, you have to put a little extra funding in to meet those expenditures. And it has to come from somewhere and be accounted for. That's interim funding, or sideways funding. Well that's the best way I can explain it. That's money you put in from the outside of the budget process by special warrants. Watch for those. Those numbers come back to haunt you in the future. Factual actuals, they're backfill for budget shortfalls and often have a nasty, lingering ghost of budget problems.

Now we're going to move on to an economic concept called the multiplier effect. This is when, let's say, a dollar is put into the economy and how many times the value is multiplied and has added more to the economy. Some people use the phrase, you've got to spend money to make money. And if done properly, it usually works. If not, well you lose money, and your hard-earned money ends up going to someone else.

There's different schools of thought about the actual multiplier effect, from four times to seven times. Regardless, there's a multiplier effect of having more money generated than what you originally started with. So take for example, let's say that the federal government gave \$1.6 billion over five years to a province for something like, uh, child care. That money goes to child care and they pay their workers in, let's say, a rural area, who then spend on groceries at the local store. And now that store has to hire a few more workers to stock shelves because more people are buying things. And families, usually moms, now can actually go to work because they can save a bit more money that they otherwise would have spent on child care fees, which now that money can flow through the economy.

Now more people in that area are able to make a down payment on a car or are ready financially to build a house. They go to the bank, they borrow the money, and more construction workers have jobs, and so on and so on. The economy of that area is growing from that injection of \$1.6 billion from something as simple as child care funding could do.

It's like free money that could build the economy. Well actually, there is no free money. Let's just clear that up. We all pay taxes. We pay federal income tax. The child care agreement of \$1.6 billion is actually your income taxes coming back to this province, and it will do good things for our communities, families, and children.

And it's beyond me, it's beyond the care providers, it's beyond the families that we haven't got this sealed up yet — something that can grow the economy — and that, by this government not signing, is already shrinking our economy because it's affecting consumer confidence in our households across the province.

Over the past months, I've been criss-crossing the province and hearing the desperation in the voices of providers. Whether they be legacy child care centres, some of which are celebrating 40 and 50 years in operation in this province, they are now at the risk of closing because of the arbitrary and inequitable funding manner in their funding. And that's forced them to chew up their

reserves, when even some of the very newest centres, who are at the brink of opening, are worried now whether they're going to continue or not to the next phase. Because lending institutions are hesitant to renew their mortgages, because there's no certainty of funding, because the five-year extension to this agreement hasn't been signed.

But that's not all that's concerning them. It's not like the government can't do anything right now. Why are they dilly-dallying about signing this time? And while they are, they certainly can do something.

Right now, they could carve out a decent funding formula to address the inequities that face legacy centres and address inflationary pressures they are feeling that address the unique needs of different areas in this province. They could also address the issue of pay, create a salary grid that is respectful of the precious work our child care workers do, so that we could honestly say that we pay our child care workers more than zookeepers are paid. They could also be working on arrangements for a pension and a benefit program that every other social sector has. Pension and benefits are key to recruiting and retaining workers for long-term careers in this field.

All of this can be happening to help a sector that's suffering and screaming in crisis. Yet no one hears, no one appears to be listening, and there are none so deaf as those who will not hear.

I met with municipal leaders who are in the radius of the BHP Billiton mine. And now you're going to hear a good example of multiplier effect. I asked those leaders, so what issues were involved in making sure that this mine and the surrounding communities are vibrant and successful? They said they had two issues, two big ones. Housing. And do you know what the second-most critical issue was to ensure this BHP mine was a success? Child care. Child care.

Let me say that again for those at the back. Accessible child care is the issue that is central to the success of the economy of one of the biggest, newest mines in this province. Not financing, not transportation of product, not environmental issues. It's hinging on and dependent on having accessible, affordable child care. A mine. A potash mine dependent on child care.

That is not a conversation we would have been having 18 years ago, but we're having it now. And any government who wants to lead — or survive — best be realizing that after all, after all it's 2025. And for the record, women's work has always been vital to Saskatchewan's economy. They just never got paid for it. And women have every right to demand that now.

If you go to Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, and listen to the issues from the child care centres there, they're going to tell you that they're 400 spaces short of what they need in that city. How many women — and it is mostly women — who can't get back to school or get into the workforce because of the affordability crisis and they can't find affordable and accessible child care. I can tell you, 400 in P.A. for sure, and counting. And if you talk to the legacy centres here in Regina, there's over 800 spaces on the path of closing within the next six months to a year, and there are no 800 spaces in the waiting.

It's outrageous that this extension hasn't been signed. Every day

it goes unsigned, it added fear and uncertainty to an already precarious future for families across this province. Real time now. I can guarantee there's not one oil and gas sector company that has bake sales to prop up their operating budget and build their reserves. That would never happen. It shouldn't happen here either.

It's good economics for women to get this done, and it's good economics to have a budget for them as well. And if you don't respect basic economic theories like multiplier effect with \$1.6 billion in child care, then you don't have a budget that recognizes economics for women and you don't have a budget for all the people.

[16:00]

And no, this budget is not a snapshot. No budget is. It's an accumulation of 18 years of budgets. As if in some fanciful world a budget would be considered a snapshot. Well when you get enough snapshots put together, you get a movie. And this one's teetering on being in the class of the disasters like *Titanic*, staffed by too many Gilligans.

