



FIRST SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

of the

## Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

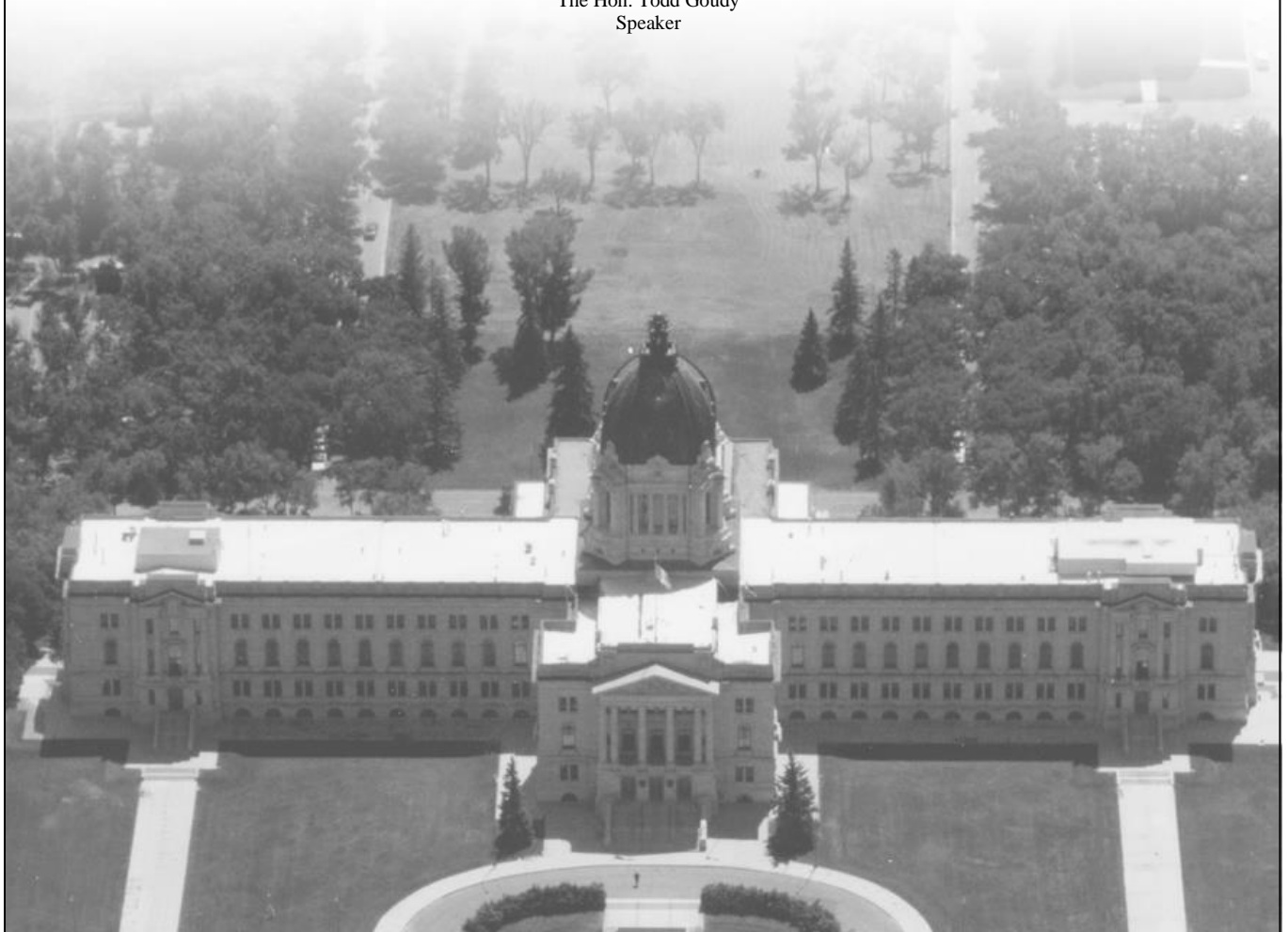
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# DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

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(HANSARD)

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authority of  
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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**Young**, Hon. Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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**Standings**

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 Minister of Advanced Education.

**Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, 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.

**Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff:** — Well colleagues, it is indeed a pleasure of mine today to introduce, to you and through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Legislative Assembly, the 11th premier of Saskatchewan, Donald Grant Devine. I don't know how many times in my career that we've had a chance to welcome a former premier to the House, but it is indeed an auspicious occasion. Grant Devine served, as I said, as 11th premier of Saskatchewan elected on April 26th, 1982; became premier May 8th, 1982; and served until November 1st, 1991.

Premier Devine oversaw an election where 55 of 64 seats at the time were elected members of the Grant Devine government. Grant and his wife, Chantal, were quite a team, a political team in our province. Premier Devine was preceded by Allan Blakeney and followed by Roy Romanow as premier. He was born in Regina. He holds a Bachelor's of Agriculture degree from the University of Saskatchewan, a Master's in Ag Economics from the University of Alberta, and a Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] from The Ohio State University in Columbus, so known as Dr. Grant Devine.

His theme in his election in 1982 was "Open for Business." If you remember back then, interest rates were 21, 19, 18 per cent. His government reduced interest rates for new homeowners to eleven and three-quarters, and that was seen as quite a thing.

The Rafferty-Alameda dam and the Rafferty-Alameda, those members in the South especially but across the province, will know that area of the province. The lake has been named Devine Lake in his honour.

[Applause]

**Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff:** — Yes. He was responsible for establishing the nitrogen plant that became the Saskferco plant in southern Saskatchewan. And when I became minister of Crown Corporations in the Brad Wall government we had an opportunity to sell that facility to the private sector and use those funds to build the children's hospital in Saskatchewan.

This introduction is special for me as I had an opportunity from 1989 to 1991 to serve as Premier Devine's personal assistant. And presently he continues to serve his province. He's on the

board of governors at the University of Saskatchewan. Members will know that there's a reception following the proceedings today in the House, and Premier Devine will be there as will the board of the University of Saskatchewan.

So ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, please help me in welcoming the 11th premier of Saskatchewan. They say that we stand on the shoulders of those who have come before us, and that is indeed the case for members on this side of the House. Thank you, colleagues.

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

**Vicki Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the minister opposite in welcoming Premier Grant Devine to his Assembly, welcome back to his Assembly, thank him for his service to the people of this province. We know that no member who sits here serves alone. It takes a village of friends and family to support us, and I want to thank him for his service to the people of this province.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome three guests sitting in your gallery today: Fred and Heather Wright from Enfield, Nova Scotia — give us a wave, thank you — and Adam Cooke from Regina here in the capital city. These guests here today came to witness the opening of the new breast health centre here in Regina. They are the parents and the husband of Sarah Wright, who is a breast cancer survivor and advocate here in Regina and also serves in communications in the government caucus office.

And you know, I just want to say as Minister of Health, and I know the previous minister of Health so greatly appreciates Sarah's contributions and advocacy for this important issue in our province. You should be very proud of your daughter and your wife because what we saw today was her work, some of her work becoming reality for many women in the province. And that is something that you should be very proud of for your daughter and wife.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would just ask all members to please welcome Fred, Heather, and Adam to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

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

**Vicki Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to join in with the minister opposite in welcoming Fred, Heather, and Adam to their Legislative Assembly today and thank them for their advocacy on behalf of all the people across this great province. Every woman deserves access to breast cancer care when and where she needs it, and we very much appreciate the advocacy work that you're doing. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Tim McLeod:** — 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.

**Hon. Tim McLeod:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in your gallery, it is my pleasure to introduce Rachelle Gruber, Britton Callander, Leah Fuchs, and Chris Clemett.

Rachelle, Britton, and Leah are emergency dispatchers from the Regina Police Service, and Chris is the executive director of engagement and enterprise projects for the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, Mr. Speaker.

Our guests are present today to join us in acknowledging Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Saskatchewan. We recognize and appreciate the very vital role that emergency dispatchers have in saving lives, and I want to acknowledge and express our gratitude to these individuals for their devotion to serving the public. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our government, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Rachelle, Britton, Leah, and Chris to their Legislative Assembly, thank them for their work and for keeping Saskatchewan people safe.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, also seated in your gallery, it is my pleasure to introduce three members from the Order of the Eastern Star Saskatchewan chapter. Joining us are the Worthy Grand Matron, Lynne Moffatt; the Worthy Grand Patron, Ray Moffatt; and the General Grand Chapter ambassador to Quebec, Donna Sanders.

Mr. Speaker, Lynne and Ray have served as heads of the order for the past year, which will conclude with the upcoming Grand Chapter session in Moose Jaw from April 25th to 27th. They are long-standing members of the community of Moose Jaw, where they raised five children.

Mr. Speaker, Ray is now retired from farming and his trucking company. Donna is a retired nurse who raised three children here in Regina and is also a recipient of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal.

The Order of the Eastern Star is a worldwide non-profit organization whose goal is to make a positive difference in the world with charitable works, lasting friendships, and loving-kindness to all mankind. Here in the province of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan chapter has embodied these ideals throughout their history, including recent fundraising efforts to support the Canadian Mental Health Association and service dog services.

I would ask all members to please join me in welcoming these three guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Nicole Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to join with the minister opposite in welcoming all of these individuals to their legislative gallery on behalf of the official

opposition.

First to the Order of the Eastern Star members Lynne, Ray, and Donna, thank you for all that you do for the community, for the people of Saskatchewan; in particular, as had been mentioned by the minister, your work in the area of philanthropy. Thank you so much for your giving spirit.