So, Mr. Speaker, I speak through you to the women of this province and share a little wisdom of them about wise budgeting. Budgets aren't hard to understand. Getting the priorities right is. And true to Sister Claire's word, this government has shown me its budget, and I will tell the people of Saskatchewan what this government's priorities are. Well they are not planning ahead. They are not accepting accurate assessment of a looming iceberg called tariffs. Their priorities are not women, not for children, not for families, and not for households.

What you have is a budget that's not worth the paper it's written on. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the budget. I will be supporting the amendment put forward by my esteemed colleague from Mount Royal.

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

Terri Bromm: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to acknowledge that I stand here on Treaty 4 territory and the traditional home of the Métis people.

Colleagues, it is my honour to stand before you today to discuss how the '25-26 budget will benefit the people of our province. I want to begin by expressing congratulations to the Minister of Finance in his first budget for delivering a balanced, responsible budget providing stability for our residents during uncertain and unprecedented times. It is a job well done by him and his colleagues.

This budget is a testament to our government's commitment to fiscal responsibility and focus on the priorities of Saskatchewan residents while addressing the challenges of this growing province. We are delivering a balanced budget with a \$12 million surplus while making strategic investments in affordability, health care, education, and community safety.

Mr. Speaker, today I will highlight investments that will benefit the residents of Carrot River Valley — the constituency that I am very proud of and honoured to serve — and benefit the people of

our entire province.

First though, I want to take this opportunity to recognize two amazing constituency assistants for Carrot River Valley. Shelley Meyer has been diligently serving our constituents for nearly 25 years. I am the fourth MLA that has had the pleasure to work with her. She is knowledgeable and dedicated to assisting our constituents and municipalities.

Wynonna Mroczo comes to us from Regina area. She most recently was a ministerial assistant in this very building. She has experience assisting others, is thorough in her role, and a great addition to our team. So to Wynonna and Shelley, thank you for all that you do. It is very much appreciated by me and has been acknowledged by others as well.

Regarding this budget, Mr. Speaker, it is a budget that prioritizes affordability in our homes and communities, improved access to health care, more supports for classrooms, and safer communities while providing still strong financial management. It is the strength of our economy that allows us to make investments in this province in our services, programs, and infrastructure for our residents.

The government continues to take measures to ensure that Saskatchewan remains the most affordable place in Canada to live, work, raise a family, and yes, start a business. Mr. Speaker, this budget will reduce taxes for every resident, family, and small business. We are delivering the largest personal income tax reduction since 2008. A family of four, earning a combined income of \$100,000, will see savings of \$3,400 over the next four years, while two seniors with a combined income of 75,000 will save more than \$3,100 over that same period.

In '25 residents will see more than 40 million in annual tax savings from the government, adjusting the provincial income tax brackets and basic tax credits to protect people from the rising cost of inflation. Altogether taxation changes, including the initiatives of *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*, will provide more than \$250 million in tax savings to our Saskatchewan residents.

Additionally there are more than \$2 billion in affordability measures. The budget helps make life more affordable. New post-secondary graduates, the retention program will increase by 20 per cent, providing students tax benefits when they choose to stay and build their futures here in this province. First-time homebuyers, the buyers tax credit will increase by 50 per cent.

Families with children, doubling both the active family benefit and its income threshold will make extracurricular activities such as children's sports, arts, culture, and recreational activities themselves more affordable for families. Persons with disability and caregivers, we are also increasing the disability tax credits and as well the caregiver tax credit and the infirm dependant tax credit.

In addition to the new and enhanced programs, the '25-26 budget continues to invest in ongoing affordability measures that assist with the cost-of-living pressures — to name a few, provincial sales tax rebate on new home construction, ambulance coverage for seniors, and secondary suite incentive. Small businesses are the backbone of this, our economy, and to support them we are

permanently maintaining the small-business tax rate at 1 per cent. Property owners will also receive relief in this year's budget. All education property tax mill rates will be reduced to absorb the increase in property assessment values.

Health care remains a top priority with the Ministry of Health receiving a record \$8.1 billion investment. The budget delivers improved access to care. This includes better access to acute care programs and services that will improve patient outcomes. Some of the acute care enhancements include reduced surgical wait times through an ambitious plan, and optimizing and realigning services at Saskatoon City Hospital to address in-patient capacity pressures by opening more than 100 acute medicine and specialized beds. Mr. Speaker, other acute care enhancements include completing and staffing the new breast health centre in Regina. We are also enhancing kidney health programs and dialysis services.

There is \$1.7 million going towards full-time equivalent positions in four communities, including my home community of Tisdale. This year's budget accelerates the hiring of health care professionals through the health human resources action plan. This includes 10 additional physician residency training seats and supports for 65 enhanced permanent, full-time nursing positions in 30 rural and northern communities. Rural, regional, and remote communities will benefit from improved access to primary care services with the addition of 27 new nurse practitioners.

Overall health capital funding has increased to 657 million, the highest in Saskatchewan's history. This funding will support major infrastructure projects, including the construction of the new Saskatoon urgent care centre and the construction of a new multi-level acute care tower at the Prince Albert Victoria Hospital, among others.

To highlight more investments, Mr. Speaker, \$5 million to initiate the construction for the Regina chronic pain clinic project, as well as \$3 million for the design of the Royal University Hospital's ICU [intensive care unit] expansion project. We are adding a second mobile mammography bus to increase capacity for women in rural and northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as always, mental health and addictions remains a priority for our government, making record investments in mental health and addictions programs and services. This will allow for continued progress on the multi-year mental health and addictions action plan. Targeted incentives expand mental health and addictions services and improved care. This includes capital funding for expansion of complex-needs emergency shelters in new communities.

Education is the foundation of our province's future, and our government has invested more than \$5 billion in the past two years in K to 12 education. Following the success of our pilot projects in eight schools, this year's budget includes funding for 50 additional specialized-support classrooms to help address learning challenges. Mr. Speaker, strong early literacy skills create foundations for lifelong academic success. The budget provides additional funding to improve K to 3 reading levels.

Investments in school infrastructure continues to be a priority. The preventative maintenance and renewal program is key to

allow boards of education and the conseil scolaire to maintain existing facilities. It provides funding for school divisions to address adding school infrastructure maintenance and repair needs. The program's formula has been updated to distribute funds more equitably in 2025. The North East School Division will receive \$2.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, our budget supports students pursuing post-secondary education close to home, and focuses on training programs to meet the needs of Saskatchewan's labour force and growing economy.

The Minister of Advanced Education is delivering operating and capital funding to continue the expansion of health care training seats in areas of critical need in the province. Funding will support more than 900 training seats, including 60 new seats for this year for nurse practitioners, registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, and medical radiologic technologists. Additional seats will be added for medical laboratory technology and respiratory therapy programs. Funding will continue development of the speech-language pathology and occupational therapy programs for our province.

Safe communities, Mr. Speaker, are vital for a thriving province. Two billion has been invested into community safety over the last two years through law enforcement support, municipal policing, and crime prevention initiatives. Increased funding for the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] will support operations in the province and the RCMP First Nations policing program.

Twenty ... 12 ... 14 ... whoops. Fourteen new safer communities and neighbourhoods personnel, SCAN, will be hired. Approximately 100 new municipal officers will be hired. The Saskatchewan Police College will receive funding to train more officers. And in addition to the above, 50 new positions will be funded for the Saskatchewan marshals service, which will become operational in a few months.

The Saskatchewan correctional centre expansion will be opened. Additional investments will support interpersonal violence programs and services, including important second-stage housing. Also, Mr. Speaker, new municipal bylaw hubs will streamline and improve bylaw enforcement and reduce strain on provincial courts.

The Ministry of Social Services will receive 1.6 billion in this year's budget to support Saskatchewan families and children in need. This includes 25 million dedicated to a provincial approach to homelessness. This budget increases the availability of safe and appropriate housing for individuals and families, along with commitments to create more supportive housing and increased funding to partners delivering emergency shelter services. And this budget contains funding for expanded homelessness services.

Mr. Speaker, the budget is enhancing services to people with disabilities. We are increasing income assistance benefits for the Saskatchewan income support and Saskatchewan assured income for disability programs by 2 per cent, benefiting more than 38,000 people across this entire province.

Among other initiatives to enhance and expand supports are a

\$200,000 investment that will expand the capacity and improve infrastructure at summer respite camps that provide seasonal respite for year-round caregivers and recreational services for adults with intellectual disabilities. Camp Buffalo and Camp Thunderbird run from June to the end of August, and will support clients with intellectual disabilities annually who reside in ministry-funded group homes, approved private service homes, family homes, or live independently.

I have a special place in my heart for Camp Thunderbird. Each summer camp accommodates about 250 individuals who participate in a variety of activities — group outings, boating, fishing, singsongs, crafting sessions, nightly campfires, and a formal banquet or awards night at the end of their week. I had the pleasure to work there for four summers during my post-secondary studies. The first summer I was the cook's assistant, where I peeled more potatoes than I likely will peel in my entire life, and the next three summers I was a camp counsellor. I can attest that for many of the campers, this experience is the highlight of their social life for the year.

A record 362 million will be provided in municipal revenue sharing to ensure that rural and urban municipalities have resources for local projects and services. This predictable, unconditional funding is three-quarters of one point of PST revenue. Municipalities in the Carrot River Valley constituency, the area that we represent, will receive over \$7.3 million. To highlight, Nipawin will receive \$1,349,562, and the RM of Arborfield will receive \$260,125.

[16:15]

The '25-26 Saskatchewan budget is about ensuring a strong, stable, and sustainable future for our province while making life more affordable, supporting businesses, and investing in services. This budget benefits the people of Carrot River Valley and the province by delivering tax cuts and affordability relief. We will continue doing the work, making the investments in health care, education, and safer communities.

More than ever, it is important we work together in this Assembly towards a shared vision of prosperity and opportunity for the future of the people of Saskatchewan. The current geopolitical reality today is very different from session a few months ago in December. Difficult choices come with preparing a budget that does not have an unlimited supply of money. Despite this, we are delivering on our commitments of affordability and safer communities and our commitment to address the challenges of growth, like crowded classrooms and access to health care.

We are strengthening our economy and promoting the economic interests of Saskatchewan here in Canada and around the world. With this balanced and responsible approach to this budget, there is a \$12 million surplus, keeping us in a strong fiscal position to respond to the ever-changing environment.

In closing, I will be supporting the original motion brought forward by the Minister of Finance and seconded by the member from White City-Qu'Appelle. I will not be supporting the opposition's amendment. Thank you for this opportunity here today.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Chief Mistawasis.

Don McBean: — You remember in my first time I got to stand up and speak uninterrupted? I told you how much I like to talk on and on. And in fact it even worked out that I got to speak over two days and set some sort of record for this. Today is not another day like that. We are running out of time. We really do want to give everyone a chance to speak. So my rather long and rambling speech is going to be quite succinct. I even have my timer on from when I was a classroom teacher, so we'll see how I can do with that.