And I also want to take the opportunity, as the minister also did, in welcoming Rachelle, Leah, Britton, and of course Chris from the SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency] to their legislative gallery. Thank you so much for all that you do. I think often we forget as citizens how much work dispatchers do and how integral they are to the emergency response process.

And you speak with the people of Saskatchewan going through horrific crisis and walk them through, navigate that experience for them while getting them the help that they need, as timely as you can. So I appreciate you being here to allow us the opportunity to shed light on the work that you do, to thank you for your work — not just yours, but all of the employees that you represent — and remember the incredible daily sacrifice, frankly, that you give on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan so that we can all live in a safer place. So again I ask all members to join me in welcoming all of these individuals to their legislative gallery.

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

**Darcy Warrington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A request for an extended invitation.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Darcy Warrington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well it's not an invitation, but it gives me great pleasure to welcome three residents of Saskatoon Stonebridge today: Jean Carroll, Sterling McWatters, and Lynda McWatters. They joined this morning for a tour of their Legislative Assembly, and it's been a pleasure getting to know them over the last several months.

The member from Kindersley-Biggar isn't here for me to make my quip about my assistant not being someone who can get along with. But anyhow, my assistant Levi has been hanging out with these three fine folks, amongst others, in their apartment building and getting to know them and learning about the issues that matter to you. It's been really meaningful and important for me. I also appreciate all the distances that you travelled and all of the things that you've had to do to be here today. It's really appreciated.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, please help me in welcoming Jean, Lynda, and Sterling to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Warren Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to welcome Premier Grant Devine here. I'm not sure if premier recognizes, but my vintage was very much incentivized

by Premier Devine in our love and interest in politics. I remember him at my kitchen table with my father. I was a young farmer, just bought some land at that eighteen and a half per cent interest rates. He asked what he could do for young farmers, and I told him that, boy, interest rates, if we could reduce that it would sure make a big difference. And sure enough, next session we had an interest rebate program for young farmers.

But also the city of Melville and the area of east central Saskatchewan has definitely benefited from some of the actions of the Devine cabinet. And crop insurance, a huge employer to our area, is embedded and still embedded in the city of Melville and plays an important role in the economy in the area of Melville. And certainly a number of other institutions developed and initiated in the east central region of Saskatchewan, it very much benefited from the Devine cabinet and Premier Devine and his role in shaping the province to where we are today. So certainly I'd like all members to again welcome Premier Devine to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Joan Pratchler:** — To you and through you, I'd also like to recognize some visitors in your gallery as well. We have Megan Schmidt, who is at the First Years early learning centre. And she is one of the stalwart care providers for children in child care here in the city of Regina. Her organization has been serving this community for nine years.

[13:45]

In addition you might see Tamara. Tamara is with the Scott Infant and Toddler Centre, and that organization has been a stalwart of child care here in Regina for 35 years. And they have 33 spaces that they provide care for.

And in addition Cara Steiner — Cara you might remember, is from the Prairie Lily Early Learning Centre. That organization has been around for 50 years here in Regina and they are responsible for 113 children, spaces that they care for.

In total it's almost 250 child care spaces that these women help to make sure that we have wonderful child care for the future. I'd like everyone to join with me in welcoming these ladies to their legislature.

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

**Hon. Everett Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to join the member for Regina Rochdale in also welcoming our guests here today. Megan, Tamara, and Cara, thank you for being here to your Legislative Assembly. And thank you on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan for the work that you are doing when it comes to child care, and as we heard from the member opposite, decades upon decades of experience in this area. I'm sure you've seen a lot of change over that period of time and of course challenges that I think all of us here are working hard to address.

So on behalf of the provincial government I'd welcome you to your Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Meara Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to join with the member from Regina Rochdale and the minister opposite in welcoming the child care advocates to the legislature. Tamara and Megan are both familiar faces. I had the pleasure of touring the Scott infant child care centre at one point, saw the good work that was being done there in the core of North Central, including making sure there's space available for many vulnerable families in the area.

And also I wanted to welcome of course Cara Steiner. I have mentioned here that my children have the great privilege of attending one of the two Prairie Lily Early Learning Centre's locations. I've seen Cara in action there not only with families and children, who she clearly cares deeply for, but the way that this individual cares for, nurtures, and protects her staff is just truly touching. She's a mama bear when it comes to her staff and making sure they have a positive workplace.

And you know, the minister mentioned change and challenges. There's been no shortage of those in this industry and that's really a testament to these three. Cara also shares her skills through the Regina Trades & Skills Centre. She's served with SECA [Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association] in the past.

She's really a leader in her area, as are all of them; I just know Cara a little better. So I just wanted to join with the members in welcoming these three to this, their Legislative Assembly.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Brittney Senger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I present a petition calling for adequate and equitable SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] rates.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that current SAID rates mean that individuals who rely on the program live in what is referred to as deep poverty, defined as less than 75 per cent of the poverty line; that the increases are insufficient and have led to an overall 20 per cent decrease in benefits when adjusting for inflation; that the Saskatchewan government engages in clawback policies that have been found to be discriminatory and further disadvantage people living with disability.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately increase the SAID rates to account for inflation and the cost of living; respect the constitutional rights of persons with disabilities in Saskatchewan by halting discriminatory practices and aligning policies with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; index the SAID basic amount to inflation going forward; and provide targeted relief to those in deepest poverty, such as single individuals paying market rent.

The undersigned reside in Saskatoon, Asquith. I do so present.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Pasqua.

**Bhajan Brar:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that Sikhism is the fourth largest religious group in Canada, making up 2 per cent of the country's population; that Sikh people have lived in Saskatchewan since 1957; that Sikh people across the province contribute to Saskatchewan's culture, economy, and community; that April be the month of the Sikh spring festival of Vaisakh and is commonly recognized as Sikh Heritage Month; that the Sikh community must currently reapply every year to have April recognized as Sikh Heritage Month.

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately pass the Sikh Heritage Month.

The signatories of this petition are residents of Saskatoon. I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Meara Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet to present a petition calling on the government to reverse the ban on third-party educators from publicly funded schools. The signatories of this petition wish to bring to the government's attention that in August 2023 their government banned all third-party educators from publicly funded schools. That includes organizations like the Regina Sexual Assault Centre, the Saskatoon Sexual Assault & Information Centre, the Battlefords & Area Sexual Assault Centre, the North East Outreach and Support Services, Partners Family Services, the Prince Albert Sexual Assault Centre, the West Central Crisis & Family Support Centre, and various YWCAs throughout the province.

These organizations and others have been providing research-based education to schools in Saskatchewan for decades, Mr. Speaker. When I think of the different petitions we present here around Saskatchewan having the highest rates of domestic violence in the country or the highest rates of unplanned pregnancy amongst youth in the country, these are the kinds of resources that we need to be providing to young people in educational settings.

With that I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately reverse its decision to ban third-party educators in Saskatchewan schools and consult with experts in developing a comprehensive curriculum for all Saskatchewan students.

The signatories of this petition reside in Melfort, Kinistino, Carrot River. I do so present.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Silverspring.

**Hugh Gordon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in the Assembly 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. The economic impact of IPV [intimate partner violence] in Canada is estimated at over \$7 billion per year. A large portion of tangible IPV costs are paid by the government for items like the criminal and civil justice system and health care system. Annual estimated losses to employers from IPV are over \$77 million in Canada. Workplace orientation would include all genders from all walks of life in all areas of the province. Employers and employees need to know the signs of IPV and where to call for help. Education is key to changing the rates of interpersonal violence.

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 in intimate partner violence be included in the orientation process for all new employees across all workplaces in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition reside in Warman and in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

**Sally Housser:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for the repeal of Bill 137.

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: queer and trans youth are at a higher risk of homelessness, self-harm, and suicide when denied access to safe, inclusive learning environments; that Bill 137 directs educators to non-consensually out two-spirit, trans, and nonbinary students under the age of 16 to their parents; that Bill 137 is in direct contravention of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as it relates to gender identity and expression; that by explicitly invoking the notwithstanding clause under Bill 137, that the government is overriding children's rights; and that Saskatchewan's Advocate for Children and Youth has denounced this policy, indicating that it would cause harm.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately repeal Bill 137 and ensure that all 2SLGBTQI+ students are supported and protected in accordance with *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*.

The undersigned reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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



### Celebration of Vaisakhi

**Tajinder Grewal:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday people all over the world were celebrating Vaisakhi. Vaisakhi marks the first day of the month of Vaisakh, and it's traditionally celebrated every year on April 13th or 14th. Historically Vaisakhi has cultural significance. It's a festival of harvest. It's happening just before the harvest in Punjab and northern India. People are singing and dancing on the beats of drums, in celebration of incoming prosperity.

Vaisakhi has special significance for Sikhs. On April 13, 1699 Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the 10th guru of Sikhism, created the Khalsa order. In the 1600s the Punjab region was in turmoil. The rulers were corrupt. There was no rule of law. The rights of the common people were non-existent. Justice did not prevail.

It was under those circumstances that Guru Gobind Singh Ji rose to the occasion and chose to create the Khalsa. The guru empowered the people within the community who would take on the challenge and rise above the weakness to be strong and fearless, to be prepared to face these challenges without reservations and to uphold justice, to be fair and even-handed at all times, to be prepared to die for the truth. Since then Sikhs all over the world celebrate Vaisakhi. Happy Vaisakhi to all.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

### Recognizing Contributions of Public Safety Telecommunicators

**David Chan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Public Safety Telecommunicators Week being proclaimed in the province of Saskatchewan.

This week, April 13 to 19, we are recognizing 911 call takers, dispatchers, and technicians in Saskatchewan. When we dial 911, these incredible individuals answer the call by relaying vital information to firefighters, ambulance, law enforcement, and more. Across the province, telecommunicators work every day of the week, every hour of the day to help save lives.

I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude for their hard work and dedication. Telecommunicators quite literally connect us to a lifeline. Mr. Speaker, we rarely get the chance to meet these individuals in person to thank them for all they do for us and our loved ones. They do outstanding work in our communities, in our towns, and in our province to help keep us all safe.

I ask all members to please join me in thanking these wonderful folks, the telecommunicators of our province. Thank you for always being there ready to answer our call when we need you the most.

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

### Honouring Chief Mistawasis, a Revered Leader

**Don McBean:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise the proud MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] of the riding of Saskatoon Chief Mistawasis. Yes, this newly created riding appropriately

took its name from the recently constructed Chief Mistawasis bridge, both the symbolic and practical connection of the northwest and northeast edges of Saskatoon.

But today I am proud and wish to speak not of the riding nor the bridge, but rather the person. Chief Mistawasis, a revered leader of the nêhiyawak known as sakâwiyniwak, a front-line negotiator and original signatory of Treaty 6. Chief Mistawasis is a well-documented, wise leader, guiding his people through the depletion of the buffalo herds, determined to find a way for them to stay alive, stating famously, "Our way of living is gone. There are no more buffalo. We have to find a new way to feed our people." And so he took the lead to ensure education and agriculture were well established in treaty rights.

The Nation Mistawasis Nêhiyawak no. 103 is located in the riding of Rosthern-Shellbrook, currently represented by the Premier.

In the first case I want to recognize this obvious and to-be-developed connection between our suburban riding and the important historical homeland. Secondly, I call upon us all to express our humble recognition of the sacrifice and debt owed the original peoples of this land through colonization, and to know the story of our namesake, Chief Mistawasis.

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

[14:00]

### Automotive Speedway Offers the Ride of a Lifetime

**Hon. Jamie Martens:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, racing fans of all ages, it's time to rev those engines and hit the gas of excitement because we're talking about Sutherland Automotive Speedway, a true jewel right here in my very own constituency.

This isn't just a racetrack; it's the racetrack — the heart of Saskatchewan's motorsports scene. It's a one-of-a-kind gem, attracting people from all over Canada who come to watch, participate, and feel the thrill of the race. Whether you're here for high-speed action, the adrenaline rush, or a friendly competition, Sutherland Speedway delivers family fun at its finest.

This track is more than just rubber on pavement. It's a place where memories are made, friendships are forged, and the roar of engines brings everyone together. It's a place where future champions get their start, and where seasoned pros bring their A game.

From the first lap to the last, every turn, every race is an experience that connects us all. The energy is electric. The atmosphere is unbeatable. And the excitement, well that's second to none. So let's take a moment to appreciate how lucky we are to have this amazing asset in our community, a place where we can come together, cheer for our favourites, and enjoy good old-fashioned family fun.

So let's continue to support this incredible venue, bring the whole family together, cheer on the racers, and keep the engines roaring. Mr. Speaker, the best is yet to come at Sutherland

Automotive Speedway. It's right here in the driver's seat taking us all on a ride of a lifetime. Let's go racing.

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

#### **Tenants Band Together Amidst Rent Increases**

**Darcy Warrington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize a few citizens of the Stonebridge community. Jean Carroll, Lynda McWatters, and Sterling McWatters live in the same apartment building in Saskatoon Stonebridge. They banded together recently with a couple dozen other residents after they all received massive rent increases.

Many in the group are seniors and long-time residents on fixed incomes, yet some saw their rent sharply increase as much as 29 per cent over a two-year period. They now also pay for their parking spaces and even a monthly fee for the planter boxes that they decorate with flowers. They're being nickel-and-dimed because of the lack of legal and regulatory protections available to them.

Recently myself and the members from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood and Saskatoon Westview met with their group of a couple of dozen, and we were thoroughly impressed by their level of organization and readiness. Their group represents a wonderful show of solidarity during the affordability crisis created by this government.

This Premier and the members of his government have done nothing to advance the rights of the many people of Saskatchewan who rent, especially seniors. The Sask Party refuses to consider implementing a rental cap, like most of our neighbouring provinces such as Manitoba, for example, have capped their rent increases to 1.7 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing Jean, Lynda, Sterling, and everyone else in those apartment buildings in this province participating in similar inspiring small acts of solidarity in these tough times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Awards Recognize Excellence in Nipawin Businesses**

**Terri Bromm:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 6th I attended the 21st ABEX Awards in Nipawin. The ABEX Awards are the Achieving Business Excellence Awards created to recognize businesses for their outstanding commitment in and around the community.

I would like to recognize the Nipawin & District Chamber of Commerce board and president, Yuriy Danyliuk, who are dedicated in their role of supporting Nipawin and district businesses. I would also like to acknowledge Lisa Suchlandt, executive director of the Nipawin & District Chamber of Commerce, who coordinates events such as this and for all other important duties she performs.

Without sponsors events such as these would not be possible.

Thank you to this year's sponsors, Lake Country Co-op, Suncrest College, and SaskTel. I would like to congratulate the following businesses on their awards: Centre St. Drugs, winner of the Service Award; Rona in Nipawin, winner of the Retail Award; Twin Lakes Trail Blazers, winner of the Heritage Award; Nipawin Greenhouses, winner of the Agriculture Award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me and recognize the winners of the 2024 ABEX Awards, the nominees, and the Nipawin & District Chamber of Commerce.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the member from Moosomin-Montmartre.

#### **Support for Community Fundraising Projects**

**Kevin Weedmark:** — Mr. Speaker, my area is known for its success in fundraising. Just this last Saturday the Fleming Pie Auction in a town of 70 people raised more than \$10,000, the most ever, as the Premier noted at SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] this morning. And for the last three years, Moosomin has had the most successful Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign in the province. Two years ago, Moosomin raised more than \$34,000 in Smile Cookie sales. Last year, it was first again, raising \$45,000; and this year, the goal is to raise even more.

The community really gets behind the effort. I was decorating cookies at Tim Hortons last year alongside a lot of volunteers, and it's amazing to see how everyone supports it. And what could be better than eating cookies for a cause? It's a win-win.

Moosomin's aiming to set a new record during Smile Cookie week, April 28th to May 4th, and raise more than the \$45,000 from last year. And the proceeds will go to playground upgrades at MacLeod School in Moosomin. Why are they going to a playground project? To benefit from matching funds our government will provide for community fundraising for school playgrounds up to \$50,000. That program will open this fall. If the community can raise \$50,000, this program could double it to 100,000.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the people in my community for the way they get behind fundraising projects, and I'm proud that our government is there to help with this new program to provide matching funds for groups that have worked so hard to raise money for community projects like school playgrounds. Thank you.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Capacity in Neonatal Intensive Care Units**

**Vicki Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, we've learned of what front-line staff are calling an unprecedented crisis at the neonatal intensive care unit at the Regina General Hospital. This staffing crisis has been going on for weeks, and there are reports that they're running out of critical life-saving equipment like ventilators. These are sick newborns that are fighting for their lives.

Will the minister tell this House exactly what is going on at the Regina General and what emergency measures are being taken to save the lives of these babies?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, all members of the House, including members of the opposition, would understand that capacity in our hospitals fluctuate week to week. Over the last couple of weeks, we've seen a bit of a surge of premature babies and multiple births, including twins, born at Regina General Hospital. This has required additional use of the NICU [neonatal intensive care unit] beds at the General, though I would quibble with the member's assertion that we're running out of ventilators, Mr. Speaker.

We are not running out of ventilators. We've brought in extra staff to support the NICU here at the General. We have spare NICU capacity around the province, whether that be in Saskatoon or Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker. We're aware of challenges and we're working to address them. Thank you.

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

**Vicki Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, the public only learned about this crisis at the General through a post by the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses late Friday, an email from a brave and clearly desperate front-line health care worker on the unit. That worker said, "We are doing everything we can, but the strain is real and growing." I want to thank that health care worker and their colleagues for all they are doing to provide health care and save lives.

But I have to ask the minister: why is it that we are only learning about this crisis through anonymous emails?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, the maternal and children provincial program team in the Saskatchewan Health Authority meets daily, understanding where our capacity pressures are and trying to load-level the system as best as possible, Mr. Speaker.

As I said in my previous answer, we have sufficient equipment at the General in the NICU unit, as well as NICU bed capacity in other facilities in the province to make sure that when children need the care that they need that we have a bed for them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Vicki Mowat:** — They're not getting the care they need, Mr. Speaker; that is the point. Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government broke our public health care system, and they're not up to the job of fixing it. It's not funny. There's no public accountability and no plan, and that's how it always goes with this government when it comes to health care.

But this involves our most vulnerable. Some of these babies are newborns, and they're fighting for their lives. How did the minister allow this crisis to get so bad?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that the front-line health care workers that we have, you know, specifically working for pediatric patients around the province, I think we can be incredibly proud of the work that they do each and every day. Whether that's here at the General, whether that's in Saskatoon at Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, or the pediatric program up in Prince Albert at the Vic Hospital, we can be very proud of the level of care and the quality of care that these folks provide to families and children in challenging situations, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that has made significant investments into pediatric programs. Even in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, new funding to plan a new high acuity maternal unit at Regina General; working together with the Hospitals of Regina Foundation on many projects over the last several years; expanding pediatric programs for more subspecialty positions here in the province. This is how our government is supporting pediatric patients and their families.