It's about the big rocks. We come back to what's important. And this opportunity, one of the things I understand is important in this opportunity is to acknowledge some of the people in our world and the support they have. Of course my constituents, my executive, my CA [constituency assistant] that I got to speak to. I want to bring out special attention to my new family, my brothers and sisters on this side of the House. They've been outstanding through these speeches, through the last couple of months. The support that they are offering is amazing. I'll stop there.

I also wanted, as much as I love my five grandchildren, as much as I love my siblings and my wife — whose name I have to say, the love of my life, Valérie Labé — I wanted to talk about my grandfathers. And I don't get nearly the right chance to articulate everything I wanted to tell you about them, but I want to mention their names because if I think about why is it that I'm here, how did I get here, and I go back a little bit, I'm talking about my grandfathers.

Archie McBean came out to Saskatoon in 1905, started one of the first pharmacies in Saskatoon on the corner of 2nd Avenue South and 20th. And just because I know you all care so much about how to pronounce my name, I'll tell you that in the '60s when they tried to name a street after him, he refused because he didn't want anyone living on "mc-been" street. An amazing fellow.

My other grandfather, my maternal grandfather, L.B. Thomson . . . Some of you know that name because you've been down south of Gravelbourg and you've been to Thomson regional park. Thomson regional park is my grandfather. L.B. came over from New Zealand at the age of 18, rode a steamer, ended up in Olds, Alberta somehow. I don't think I've heard that story in much detail. Went to Olds College of Agriculture. Went on to become director of agricultural research, Swift Current. Raised my mom for a number of years down at the end of the road in Manyberries, Alberta. Became director of the PFRA [Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration], for which he was honoured with that park.

This is who we are, on all sides very likely. And it's been an amazing journey for me to sort of recognize that that's who I am, and how proud it makes me to be in this House speaking. And oh boy, that timer. I knew I shouldn't have looked down at that timer.

The budget. This one, I've got to put this one in though because I actually worked on this one. I prepped this one. Alliteration of the day: a pastiche of platitudes, pontifications, and pretend promises. Imaginary is not too strong a word for this. We take

the big number. We take the so-called surplus, by my math — and I actually do like math and checked this a few times over — 0.046 per cent. I think anyone making a budget, and it's not me making a budget, that calls 0.046 per cent a surplus and repeats it over and over and over again are living in an imaginary world. It's not going to happen. See you next year.

And speaking of next year, I jumped over. I wanted to talk about last year. You know, last year for budget, that was my first time ever to the legislature. I'm a substitute teacher. I came down with STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation]. I was out on the front, got to come up in the gallery, and I was very concerned at what I saw, especially from the other side. Well absolutely from the other side. The hubris, the heckling. I turned to my other teacher colleagues and said, really; this is what this looks like? And they said, yeah, it does.

Isn't it interesting last week it wasn't like that at all. And we can draw our own conclusions as to why now we're a little quieter. Might have something to do with looking at 27 pairs of eyeballs looking at them as the government-in-waiting.

My timer's done. But if we're talking about big rocks, I want to repeat what I said in my so-called maiden speech. It's a poem that has guided me for the 35 years that I've known it.

He built a wall to keep me out.
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had wit to win.
We drew a circle and brought him in.

I would like to think that we're all working together. It's really hard for me to keep convincing myself of that, given what we're looking at here.

I'll skip that part, and I'll skip that part, and I'll go to the highlighted to say, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this year's budget. I will be supporting the amendment from the member of Mount Royal.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure to rise in my seat to respond to the budget for the 21st time in my legislative career. So there you go.

Now Mr. Speaker, I say the budgets have gotten better since I first became a member here, especially that 2003 to 2007 period. That was a bit trying. I happened to be the Finance critic for a couple of that, the member from Mount Royal, if you like, from back then.

You know, some of you were around. I know all of you paid lots of attention back then, so I got a little skill-testing question for you. Who was the Finance minister that raised the PST to 9 per cent?

Some Hon. Members: — Andrew Thomson.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Oh my goodness. Well it was probably, geez '06, I think, yeah. No. Yeah. Well it would have

... I was Post-Secondary critic, '03, '04, '05. So '06 or '07. So you betcha — 9 per cent.

Anyway I'm getting off track and I'm limited by time. So yes, it was Andrew Thomson. Yes, you're all correct. It was an NDP government that raised the PST to 9 per cent. And like I said, budgets have gotten a lot better since then, Mr. Speaker.

I want to talk about my family. I want to talk about my wife, Trish. She's working at St. Paul's Hospital. She's a manager of major giving there, celebrated last week a donation from TD Bank [Toronto-Dominion Bank] — \$225,000 to the kidney campaign that they're working on there. So she does a lot of great work in that.

[Applause]

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Yeah, let's give a hand to all foundations in Saskatchewan and the good work that they do.

I got some news. My son Carter, he's engaged. He's going to be marrying Meredith Stotz — a 2026 wedding coming up in the family. He's with Mallard Wealth management and he's a financial planner, doing some great work for people of his age and encouraging them to put a few shekels away for their retirement later on.

My daughter Paige is at McMaster University in Hamilton and enjoying her studies there, doing a master's degree in health care and trying to get into medicine. And it's difficult — and I know that from my day job as well — but I wish her well and she's doing very well.