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

**Meara Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My heart hurts for these babies at the Regina General NICU and their families. This is literally every parent's worst nightmare. The health care worker who came forward said, "The situation is becoming critical. One-to-one patient care assignments are being doubled, and today we used our last available ventilator."

This is horrible, Mr. Speaker. Lack of staff, no more available ventilators. How did it get to the point where our NICU here in Regina has been over capacity for weeks? Health care workers are having to go public, and while the minister may quibble with the account of front-line health care workers, they say they used their last ventilator last week.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, the Regina NICU has 16 machines that can be used as ventilators. Eight are in use right now as of this morning. That means there's eight still available for use at the NICU at the General, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of beds, Mr. Speaker, we're having some discharges today. I understand that that means we'll have about three beds available later today at the NICU unit at the General Hospital, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is we have five available beds in Saskatoon after discharges and five available in Prince Albert as well.

Mr. Speaker, pediatric care is something that we take very seriously in this province. That's why we've made the investments that I talked about in my previous answer. We'll continue to work with our provincial head of pediatrics, Dr. Klassen, to learn about more ways that we can support pediatric patients and their families in this province.

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

**Meara Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's disturbing to see the minister downplay these issues. The NICU has been over capacity for weeks. This front-line worker who came forward reported:

We've been operating over capacity for weeks with no immediate relief in sight. Our dedicated staff are exhausted, working extended hours and multiple overtime shifts to ensure our most vulnerable patients receive the care that they need.

These staff are working around the clock, and that minister is minimizing this crisis. For the record what exact date did that minister become aware of this crisis, and how long has he been keeping it from the public?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, some of the things that that member opposite is saying are just simply not the case. As I said in a previous answer, the maternal and children's provincial program teams with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, they huddle every single day to understand pressures that we might be having in a specific facility and across the province and making plans to make sure that we can look after these patients and their families, Mr. Speaker.

I have a high degree of trust in our front-line health care workers, both here at the General Hospital in Regina and right across the province, that look after pediatric patients, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to continue working with them. Thank you.

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

**Meara Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, out of one side of his mouth that minister says he trusts health care workers. Out of . . .

**Speaker Goudy:** — Please apologize and withdraw from that and continue with your question.

**Meara Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, I apologize and withdraw. Mr. Speaker, the minister just said that what I said in my previous question was false. It was a quote from a front-line health care worker. I invite that minister after question period, go to the Regina General, go to the NICU, talk to those health care workers, Mr. Speaker.

It is abhorrent that not only did we . . . We found out about this crisis because a health care worker went public, and I can't believe that this government would keep this from the public, Mr. Speaker. I mean that Minister of Health, he won't release contracts. They won't post disruptions for rural communities so people know to go to the next community. And now we hear that the Regina NICU has been over capacity for weeks.

Does the minister think it's acceptable that we learned about this crisis through a leak? Yes or no?

[14:15]

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, I am not and will not minimize challenges that we have within our health care system. And that's exactly why I said in previous answers, why I trust our team at the Saskatchewan Health Authority to understand challenges that we may be having in specific facilities, whether that be around disruptions or capacity surges, Mr. Speaker. And I trust those people within the Saskatchewan Health Authority to make the right decisions so that people in our province can be cared for. Even if they're pediatric patients, we want them to be supported as well as their families.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said in previous answers, this is a government that takes pediatric programming very seriously. I talked about all the investments we've made up to this point. We talk about the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital that has been built in Saskatoon — an incredible facility — and the pediatric programs that we have in Regina and Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker.

Again we thank the front-line health care workers for their incredible work. We've added additional workforce support here in Regina while we have a surge at the General, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue evaluating ways that we can support front-line health care workers as well as the patients and their families.

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

#### Access to Breast Cancer Diagnostic Services

**Brittney Senger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for months the Sask Party has touted their new breast health centre. They said it would be a game changer and they would finally be able to deliver health care that Saskatchewan women need. But new messages we've released today reveal the Sask Party is actively moving staff from other centres to operate the new centre.

Why did the minister fail to hire new staff for the breast health centre? And how is moving around overworked staff we already have going to improve health care for Saskatchewan women?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll do my best to clarify this for the members opposite. There's 13 new positions at the Regina breast health centre: two MRTs [medical radiation technologist], one medical imaging scheduler, one diagnostic sonographer, two and a half nurse navigators, one manager, one physiotherapist, one social worker, one unit support worker, and two medical office assistants, Mr. Speaker. That's in addition to the four positions that we're moving from the breast assessment clinic at the Pasqua Hospital to the new Regina breast health centre, Mr. Speaker.

And this facility, it is a game changer. It's a game changer for that exact reason, Mr. Speaker: making sure that we're taking all those services that are available to women in their breast health journey and putting them under one roof.

We've heard directly from cancer survivors. We've heard directly from patients. We've heard directly from front-line health care workers and breast specialists in this community, Mr. Speaker. That's what the women of Saskatchewan deserve, and

that's what we've done in this new Regina breast health centre.

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

**Brittney Senger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to clarify for the minister that new positions don't mean new workers. Mr. Speaker, I was horrified to learn that over 500 women have been forced to go to Calgary for mammograms because they could not access them here. This is a complete and total failure. Saskatchewan women deserve health care in Saskatchewan.

What does the minister have to say to those 500 women staring down a cancer diagnosis? Will he at least start by apologizing for this complete failure?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, what I would say to that is, you know, thank goodness the previous minister signed this contract with a company in Calgary, while we had temporary pressures here in the Saskatchewan system, to continue to give access to women to diagnostic mammograms and biopsies. Thank goodness that we had another option for them while we built up the breast health centre, Mr. Speaker.

Again I spoke today; I spoke previous times in the House. We are going to improve access for women in their breast cancer journey. That's exactly why we went to the company in Calgary while we were building up the breast health centre, provided that access opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

We're looking forward to this breast health centre accepting its first patients here in Regina next week, Mr. Speaker. We expect that that health centre will accept over 1,600 referrals every given year. But that doesn't mean that we can't offer other access opportunities for women who are staring down a diagnosis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Brittney Senger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this minister has said that sending women to Alberta for mammograms is efficient. I think performing mammograms right here in Saskatchewan would be much, much better. But you can't run mammograms if you don't have the staff to do so. Why did the Sask Party government fail to hire staff for the breast health centre? How does shuffling staff actually get more women access to the health care they need?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of the 13 positions that I outlined in one of my first answers to the member opposite, 12 of those have been filled. One we're in the final interview process for this week. We look forward to getting that position filled so that the breast health centre will be ready and up and running next week when it sees its first patient, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we talk about the other access options

for women in this province. Mr. Speaker, if it was my mom, if it was my grandma, if it was my wife or my sister, I would want to have them have the quickest access possible to that diagnostic mammogram. Sometimes . . . We hope, Mr. Speaker, that we can continue to build that capacity up in Saskatchewan, but if there's another option, I know that I would want my relative to have that option. Thank you.

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

#### Comments by Member and Support for Sikh Community

**Tajinder Grewal:** — Mr. Speaker, both the Sikh Society of Regina and Sikh Society of Saskatchewan have directly written to the Premier. They have requested that he remove the MLA from Humboldt-Watrous from government caucus in response to her hateful remarks.

The Premier took away some additional responsibilities from that member. This is a slap on the wrist. My question to the Premier is simple: will he listen to the Sikh Society of Saskatchewan and Sikh Society of Regina and remove the member from Humboldt-Watrous from the government caucus?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Jim Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, last week the member from Humboldt apologized for her inappropriate comments. And last week also the Premier on the floor of this Assembly spoke to her statement which he called inappropriate and inaccurate, Mr. Speaker. Also last week, as the member indicated, he removed a number of her caucus duties.

Mr. Speaker, our government has taken a number of steps to recognize the importance of the Sikh religion and culture in our province. We'll continue to recognize the importance of that. We've declared, as we have in previous years, April to be Sikh Heritage Month. And we will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Tajinder Grewal:** — Mr. Speaker, this is extremely disappointing and the community agrees too. The Sikh Society of Saskatchewan said in the letter to the Premier:

It is especially disheartening that such an egregious and harmful statement was made from a position of public trust and within the legislature itself, a space intended to represent all people of Saskatchewan with integrity and respect.

What does the Premier say to the Sikh Society of Saskatchewan? Why won't he listen to their call and remove her from government caucus?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Jim Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the Premier responded to that letter and has offered to meet with them. And I would reiterate the remarks were inaccurate,

inappropriate. This Premier addressed that on the floor of this Assembly, took further action also last week. We recognize the tremendous contribution the Sikh community has made to Saskatchewan. We will continue to recognize that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Tajinder Grewal:** — Mr. Speaker, this incident was not merely a slip-up. The member from Humboldt-Watrous knows better. In fact she campaigned on the exact opposite to her constituents. Looking at her campaign website, she highlighted training in anti-racism, culture and diversity, and providing supports in diversity.

I find it extremely concerning that these hateful remarks were made after taking anti-racism training. Mr. Speaker, such hateful words should have real consequences. Why won't the Premier remove the member from Humboldt-Watrous from caucus today?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Jim Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the member from Humboldt-Watrous has apologized for those comments. The Premier has addressed those on the floor of the Assembly, has taken further action, removing a number of the duties from the member, Mr. Speaker.

As I said in earlier answers, Mr. Speaker, we recognize the tremendous contribution the Sikh community has made to Saskatchewan. We appreciate that. We'll continue to recognize that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

### Party Leadership

**Kim Breckner:** — Mr. Speaker, the weekend has come and gone and the Premier found time to fly to Ottawa for the Canada Strong and Free conference, a conference founded by Preston Manning, someone who penned an op-ed calling for western separatism. The Premier — and a few potential future Sask Party leaders, mayhap — flew down east to hang out with conservative thought leaders and ignore the problems here at home.

Why did the Premier and the Health minister fly off to Ottawa when they should have been here fixing the problems in health care?

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — You know it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that last week in question period the opposition asked more questions about my weekend plans than Saskatchewan patients.

Mr. Speaker, you know, when it comes to our leader, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take much to know that that's the party over there that changes their leader after every election. The party on this side, we stand with our leader. We like winning. We like

delivering for the people of this province. That's why myself and members of this caucus stand by and support our Premier. Thank you.

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Kim Breckner:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister doth protest too much, methinks. A house divided within itself cannot stand, and as long as the Sask Party is occupied with who is going to be the next leader over there, the real issues facing people here at home will continue to be ignored.

People will continue to struggle to pay their bills in an economy that lags every other province, and with a health care system that forces women out of province for basic care. Why won't the Premier focus on the real issues facing Saskatchewan instead of hanging out with separatists in Ottawa?

**Hon. Jim Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, there was a lot in there but I would address the comments about supposedly a divided house over here that the member opposite made. As the Health minister just said, this caucus is fully united behind our Premier, the best premier in this country, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's my hope and the hope of all members of this caucus and of this party that this Premier stays a long time because he is the best possible leader for this province.

Mr. Speaker, the members seem to be confused though on that side of the House. That's the side that keeps changing leaders. In fact since I've been elected, every election they tend to change the leader. In fact a former MLA used to call the Leader of the Opposition's chair, he called it the ejector seat, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Cost of Rental Accommodation

**Darcy Warrington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. United, and united behind the member from Humboldt-Watrous as well.

Seniors in Saskatoon Stonebridge fear for their housing. Dozens of the residents that I graciously represent today have shown me their records and receipts. Their rents have gone up 10 to 29 per cent over the last two years, and they're paying fees on things that they have never seen before. They live on fixed incomes and thin margins, Mr. Speaker. They can't afford this, and they are scared of what happens next.

Other provinces have introduced protections like caps on rent increases. We are one of two provinces in Canada that do not have this mechanism. Not in Saskatchewan.

Why won't the minister get to work and offer protections for tenants like the seniors of Saskatoon Stonebridge?

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

**Hon. Terry Jenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to rents in Saskatchewan, particularly seniors' rents, this is an issue between a private landlord and their tenants. This is

not an issue where the government will be getting involved.

[14:30]

I should note, Mr. Speaker, that, you know, year over year in Regina rent prices have actually decreased. In the most recent report for rentals.ca, Saskatchewan has the lowest average rent in the country with an average of \$1,336 per month. That's for a one-bedroom apartment. That's over \$200 less than next door in NDP [New Democratic Party] Manitoba, who have an average rent of \$1,592 per month, Mr. Speaker.

Out of the 60 major cities across Canada, one-bedroom rental in Regina is the fourth cheapest in the country, and in Saskatoon it's the seventh cheapest in the country. For a two-bedroom rental, Regina is fifth cheapest; Saskatoon is sixth cheapest in the nation.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to rental and affordability, Saskatchewan is leading the way across the country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Darcy Warrington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The stats the minister just said mean nothing. These residents have their bills and receipts here today, and I encourage them to show the minister afterwards if he's willing to meet with them.

Last week we heard the Minister of Social Services claim rent isn't an issue in this province, as he more or less is right now. He's welcome to tell that to these constituents who are worried that they won't be able to afford their homes they enjoy now, and forced to move to a new location costing them even more money to do so.

What is that minister going to do for seniors in Saskatoon Stonebridge whose rent is going up too high, too fast? And will he meet with these seniors from Saskatoon Stonebridge today?

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

**Hon. Terry Jensen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And yes, I'd be more than happy to meet with these residents of Saskatoon to discuss the issues that they're facing between their landlord and themselves.

Mr. Speaker, the best way to address rent prices, and really housing across all continuums, is to increase the supply of housing throughout the province in all areas, in all areas throughout the continuum, whether that be supportive housing, whether that be through transitional housing, social housing, market housing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we've put in place several different initiatives in this budget to help with that, to increase the housing supply across the province. And that includes the home renovation tax credit. That includes the provincial sales tax rebate for new home construction. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to keeping rents affordable and keeping mortgages affordable, the best thing to do is to increase supply.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**Speaker Goudy:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

### New Regina Breast Health Centre Offers Streamlined Approach to Care

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today with a message of hope, compassion, and progress in the fight against breast cancer. On April 23rd the doors of the new Regina breast health centre will open to patients, marking a significant milestone in how we support women facing one of the most difficult and emotional journeys of their lives — a breast cancer diagnosis.

Today we had the honour at the grand opening event to hear directly from a breast cancer survivor, an experience that was deeply moving and a powerful reminder of why this work matters. She spoke candidly about the fear and uncertainty that followed her diagnosis, the countless appointments she had to coordinate across different locations, and the emotional toll it took on both her and her family.

But more than that, Mr. Speaker, she spoke of the hope she found in the hands of her care team — the nurses who listened, the doctors who took the time to explain, and the support staff who never let her feel alone. Her journey was one of resilience, courage, and determination, and her voice echoed the need for more coordinated, patient-centred care, exactly what the Regina breast health centre is built to provide.

Now her story is not just a reflection of the past but a call to action for the future. It is women like her who inspire us to keep pushing for better and more compassionate care. Her experience is at the heart of what we have built here. This new centre represents not only an investment in infrastructure but a transformation in how care is delivered in the southern half of the province.

For too long patients have been required to navigate a complex system, often attending multiple appointments across different facilities in the city of Regina. The breast health centre here in Regina changes that. It brings diagnostic imaging, biopsies, specialist consultations, and patient navigation together under one roof, and in the near future it will expand to offer on-site therapies and rehabilitation services as well.

By integrating these vital services into a single location, we are ensuring that patients receive timely, coordinated, and compassionate care, care that wraps around them from the moment of diagnosis through every stage of their treatment and recovery.

The centre will be staffed by a dedicated and highly skilled team of health care professionals including radiologists, surgeons, nurse navigators, and support staff. These are individuals who understand not only the clinical needs of breast cancer patients but also the emotional toll that a diagnosis can bring. They will work together to ensure that patients are not just cared for, but that they are supported, empowered, and never left to walk this journey alone.

In addition to 13 new hires, four existing positions from the current breast assessment centre at the Pasqua Hospital will be

relocated to the new facility. This transition will ensure continuity of care and allow us to build on the expertise already in place, all while reducing the burden of travel and multiple appointments for patients.

Mr. Speaker, the streamlined referral process that has been built into the centre's design will reduce wait times and provide patients with a greatest sense of comfort through continuity and familiarity. When someone hears the words "you have cancer," their world can change in an instant. Knowing that a coordinated team is ready to act quickly and compassionately can make all the difference. This eight-and-a-half-million-dollar investment is far more than bricks and mortar. It is a reflection of our government's commitment to health care that meets people where they are with compassion, with innovation, and a deep understanding of what patients truly need in their lives.

I want to take a moment to extend my sincere gratitude to the health care teams, the planners, and the community partners who have brought this vision to life. Their dedication and collaboration has helped create something truly remarkable that will have an impact on many families in our province. And to the survivors, the families, and the advocates, your strength and resilience are a constant source of inspiration. This centre and this investment is for you. It stands as a testament to your voices, your advocacy, and your courage.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan women deserve the best possible care, and with the opening of the Regina breast health centre, we take a significant step forward on delivering on that promise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Brittney Senger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for providing a copy of his remarks in advance. It's good news that the health care centre is opening, but this government has no credibility when it comes to women's health.

Mr. Speaker, the minister is talking about what he is doing and what this centre will mean for women who are facing a cancer diagnosis, yet 500 women — more than 500 women — have had to go to Calgary for basic breast cancer care that they should be able to get here. They have to endure this diagnosis alone. They have to pay out of pocket for services and it's heartbreaking. And frankly we need more compassion. And we have new internal messages that show the government hasn't hired new staff but is instead reallocating existing resources from other facilities.

This government has had 17 years to fix our health care system, yet they've broken it. It is time for us to invest in women, invest in women's health, and ensure that we have the resources that we need. Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

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

### **Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive Expands Eligibility**

**Hon. Lori Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, strengthening health care services in rural, regional, and northern

communities is a high priority for our government. Our goal as a government is to ensure that every Saskatchewan resident has access to a health care professional at the right place and at the right time, which is why today we are announcing an additional 16 communities that will benefit from Saskatchewan's rural and remote recruitment incentive, the RRRI program, extending eligibility to a total of 70 communities.

Mr. Speaker, this made-in-Saskatchewan program will add eligibility to the communities of Wakaw, Spiritwood, Raymore, Pinehouse Lake, Maryfield, Kerrobert, Grenfell, Foam Lake, Elrose, Cut Knife, Central Butte, Carrot River, Candle Lake, Beechy, Balcarres, and Arborfield. The rural and remote recruitment incentive offers up to \$50,000 for hard-to-recruit positions in rural and remote areas of the province, and includes positions such as nurses, medical technicians, and continuing care assistants.