I want to thank my CA Brianne Toupin who is, you know, the only government CA in Saskatoon right now. So the phone is ringing a lot, you know. We're helping out people from across the province and helping out members across the way as well who need a government MLA's office to talk to. But I thank Brianne. She's the friendly voice that answers and tries to, no matter who's calling or where they're calling from, tries to get them the answer they need.

I want to thank Jacquie Klebeck, who does my communications, does my newsletter that goes out to almost 10,000 people across, well across North America, mostly in Saskatchewan. But she does a great job in social media as well. And Jacquie's been in my office a long time and does an excellent job.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been at this job about 120 days. It's amazing. It is indeed a privilege to be the Minister of Advanced Education. It's a wonderful portfolio. It's got, you know, so much to see and do, and it affects our economy so much. The 59,000 students that we represent here in Saskatchewan that are post-secondary students, they create so much for our province in both the economy and the culture and just the vibrancy of our province.

A few days after I became the minister, I got invited to the Fedoruk Centre at the University of Saskatchewan, just a phenomenal place. And they talked about not only the work that they are doing, but the work that they were doing with the University of Regina, with Sask Poly. It was just wonderful to see not only the work that they're doing but the collaboration.

And that's what we see in post-secondary education, you know.

The U of R [University of Regina], the U of S, Sask Poly, First Nations University, SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies], and the regional colleges, everyone gets along and they work together and they complement each other. So we certainly are very, very pleased about that. We benefit in so many ways.

As many of you know, I enjoy sports, and our universities contribute so much to the sporting world. The U of S Huskies hockey team, the basketball team, the volleyball teams have done so well. You know, we had an opportunity, . . . Small Saskatchewan story: I go to the game, somebody says, "Oh hey, the Premier's here." Well I didn't know the Premier was there, so I texted him and he said, "Hey, you got an open seat beside you?" So I go and talk to the Premier, or he comes and sits beside me. And then we see the president of the university and we all have a chance — not knowing that each one of us were going to be there — to celebrate together.

I was recently at the Rams dinner the other night, you know, seeing a great football program. I could go on and on. But we really do benefit from the U of S, from Peter Stoitcheff; and U of R, Dr. Jeff Keshen; Sask Poly, Dr. Larry Rosia; and Riel Bellegarde. And I can't mention all the regional colleges, but it's just wonderful.

[16:30]

And you know, I wanted to talk about two different things in my speech here, but it's going to be an abbreviated version. I might have to put it on my website or something like that if anyone's interested. But I wanted to talk about Advanced Education, of course. But being from Saskatoon and so proud to be from our largest city and represent the people of Saskatoon Willowgrove, I want to talk about revenue sharing: \$66.5 million, no strings attached, from the Government of Saskatchewan to the city of Saskatoon.

We even had a cheque made so I had an opportunity to take the cheque on budget day and the mayor of Saskatoon was there with me, and she graciously received the cheque. And we even had an opportunity . . . I kept the cheque for two days. I thought the minister should probably get the interest on that \$66.5 million for, you know, just having that money for two days. But that never will happen.

But you know, we had an opportunity to see the Finance minister speak to the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce, and it was a packed house. And everyone was there and I brought the cheque and we put it up at the front, and everybody came and took a look at it and said, well what is that? What is revenue sharing?

I said, "Well that is something that when I first was elected in '03 that we asked the NDP government to do for four years. And they said yes, we're going to do it. Yes, next year. Yeah, no, we're going to do it next year." You know, Harry Van Mulligen — good friend — was the Finance minister but, Mr. Speaker, as so often happened back then with the NDP government, they just didn't get it done. You know, Mr. Speaker, they tried. They agreed, but they didn't get it done.

The minister had questions about revenue sharing. Yes, he had questions about tariffs. He had questions about tax decreases and making life more affordable for residents of Saskatoon and those across the province. He answered all of those questions. Jason Aebig and Prabha Ramaswamy, they were great in hosting him and doing all of that.

Before I get into the budget any more, I want to talk . . . a couple more constituency notes. The Willowgrove University Heights Community Association, a wonderful group. The member from Saskatoon Silverspring and I were there giving out coffee and doughnuts and hot chocolate. And a wonderful organization. And they always invite me. And it was great to be there and thank them. Community associations do so much for our province, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank, you know, the many members of my riding association, my constituency association who came out and helped. And you know, they do so much for me year-round.

I can't talk about the constituency of Saskatoon Willowgrove without mentioning the four new schools that were announced in last year's budget. And now they are receiving additional funds to ensure that those schools get built as soon as possible. Four new schools, yes, in one constituency — two high schools, two elementary schools. The high schools are going to be amongst the largest in the province, and we're so excited to see that happen.

I'm so excited to see the money for education in our budget and certainly the money to fund the arbitrator's ruling on teachers and education. Just wonderful that we're able to do that. And I do value teachers very much and enjoy talking to them, not only at election time but throughout the cycle as well, and I appreciate that.

I had the opportunity to join the Education minister at John Dolan School. We met with the Saskatoon Public board there and it was amazing. Sixty of the highest needs kids in the province there. And the people that work there are just wonderful. It's a wonderful opportunity. And I saw something that stuck with me. It's called Eyegaze. It's like an iPad. And somebody that doesn't have the use of their arms or doesn't have the ability to speak can gaze at an iPad, if you can believe that, concentrate on one area — and you know, there was about nine different areas — and it could say, hello. It can say, "my name is" and just by the gaze of an eye. Incredible technology, incredible work. And you know, we're going to hear about that I think as well.