More than 420 hard-to-recruit positions have been filled as a direct result of this incentive, which is a key to stabilizing and strengthening health care services in rural and northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, a total of 8.7 million is being provided in the '25-26 budget for the rural and remote recruitment incentive program. This includes a \$1.8 million investment for an additional intake round of up to 180 new applicants, and continued funding of 6.9 million for the existing recipients completing their second and third year in the workplace.

By expanding the rural and remote recruitment incentive program to more communities, we are able to reach more health care professionals and ensure that rural and remote communities have access to primary care when and where they need it. This incentive has proven to be a great success in attracting highly sought-after health care workers, including in northern communities.

More than 150 hard-to-recruit positions have been filled in northern communities as a direct result of the rural and remote recruitment incentive program. Some of these communities are North Battleford, Prince Albert, La Ronge, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and La Loche. Attracting health care professionals to northern communities is especially critical, and we are taking the necessary steps to ensure that northern residents have access to primary care when and where they need it.

This incentive is one of the many important initiatives that have been introduced through our government's ambitious and nation-leading health human resources action plan. The health human resources action plan has been supported by over \$460 million since it was first introduced in 2022, and we continue to invest in numerous initiatives put forward under this action plan.

Our HHR [health human resources] action plan aims to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain more health care professionals in Saskatchewan. We have seen success through ongoing collaboration between multiple ministries, health employees, partner agencies, post-secondary institutions, and professional regulators. That is why in this year's budget a total of 156 million has been committed to support these initiatives under our HHR action plan. This is an increase of over 10 per cent from last year.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to invest in our HHR action plan



— the most ambitious one in Canada — so we can ensure that Saskatchewan remains an attractive place for professionals to work, live, and build a career in health care. And we will continue to invest in our northern communities with programs like the rural and remote recruitment incentive to strengthen services and ensure every resident of this great province has access to care when they need it.

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

**Brittney Senger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for providing a copy of the remarks in advance. Mr. Speaker, the minister has said that this will give residents access to health care at the right place at the right time, yet women are still being sent to Calgary to access mammograms and basic health care.

The minister claims that nurses and medical technicians and continuing care staff will . . . that there will be more positions here in Saskatchewan. Yet we see at the breast health centre that it's simply a matter of shuffling staff from the Pasqua Hospital to the breast health centre to fill positions.

The minister talks about the services they are going to provide to the North. But I'd like to ask, when was the last time the minister visited the North? We're talking about creating health care positions in northern communities, but the issue isn't creating health care positions; the issue is a lack of housing for people who need access to health care and for health care workers.

Mr. Speaker, what the minister is saying about filling these positions . . . When I was in La Ronge, I did not hear the same thing. Attracting health care professionals to northern communities, well that's simply not the issue. The issue is having the resources available, having housing available. In La Ronge there is a shortage of housing, and therefore a shortage of health care workers, because there is nowhere for them to reside.

We're talking about recruiting and retaining more health care professionals in Saskatchewan, yet we still have a doctor shortage, and over 500 women have been forced out of province because the Sask Party government can't keep their promises. Mr. Speaker, the investment that has been made into this program . . . Well we're still seeing cuts to health care, and frankly this is failing northern communities and it's failing Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill No. 13

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jim Reiter that **Bill No. 13 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2025*** be now read a second time.]

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

**April ChiefCalf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today in the Assembly to enter into debate on Bill No. 13, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2025*. I do have several points I'd like to make before it moves on to the next stage.

So this Act is basically putting into legislation many of the promises made in the provincial election campaign by the Sask Party government relating to affordability. This legislation will include exemptions for basic personal amounts, which do change — it's routine for those to change from time to time — also exemptions for spousal amounts, amounts for dependant children, as well as amounts for seniors.

There are also provisions for people with low incomes, tax credits for people needing fertility treatments, and tax credits for small and medium enterprise investment, as well as the rebate has increased for university graduates.

Now, Mr. Speaker, saving money through income tax can be a good thing. So you know me well enough by now to know I'm going to a story. So I think back to the '90s, when my husband and I were struggling financially and we had a young family. And one of the reasons we struggled so much financially is because we had this enormous burden of student loans that we had to pay off.

And those never counted for anything, right? So I would be paying \$500 a month to student loan payments. At one point we were paying \$1,000 a month for both of our combined student loan payments, and there was no reprieve for that. And then suddenly it was introduced into federal legislature that you could claim the interest on student loans. And believe it or not, that provided just enough of a reprieve, just enough breathing room that it did make a difference. So that was a good thing.

However, if we think about the bigger picture, there are problems with trying to create affordability simply through income tax savings. I want to relate another story of a senior who came to me recently, who told me that her rent is going up \$370 a month. That's over \$4,000 a year. She does not qualify for the rent benefit, and so what this means is that even though she will be getting an exemption in income tax as a senior, that will actually not make up for the increase that she's going to be paying in rent. So affordability is not being improved for her through these measures through income tax.

Another issue we need to think about is that a lot of these . . . People aren't going to benefit from these until next year, right, so they're not going to benefit now. We also know there's no affordability being implemented through PST [provincial sales tax] exemptions. So income tax is one form of tax, but provincial sales tax is another form of tax that people are paying.

Again I'm going to tell a story. So in 2017 there was PST added on many items throughout the province, and those additions continued on year after year. And PST was added to used cars. So my son worked two jobs to be able to buy a used car. And he had to pay \$1,600 in PST on that car, and he couldn't afford that. He was a young man starting out. He couldn't afford that.

Also just wanted to comment on the graduate tax credit. I believe this only applies to people who graduate with an undergraduate degree. So when I graduated with my Ph.D., I wasn't able to claim this. There's also no ability to claim tuition or the education amount that we used to be able to claim on income tax for full- and part-time study.

And as for the income tax exemptions for people who are living below the poverty line, I think there's other ways we need to think about for lifting people out of poverty than simply tax exemptions. So the government has said they're listening to people, but these affordability measures are limited when we consider things like rising rent.

I'm glad to have had the opportunity today to commit a few insights to record. And with that I look forward to seeing this bill move on to the next stage. Thank you.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 13, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2025* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Second reading of this bill.

**Speaker Goudy:** — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Lori Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

**Speaker Goudy:** — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

#### Bill No. 16

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jim Reiter that **Bill No. 16** — *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2025* be now read a second time.]

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

**Sally Housser:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to enter some comments on *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act*. You know, the summary, the purpose of this bill is removing the PST exemption on vapour products, vaping products.

You know, obviously we're very much in support of that. I've got two teenagers at home, two high school students at home in my house. I know very much that these vaping products are specifically targeted at younger individuals, and we see a real epidemic of people taking up that vaping at an extremely young age. You know, so obviously we stand in support with the Sask Party government when it comes to tobacco and vapour product initiatives that encourage good health.

In November of 2023 we were happy to help them and the

Youth4Change push through *The Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Amendment Act*, which raised the minimum age for purchase of tobacco and nicotine products. And that was something we were very happy to collaborate with all involved on.

You know, when it comes to nicotine and vaping products, tobacco products, there's really no safe amount, particularly when we're talking about youth. There's still lots of studies to be done on the long-term effects of vaping that we have not yet really seen the results of, just because it's frankly a newer technology that hasn't been around long enough to have real long-term clinical studies on.

So obviously very much in support of removing the PST exemption. I mean, you know, I would love to see when you remove one exemption here, that perhaps you could get rid of some of the 32 PST expansions we've seen this government make since 2017. But ultimately, you know, ultimately this is a positive move on the government's part and one that we support.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to see this bill move to committee. Thank you very much.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 16, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2025* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Second reading of this bill.

**Speaker Goudy:** — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Lori Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the committee of Crown and Central Agencies.

**Speaker Goudy:** — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

#### Bill No. 17

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Warren Kaeding that **Bill No. 17** — *The Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive (Patent Box) Amendment Act, 2025* be now read a second time.]

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

**Don McBean:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise to make a few comments regarding this Bill No. 17, Saskatchewan commercial innovation incentive amendment Act, 2025 in order that we move it forward to committee.

It's interesting to me. You know, it's been spoken to a number of times by a number of my colleagues. Obviously this is deemed to be a good program. It's being extended for two more years, so we can be in agreement that that . . . The major part of this is that there's an economic eligibility test to be removed, and that sort of gives me cause to take a step back and to take a bigger look at

what it is that we're trying to do here.

I'm noticing some of the dates. You know, the government opposite took power in 2007, and then in 2017 they decided that they needed to do something to promote innovation. And I would suggest that there's never been a concern in innovation in Saskatchewan. Innovation, whether it's considered as invention or just the amelioration of some already good idea, people do this. People innovate all the time. Every time someone is faced with their daily situation, they're always looking for a way to make it better.

So what it seems to me, and when I read through all the points of the removal of the economic eligibility test, is a bit of a question as to why that was necessary in the first place, that only those that were jumping through the correct hoops of economic eligibility and providing all sorts of what seems to have been barriers towards executing and having agency with their new innovations . . . I can only imagine that removing those barriers is a good thing.

As my colleague from Saskatoon Westview says, you're getting used to some of my stories. I always leap into my world as an educator. And the thesis that I never wrote for my education administration was that the greatest untapped resource in the classroom was the empowerment of the passion of the teacher. And it was all about giving the teachers the permission to live their passion.

And when I'm looking at this innovation incentive, the parallel seems clear to me. We don't need to motivate people to be innovative; they are innovative. But what we can do — like I would have suggested in a school that I might have had absolute control over, where we might have removed some of the barriers to the teachers doing their passionate work — I think the people of Saskatchewan deserve to have some of this red tape, if I may, what seems to me to be red tape, in order. And it's now seven years, eight years after the execution or the implementation of the legislation; it seems like it's getting simpler, and I applaud that. We applaud that.