You know, I want to get back to Advanced Education because I could go on and on, but I just want to say a big thank you to my team and my office in the Advanced Education office. And I know members from the opposition as well as my colleagues have been in my office and they get treated very well. You know, my instruction is, if an MLA comes in here, they're representing the people of Saskatchewan. They get top-shelf attention right away.

So I want to thank Cindy, Dawn-Marie, Jodi, Rushang, and the chief of staff, Josh, for all the work that they do in my office. And they work for every one of us in here and every person in the province.

[Applause]

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thank you for that. I know my time is running really short, but the theme of our provincial budget is *Delivering for You*, a commitment to support education, health care, affordability, and community safety. The Ministry of Advanced Education budget's \$788 million for the '25-26 fiscal year demonstrates this government's unwavering commitment to the post-secondary sector.

This investment is not made in isolation. It is deeply aligned with Saskatchewan's Growth Plan, the labour market strategy, and the health human resources action plan. And again, when I meet with the universities, with Sask Poly, with the regional colleges, they're all very familiar with the growth plan; and they're all aligning their classes towards the growth plan so we can have as many people working in our province and contributing to the economy as well. We are allocating \$718.2 million direct support for post-secondary institutions — 454 million for universities and their affiliated colleges, \$186 million for Sask Polytech, 35.8 million to strengthen the regional colleges, and 40.9 for infrastructure projects and maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on, and I can go in depth. And I so want to do that, but I want to be respectful of other people's time as well here, Mr. Speaker.

Yeah, I do want to talk about the graduate retention program. It offers an increase, a \$4,000 increase from 2024. \$24,000 in tax credits for graduates who choose to live and work in the province. Since it launched in 2008, this one-of-a-kind program in Canada has benefited — how many? — 85,214 individuals. No wonder, Mr. Speaker, this province has grown by a quarter-million people since this government took office, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that members on both sides of the House . . . I even heard that members on that side of the House took credit for the graduate retention program. Well they should. Every member here should because it is benefiting the province. And even though it wasn't yours, you can take credit for it — absolutely, absolutely, absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

I want to talk about student loans in the province, Mr. Speaker, you know, student loan forgiveness. 730 health care professionals have had their student loans forgiven, and more than 23,000 students will benefit from nearly \$113 million in financial assistance, Mr. Speaker.

While I know that my time is getting short here, I do want to talk about, you know, a very important college in our province here, the College of Medicine. And it is something, as Minister of Advanced Education, that I take very seriously. I think that we can do better. I think we can improve. We already have.

When I was first elected here we had 60 seats in the U of S College of Medicine. Now we have, going up, we're going higher from 104 to 108 seats. And I know that there's about 800 people that apply for those 108 seats. So there's room to do more, and we're going to be looking at some innovative things, but I want to just highlight that and the 150 post-graduate resident seats that we have. The 15-seat expansion of the physical therapy program. I could go on and on.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the nurse practitioners. We've got a new program starting in the fall at the University of

Saskatchewan and that's nurse practitioners and physician assistants. The physician assistants is the new program that's starting, and it's just wonderful to see that happen.

Mr. Speaker, while I do have a couple of minutes, I should thank the former minister sitting right beside me here for all the work that she did. And I certainly was able to hit the ground running with the great work that she was able to do and her predecessors as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I could go on and on and talk about the infrastructure in Saskatoon and talk about the 109 new acute care beds at Saskatoon City Hospital. It's wonderful news, and no matter what side of the aisle you sit on here, 109 new beds for the city of Saskatoon is good news. It's never enough, I know that, but yeah, let's give the Health minister . . . You know, 22 acute rehabilitation beds, 12 acquired brain injury beds, 60 in-patient general medicine beds, and 15 high acute beds.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to skip forward here, as I have to do for sure. I had an opportunity just a week or two ago to join the Minister of Trade, and we welcomed high school students from the northern village of Pinehouse to the Petroleum Technology Research Centre. Kids from Pinehouse going to the PTRC [Petroleum Technology Research Centre], meeting with a couple of ministers but meeting with some really smart people that work there as well.

Last month I had an opportunity to visit Suncrest College, and meetings in Melfort, and there was many MLAs that were able to join. And you know, they had two meetings. They had one in Yorkton and one in Melfort. I was able to go to the Melfort one but not able to attend the other one. But I look forward to, at the conclusion of session, to get out there and see all the regional colleges and all the great work that they've done.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make you aware — and I know you are, members on this side are — the infrastructure in the city of Saskatoon, the education, the economic development, and of course the post-secondary education facilities. \$200 million committed to the new Sask Poly. If you're up in Saskatoon, and I know many of you live there and some of you come up and visit from time to time, take a look at what's happening there and the great synergies that there are going to be with the University of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I haven't had time to get into a lot of areas here. I just want to take 30 seconds and thank the Premier for the great work that he's doing. You know, when I look back over the time that he's been Premier, it hasn't been easy. Going through COVID, you know. And I know in private conversations with all members in the House, they would say, my goodness, you know, the work that he's done. And there is no playbook written on COVID, but I was very proud of what happened.

And in as many ways the situation that we're in is like COVID. You don't know what's happening one day to the next. You know that you have to do the best. And you know, there are times . . . And it was great to see yesterday that the opposition leader agreed with the Premier and supported what he was saying. And that does happen from time to time.

But these are challenging times, and I'm very, very proud of the

Premier and the Trade minister and everyone who's working so hard on this side of the House and members on the other side that are trying to put their ideas forward as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, *Delivering for You* is the theme of this budget. Many colleagues have had an opportunity to go more in depth than I was able to do today. But it's balanced, it's responsible, and it's focused on what matters most to Saskatchewan people — providing stability. And that to me is what hits home — providing stability.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the budget as moved by the Finance minister and seconded by my good friend the member from White City-Qu'Appelle. And I'm sorry, I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity.

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

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I'll just let the member from Willowgrove know that I will pass on your compliments to Andrew Thomson about the amazing graduate retention program that he created. I'm sure he will love that. I won't sign your name; I don't want to be caught for forgery. But I will pass, I will pass on the sincere thanks. I'm sure it will mean very much to him.

You know, and I'll apologize in advance, I did have to cut eight minutes from my speech with this handy little red pen. So I'll try and hit the highlights or the lowlights, depending upon your perspective, members.

Mr. Speaker, every day that I come into this building it brings me pleasure and joy. However it brings me absolutely no pleasure and joy to ponder what this budget means for the people of Saskatchewan. You know, I have to be honest with you. When I saw the budget document, I thought it was an advertisement for a meal delivery service, Mr. Speaker, because it says on the outside, *Delivering for You*.

[16:45]

You know, honestly, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of Saskatchewan would have rather had ramen or pizza on the 19th than this budget. Because all this budget does is deliver more debt, more cuts to health care, more cuts to education, and does nothing to support people who are struggling with mental health and addictions and the looming tariffs.

You know, Mr. Speaker, for me to explain why I'm voting against this budget, I need to start at the beginning, truly at the beginning, with babies. Each day in Saskatchewan around 36 babies are born, babies born with a thousand dreams yet to be dreamt and hope for the future.

Instead of these babies being given a gift of promise and opportunity by this government, what do they start life with? \$32,000 in debt, and a province that is more dangerous, more expensive, with a weakened public education system and health care system, and where they will statistically, Mr. Speaker, live shorter lives than their parents. Such a remarkable gift to give to a baby.

Mr. Speaker, I've always loved math. The thing about math is it will never lie to you. It will never beguile you with a story that simply does not add up. So let's talk about the budget, the math of this budget.

Never in Saskatchewan's history has it been so dangerous to be a teenager. We are in the midst of an addiction crisis without parallel. Yesterday I listened to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions respond to the budget, and the nicest thing that I can say about that is it made me feel really sad. Sad, because of the thousands of young people's lives and futures that are in her hands and in our hands, Mr. Speaker. And frankly, I'm at a loss for words.

The minister boasts about the exceptional work that our government is doing. And she went so far to suggest that other provinces should come here and follow our lead. The nicest word I can find to describe that is "odd." Evidence is everywhere that this isn't working. The math is cold and hard and grim — 3,000 dead young people.

In Saskatoon we had 19 overdoses in one day — 19. But everything is going according to plan. In our major cities firefighters are spending 70, 80 per cent of their time resuscitating people. One firefighter told me he resuscitated four people before lunch. All this is according to the plan. In Saskatoon we have two of our libraries closed because of overdoses. Last week another agency had to close its doors because a 15-year-old pregnant girl OD'd [overdose]. The staff was so traumatized they've closed temporarily. This plan isn't working.

Our Saskatoon caucus recently met with city councillors. Conservative and progressive, they all said the same thing, Mr. Speaker. They wanted to get back to the job of running the city, and they wanted this government to do their job. What makes me angry is that all of us see that this plan isn't working every day.

It also was unavoidable, Mr. Speaker. In 2017 community leaders in Saskatoon saw this crisis coming. It was like watching a tsunami approaching a shoreline. We called on the government to do something. And what did they do? What did they do? They cut funding to dozens of programs and agencies that supported people living on the edge. And then they changed how they paid accommodation to people on social assistance.

I vividly remember sitting around our supper table talking about this, and my youngest child, who was eight at the time, had a puzzled look on his face. And he thought about it for a second and he said, that's a horrible idea. If it took an eight-year old two minutes to figure out that this was a bad idea, how has it taken eight years and this government still can't figure out that this was a horrible idea? These changes were like pouring gas on an open flame. It made everything worse. All these young people didn't need to die.

Mr. Speaker, as you can tell, I'm very passionate about this. I decided to run for provincial politics when we found a young girl frozen to our back fence. This grim crisis continues to devastate our province.

And this crisis is not free. Business owners in Saskatoon list this as the biggest challenge facing their business. I invite the

Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to take a walking tour of Saskatoon's core with us so she can see what's actually happening in our core neighbourhood.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk to you about the crisis of young people leaving this province. The members opposite love to talk about the population of Saskatchewan. They're so immensely proud of it. But you know, population growth or decline is a simple math equation, like so much of what we do here. You take the existing population. You add births. You add people moving from other provinces. You add people moving from other countries. And then you minus deaths and people moving away. It's simple math.

Now let's look at that math for a second. The province has some control over people coming and going from other provinces and births and deaths, and they have little control over immigration as that's a federal responsibility. I hear the members opposite boast about these population stats, but that's just more Sask Party math, Mr. Speaker. Everything good that happens, they take credit for. Everything bad is someone's else's fault. But like every good math teacher, I say show your work. Show me how you got the answer.