And with that I'm prepared to allow the bill to move forward to its next stage.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 17, *The Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive (Patent Box) Amendment Act*, 2025 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Second reading of this bill.

**Speaker Goudy:** — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Lori Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

**Speaker Goudy:** — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

### Bill No. 20

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Warren Kaeding that **Bill No. 20 — *The Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Investment Tax Credit Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Sally Housser:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise and enter in some comments into the record on Bill 20, the small and medium enterprises investment tax credit.

You know, obviously we're very supportive of small and medium enterprises, small businesses, here in the opposition. I myself was formerly a member of the Regina Chamber of Commerce board here in Regina. Just recently we got to attend, myself and lots of my colleagues, the Paragon Awards recognizing some of the greatest small and medium-sized businesses here in the province.

You know, this investment tax credit is a very positive thing in many ways, and you know, a lot of the Act is to make sure those taxpayer dollars are going to the right people in the right way at the right time, you know, so obviously something we're very supportive of.

Still have some concerns around if out-of-province investors can also claim this tax credit. It's important to keep Saskatchewan-owned businesses Saskatchewan owned, and ensure that any Saskatchewan tax dollar is staying in the hands of the Saskatchewan business people and not people from out of province and out of country.

You know, for small businesses in this province right now there is so much anxiety. People are really struggling not only with what we've seen for the past couple of years, an affordability crisis in this province and right across this country which has hit small-business owners twofold — one in the increased costs of them doing business, and two in the difficulty customers have in having less money in their pockets, particularly for people in the service and retail industries seeing both, on the one side the cost of business increase and on the other side the spending power of their customers decrease. And that was all before we saw the chaos created by the tariffs implemented by Donald Trump to the south of us.

And you know, even for a lot of Saskatchewan businesses . . . I talked to one business owner in my riding of Regina University and it was interesting because it was this great store called Hello Baby for baby clothes — a plug for them if anybody has small kids. But it's such an education on the supply chain issues that really every business owner faces. Most of the products that this business owner sells are made in Canada, but even, you know, like a baby car seat. The majority of it is made in Canada, but the buckle for it is made in the United States, so how does this affect how this product is going to get to her?

So you know, any relief we can provide to small-business

owners, small and medium enterprises here in the province is greatly, greatly appreciated. Obviously we think that we can be doing a lot more. One thing that I was super delighted to see — it was a campaign commitment of the NDP back in October to keep the small-business tax rate at 1 per cent. Initially the government had said they were going to raise it to 2 per cent. Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, they saw the light and agreed with the NDP that it should be kept at the 1 per cent. And I'm very happy. That was a very sensible decision made to follow the NDP on that respect, and certainly provide some relief for small-business owners.

But you know, in closing, Mr. Speaker, just want to say that I'm so proud of the small and medium businesses here in Saskatchewan. They're really the backbone of this province. They contribute so much to our economy, both in the business they do and the jobs they provide. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to see this bill move to committee. Thank you very much.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion made by the minister that Bill No. 20, the small and medium enterprise investment tax credit Act be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Second reading of this bill.

**Speaker Goudy:** — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Lori Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

**Speaker Goudy:** — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

### Bill No. 3

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 3 — *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2024*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Darcy Warrington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to discuss and debate Bill No. 3, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2024*. The bill and amendment would have the power to deal with nuisance properties, which is defined as a property that "remains open to unauthorized entry despite being vacant."

The bill summarized in its entirety has benefits allowing for structures that are beyond repair or people are taking refuge in them. For their own safety, it allows the powers that be to deal with the situation appropriately, whether it's the owner not co-operating with proceedings. This gives the authorities the

right to make the proper adjustments to the property.

The director can, but doesn't have to, warn or try to make arrangements with the owner before applying for this order under this bill. And the Crown is not on the hook for broken leases or mortgages if anything is being done to these properties that might result from, you know, work being done on the property, maybe dismantling the property. The Crown won't be responsible for any of that lost revenue.

But some of the things that are of concern are not so much related directly to the wording of this bill, but how people are struggling with maintaining their properties in the province of Saskatchewan — those fortunate enough to own a place. We have the worst mortgage arrears in Canada. It's the fastest rising for rents. Even with an affordable cost of living, these sorts of increases are asking many of our residents to move out and move on to newer towns or villages, and some people aren't ready or interested in leaving their homes.

So the home reno and first-time homebuyer credits aren't going to cut it. Obviously that's going to be helpful in some of these situations. But in many of these situations where these properties require severe repair, these aren't the types of folks who are going to be able to afford a home renovation. They're not the type that are going to be able to access first-time homebuyer credits.

We need to look at the root causes of all of these issues surrounding poverty, mental health and addictions, crime, cost of living. We hope the Sask Party is going to do more to make neighbourhoods safer for all. Beyond this bill we know that more work needs to be done on these root causes. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 3.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 4

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jim Reiter that **Bill No. 4 — *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2024*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Brent Blakley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the Chamber today to continue debate of Bill No. 4, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2024*. As has been debated and discussed in this House previously, this bill stands to extend compensation coverage to wildland firefighters, extend coverage to non-residents of Saskatchewan doing work outside of the province for a Saskatchewan employer. The bill also goes on to state that Workers' Compensation Board members whose terms have expired can finish participating in any hearings ongoing since before their terms expired. Also stated in the bill is that appeal decisions must be published in a format in keeping with regulations.

As we move forward in this process, my colleagues will continue of course to confer and comment on this bill. As we all know, firefighters are our community heroes. They do important, dangerous work and we fully support expanding coverage to these wildland firefighters. In our changing climate, wildfires are becoming more common and more dangerous, and these heroes deserve to be cared for.

All people of Saskatchewan deserve to work in a safe environment. And on those worst days when an accident occurs, they deserve to be taken care of. We hope to continue seeing improvement to safety standards so that workers' compensation isn't an issue.

When firefighters are called to do their work, their important work of keeping land, buildings, and people safe, the last thing that any firefighter should have to worry about is how they or their family will be cared for if a workplace accident or tragedy happens. This bill gives firefighters some peace of mind, enabling them to concentrate on the task at hand. When it comes down to this, caring for those firefighters that risk their safety and their lives to keep others safe, we should be doing all we can to allow them the financial coverage.

Again we've heard lots of interesting comments, ongoing opinions of the debate from my colleagues. I'm sure we'll have more comments and input. So, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 4, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2024*.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 5

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jim Reiter that **Bill No. 5 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2024*** be now read a second time.]

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

**April ChiefCalf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again in the Legislative Assembly today to enter into debate on Bill No. 5, which is *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act*. The purpose of this Act is to create flexibility for employers while still supporting employees. And some of the measures within this Act include prohibiting employers from withholding tips, limiting when employers can request sick notes, and extending leave provisions.

In looking through the notes from *Hansard* as well as the bill itself, I do believe that many of these are positive changes that will be beneficial to Saskatchewan workers, and I do appreciate anything that will support our workers in Saskatchewan. So for example, with the measure regarding tips, without this legislation there is no guarantee that the tips that we provide for good service actually make it to the staff. So I do welcome this measure.

The one that I think I'm really pleased to see is the changes to requirements for sick notes. And I think we've all had that experience, Mr. Speaker, where we've gone to the doctor's office. I think about a few summers ago, I broke my toe. And I was sitting in the doctor's office waiting for hours just to get an X-ray and confirm what I already knew, which was that my toe was broken. But during that time I was being exposed to, you know, germs from people who were waiting to see the doctor to get a sick note because they were off work due to a cold or a flu. And I think this also is, quite honestly, a waste of doctors' valuable time as well.

I also wanted to speak to the change on bereavement leave. And I'm in full support of changes to bereavement leave for those who have suffered a miscarriage or loss of a pregnancy up to 20 weeks before the date that the pregnancy was due. And as someone who has experienced pregnancy loss and had to return to work immediately afterwards, I found that very traumatic and extremely challenging. So I do support that amendment.

I've also worked in a women's shelter for two years in northern Saskatchewan, and I can see how the amendment to the Act to allow for leave for survivors of violence is very supportive to the healing that takes place for folks who are in that position.

This bill does have some red flags for me. One that I am concerned about is that the provision for mass firings or layoffs is increased to 25 people, whereas it used to be 10. And this makes it actually easier to fire people en masse. So I find that to be quite problematic.

[15:15]

I'm also concerned about changes to requirements for employees' work schedules that only require consent of the employee with no consultation with union. Employees may feel pressure to commit to these, to agree to these. And I think that the consultation with the union needs to stay in place.

And then lastly, I think wages paid in cash . . . I have friends who have had to get child support, and it's been very difficult for them to do so. And so if wages are being paid in cash, it can make it even more difficult to garnish money from partners or ex-partners for child support.

I do look forward to further debate on this bill and consultation with stakeholders. And with that, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 5, the Saskatchewan employee Act amendment. Thank you.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 7

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 7 — *The Court of Appeal (Residency) Amendment Act, 2024/Loi modificative de 2024 sur la Cour d'appel (résidence)*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Silverspring.

**Hugh Gordon:** — I recognize the Speaker too. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Appreciate that.

I rise today to speak on furtherance of the debate of Bill No. 7, *The Court of Appeal (Residency) Amendment Act, 2024*. I think there's not really much more I would be able to add to others' perspectives that've already been provided. Seems to be some fairly simple and straightforward amendments that would hopefully assist the Court of Appeal in its vital functions to the province, a number of measures perhaps to assist the staffing of appeal court judges by allowing the Chief Justice to permit any given judge to reside in Saskatoon instead of Regina, providing for some more flexibility.

All I would mention is, you know, based on my prior law enforcement experience, I understand and I'm sensitive to the importance of having a well-functioning court system. I have, you know, been a part of cases and investigations that unfortunately, due to delays in the court system, resulted in perfectly good cases having to be stayed or withdrawn due to those delays.

So I think anything that would assist the court in adequately functioning, being efficient, and utilizing people and resources in the right manner would, generally speaking, have the support of myself and I know of my colleagues. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 7. Thank you.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 9

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jeremy Harrison that **Bill No. 9, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2024*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Silverspring.

**Hugh Gordon:** — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I rise on my feet to do furtherance to the debate to Bill No. 9, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*. Again I don't think there's much more I could add to the debate that my colleagues haven't already done so. You know, the bill seems again to be a very straightforward amendment to allow regulation-making authority to deliver other forms of documents other than in person or by mail.

Clearly, you know, we are in the 21st century, 2025, and more and more personal communications and delivery of documents, secure and otherwise, are done electronically or digitally. And so I think generally speaking we would support this bill if it assists the ministry and the government to facilitate the service of documents to individuals.

And quite frankly, you know, if they get them other than mail or in person, it can be much quicker and more efficient both for the government and for the people in our communities. Particularly in our rural communities and in isolated communities, this might be a great way to assist them in getting those documents and information they need in order to deal with the things that they have to under *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 9 as well.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 14

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jeremy Harrison that **Bill No. 14, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2025*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

**Brent Blakley:** — Thank you, mister deputy deputy speaker. On my feet again to continue debate of Bill 14, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2025*.

As discussed and debated in this House previously, this bill stands to increase SaskPower's borrowing limit from \$10 billion to \$14 billion. Things also mentioned in the bill, things already known and reiterated are: SaskPower and its subsidiaries are agents of the Crown, SaskPower profits are property of the Crown, and SaskPower can lend or advance money to its subsidiaries and demand repayment.

As we move forward in this process the shadow minister for SaskPower and my colleagues will continue to confer and comment on this bill, as we see this area as vitally important. With the looming trade and tariff war electricity is going to be a major issue, which is why we continue to call on the government to have a plan to protect infrastructure, including power lines.

Electricity in this province, no matter how it is generated, is a valuable resource and commodity, and we need to advance and protect it. We also need to make sure that the cost of that advancement and protection is not passed on to the consumer in such a way that makes it unaffordable for the customer.

However the cost of utilities continues to increase. For many people in the province, especially the most vulnerable that require income assistance, the cost of utilities and rent is becoming unmanageable, with many folks having their power cut off or finding themselves evicted for not being able to pay their bills. We have to ensure that our Crown corporations are making these utilities affordable for people of Saskatchewan.

With regards to points mentioned in the bill, restating SaskPower's relation to the Crown seems rather redundant and unnecessary. Again we've heard lots of interesting comments and opinions during debate of this bill from my colleagues. Of

course our shadow minister for SaskPower will have further input and comment on this important bill.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 14, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2025*.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 15

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Alana Ross that **Bill No. 15 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2025/Loi modificative de 2025 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Regina University.

**Sally Houser:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I myself am deputy deputy on the Whip job today, so I appreciate you stepping into the Chair. I'm pleased to rise today to put some comments on the record for Bill No. 15, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act of 2025*.

You know, this is to allow for the SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] to charge interest on late payments for alcohol purchased by distributors. You know, this will allow the SLGA to enforce debt repayment with the same powers as other Crowns. It will also allow on-reserve gaming employees, regulators, suppliers, or directors, if they don't obey the terms of their registration, that the maximum penalty can be increased from 10,000 to 25,000.

You know, the SLGA is such a valuable Crown, and we want to see them empowered to get the money they're owed. Unfortunately with what we've seen in the competition from the private sector for SLGA storefronts that has been allowed by this government, we've already seen a decrease in revenue that this province is getting from the SLGA as well as the loss of good union jobs. So any support for the SLGA that we can see is positive.

Like just about everyone, liquor sellers are struggling right now, so you know, we are concerned that the number of entities struggling to pay on time is only going to go up. And it's really important to support gaming operators on-reserve as well. You know, the Sask Party government has had some challenges with meaningful funding for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit affairs. Those communities really depend on those gaming payments.

But in general obviously supportive of SLGA being able to have the same powers to get money that's owed to them as other Crowns. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to

adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 18

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jeremy Cockrill that **Bill No. 18 — *The Regulated Health Professions Act*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

**April ChiefCalf:** — Thank you, mister deputy deputy speaker. It is my privilege to rise today to enter into debate on Bill 18, which is *The Regulated Health Professions Act*.

My understanding on this bill is that it will bring together regulations governing a number of different health professions. It will also provide rules on creating and running a health college. It outlines roles and processes for councils and the laws and bylaws that fall under their purview. And lastly it outlines the powers of conduct and discipline for committees.

One thing that is absent from this amendment is massage therapists, so we're wondering where they fit in, because we know that they have been working very hard to enact legislation that governs their profession.

Now good governance, as we know, is essential for a well-functioning health care system. Also essential for a well-functioning health care system is respect for health care workers. Adequate staffing is also extremely important.

And with that I look forward to hearing more from the shadow minister of Health on consultations. And I move to adjourn debate on Bill 18, *The Regulated Health Professions Act*. Thank you.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 19

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jeremy Cockrill that **Bill No. 19 — *The Regulated Health Professions Consequential Amendments Act, 2025/Loi de 2025 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Regulated Health Professions Act*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

**April ChiefCalf:** — Thank you. I am pleased to rise again, this time to speak to Bill 19 which is *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Regulated*

*Health Professions Act.*

Now the purpose of this amendment is to repeal the definition of “duly qualified medical practitioner,” and substitute with the following:

“**‘duly qualified medical practitioner’** means an individual who holds a valid licence to practise medicine issued by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan pursuant to *The Regulated Health Professions Act*.”

As well, this Act repeals the definition of “physician” from *The Vital Statistics Act*, and substitutes it with a “**‘physician’** means a duly qualified medical practitioner.”

I look forward to more consultation and debate on this amendment. And with that I move to adjourn debate on Bill 19, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Regulated Health Professions Act*. Thank you.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 21

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Eric Schmalz that **Bill No. 21 — *The Construction Codes (Derelict Buildings) Amendment Act, 2025*** be now read a second time.]

**Deputy Chair of Committees Beaudry:** — I recognize the member from Regina University.

**Sally Houser:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m pleased to rise today to enter in some comments on Bill No. 21, *The Construction Codes (Derelict Buildings) Amendment Act*. I frankly thought I’d be talking out the clock on this last week, so it’s nice to get a chance to stand up today and enter some comments into the record.

You know, this has to do with the demolition and constructions standards for derelict buildings. You know, we certainly see a need to address derelict buildings. This is something that we’ve heard from municipalities across the province, and this needs to be dealt with.

But we are concerned with some of the issues around just lighting up buildings that might have toxic materials like lead paint or batteries or asbestos or asphalt. You know, that’s something that’s a concern that we hear from firefighters in terms of workplace health and safety. Also some concerns with, you know, the rights of homeowners or building owners on either side of any building that is being burned to the ground.

[15:30]

I think it’s also, when we talk about this bill, to give the context

that derelict buildings are a problem in Saskatchewan in our urban centres, really all around the province, both in terms of housing and in terms of businesses. But you know, I think we have to take a look at why we have so many buildings that are fallen into disuse, why we find so many businesses that are fallen into disuse. It is not the sign of an economy that is doing so well that a major concern of our municipalities is how do we deal with so many derelict buildings. That is not I think a harbinger of an economy that is on the rise unfortunately,

And you know, we see, Mr. Speaker, I’m sure many of the members in the House are familiar with the broken windows theory and how that relates to, you know, a community. And you know, we see too many buildings across this province — unfortunately many of the public housing units that are actually owned by this government — that have fallen into such disrepair that they’re no longer adequate for people to be housed in. And that’s, you know, the housing issue is kind of perhaps a separate issue that I could speak to a lot longer.

But ultimately I think when we talk about, geez you know, the hazardous building materials in many of these buildings that have to be disposed of, you know, as we talk about the need to burn so many buildings down . . . It’s a positive thing, you know, that we need to get rid of these and improve our communities, you know, but ultimately more consultation does need to be done, certainly with firefighters and obviously with the kind of health care professionals around some of the dangers of combustion of derelict buildings. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on this bill.

**Speaker Goudy:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried. I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Lori Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committees, I move that this House now adjourn.

**Speaker Goudy:** — It’s been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt this motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Speaker Goudy:** — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:33.]





# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

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**Hon. Scott Moe**  
**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  
Saskatchewan Power Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Telecommunications  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Water Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation

**Hon. Everett Hindley**  
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**Hon. Travis Keisig**  
Minister of Environment

**Hon. David Marit**  
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Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement  
Minister Responsible for the  
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**Hon. Tim McLeod**  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

**Hon. Jim Reiter**  
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Minister of Finance  
Minister of Immigration and Career Training  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister Responsible for the  
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

**Hon. Alana Ross**  
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority  
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

**Hon. Eric Schmalz**  
Minister of Government Relations  
Minister Responsible for  
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs  
Minister Responsible for the  
Provincial Capital Commission

**Hon. Colleen Young**  
Minister of Energy and Resources