When it comes to deaths, I ask, does the man that died in an ambulance that was diverted from Lloydminster to North Battleford not matter in this equation? Does the 92-year-old that froze to a concrete pad at a personal care home not matter? Do the 3,000 young people that overdose not matter in this equation? All these things have caused our population to decline, Mr. Speaker.

Now let's talk about net immigration. In the last number of years, 68,782 people have moved away from our province. That's like two of our four largest cities moving to BC. The math doesn't lie, Mr. Speaker. Three of the four worst periods of net outward immigration occurred under this government. We have one of the worst immigrant retention rates in the country.

So everything that this government does to control our population has caused it to decrease, Mr. Speaker. Yet our population goes up. Well, Mr. Speaker, math will solve this mystery. This government loves to attack the federal government, and I'll admit I'm no fan of it either. But isn't it ironic? Isn't it like a fly in your chardonnay? Isn't it like a rain on your wedding day, Mr. Speaker? Isn't it like good advice that this government just couldn't take? Isn't it ironic that the thing that this government is the most proud of was actually an accomplishment of the federal government? Remarkable.

On social media, sometimes people like to set their relationship status as "it's complicated." Clearly this government has a complicated relationship with the federal government. But, Mr. Speaker, it isn't complicated. People just want a government that makes it easier for kids to stay in Saskatchewan.

As the shadow minister for Seniors in long-term care I've travelled to a lot of facilities across this wonderful province. This government has managed to fail at the one thing that every young child understands — we all get old. This is the easiest part of the health care system to plan for, yet this government managed to be completely unprepared for even that.

Nearly every day I hear horror stories of people being left in undignified situations — seniors drugged, people that aren't even incontinent in diapers due to inadequate staffing. We have a system with massive capacity issues, and people waiting for everything — programming, respite beds, long-term care, and even sadly to die, Mr. Speaker. Seniors deserve better, and I'll continue to advocate them through the coming session.

Recent history and facts tell us that we're going to have a deficit. This government has run deficit after deficit. There is an old saying, third time is a charm. Well I guess for the Sask Party it's eighth time a charm, because it took them eight years to finally balance a budget. I have listened to the members opposite tell us again and again that this budget is balanced. It's like a person at the roulette wheel calling wildly out, lucky number 12 million, as the wheel spins round and round and round.

Sorry. This place and its grandeur, I think, can go to your head. Makes you feel that you're somehow special, spending billions of dollars a day. Something that I've said many times knocking on a door is us politicians need to be humble enough to say that we don't have all the answers. I've never once heard this government ask a question that they didn't know the answer to or seek someone's opinion.

Central and most important thing to fix anything, whether it be a combine or the health care system, is to seek an understanding of what is broken and acknowledge when something isn't working. This budget does neither of those things.

As a result I will not be supporting the motion moved by the members opposite. Instead I'll be supporting the amendment moved by the member from Mount Royal.

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've only got a few minutes here, but I'm going to go with a few thoughts to take us to the end of the day.

It's been really interesting sitting in this Chamber over the last few days, listening to the speeches from this side of the House versus that side of the House. And it's been very clear that the Sask Party government lives in a very different world than that of regular Saskatchewan people, because day after day and speech after speech we have heard nothing but glowing reviews about the situation that Saskatchewan people face. And yes, there are a lot of things to be proud of in this province, a lot of things. But there are a lot of issues that Saskatchewan people brought to our attention during the election in October that are going unanswered in this budget.

Yesterday the Health minister talked at length about the initiatives that this government is bringing in with this budget. What he didn't mention is that 200,000 people in this province still do not have access to a primary care physician. That means people, one out of six people in this province are wondering every day when their child gets sick, what do I do? Do I go to an emergency room and sit there for 10 hours and maybe see a doctor? Or do I keep him at home and hope it's not too serious? If they're suffering from chronic illness, what do they do? What do they do when they need a prescription filled?

These are questions that we heard on the doorstep day after day during the election, and this budget does nothing to address those things. Five hours a day, City Hospital emergency room is being closed until June — every day. That's not addressed in this budget. We know that there's 526 fewer rural nurses across this province under the Sask Party's watch. That has meant 8,613 days of temporary service disruptions or blackouts across this province in rural health care facilities. No emergency rooms. No labs. No doctors.

These are all in their constituencies in rural Saskatchewan. These are Saskatchewan people who are not getting the health care that they so desperately need. And this budget does not address that. Their solution: build more urgent care facilities, just like they've done here in Regina. But the problem, Mr. Speaker, is about staffing. That has been the issue all along.

And you can build new buildings across the province and in this city and in Saskatoon and in North Battleford, but you need the staff to actually staff it. And if you look at the urgent care centre in Regina, all the doctors that are there are the emergency room doctors that already existed in the Pasqua and the General. Those doctors are now just taking care of three facilities instead of two. So when they bring on another urgent care centre in this city, who's staffing it?

Now there's been thunderous applause from the other side about the government being champions for women, women's health. And I got to share that one of the most common emails that I get is from women who cannot access mammogram service in the city of Regina. They email my office and tell me frantically with tears that they are being scheduled 13 months away to receive a mammogram, even when they've found a lump in their breast. I can't imagine what that is like. And this is something that this side of the House has been talking about for over a year. This is not acceptable for Saskatchewan women to be facing.

Speaker Goudy: — It now being 5 p.m., this Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. Thank you.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Advanced Education

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Health

Hon. Daryl Harrison
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
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
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