

FIRST SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

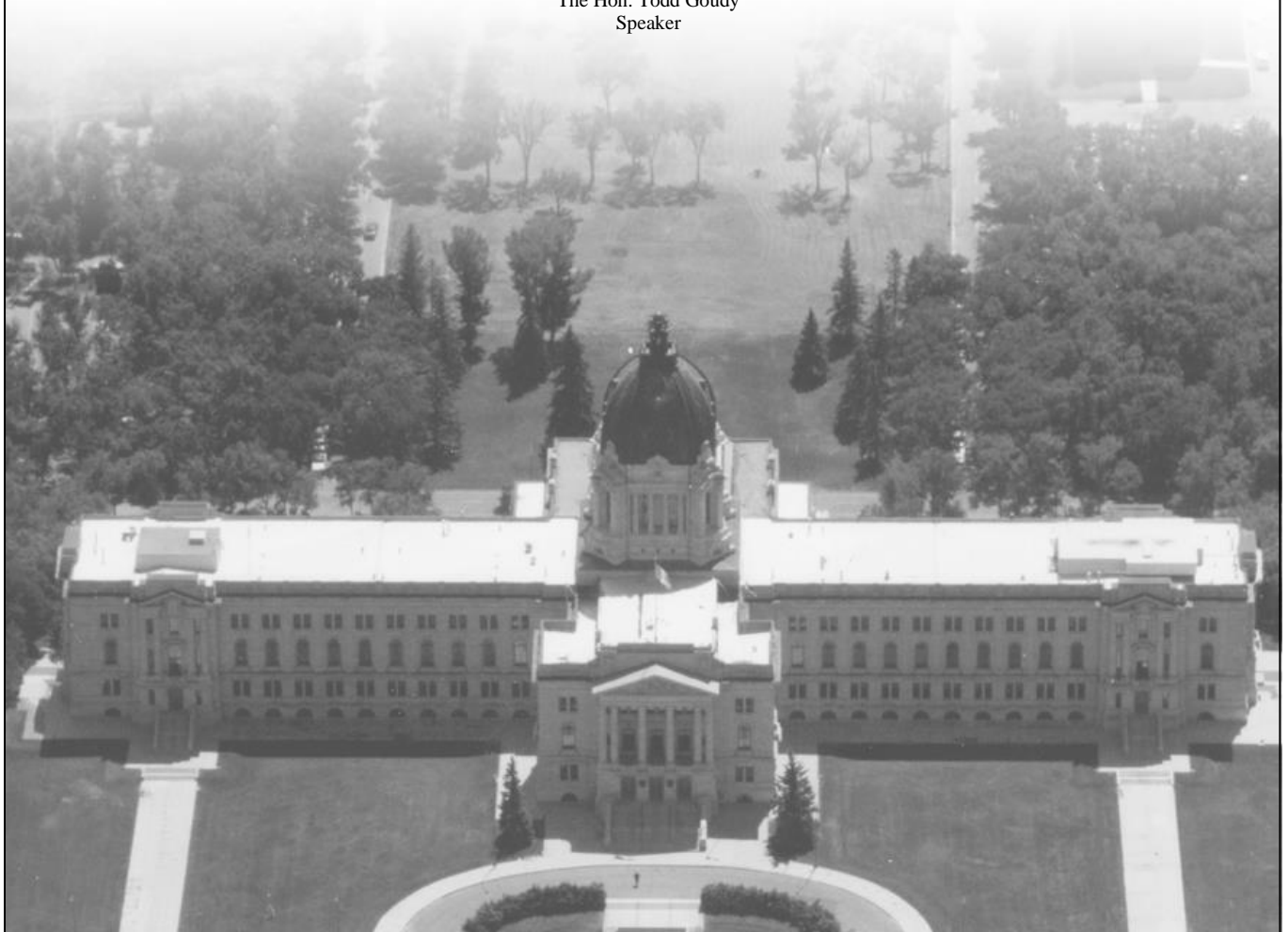
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

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

Standings

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

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CONTENTS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Speaker Goudy.....	799
--------------------	-----

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Cockrill	799
Clarke	799, 800
Schmalz.....	799
Steele	800
McPhail.....	800
Patterson.....	800
Wilson	801
Beck.....	801
Burki	801
Pratchler	801
Hindley.....	802
Speaker Goudy.....	802

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Roy	802
Wotherspoon	802
Teed.....	802
Breckner	802
Burki	803

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Innovative Seed Farm Recognized for 55 Years of Service	
Wilson	803
Silverspring Community Association Appreciated for Their Good Work	
Gordon	803
Cancer Society's Daffodil Month Is a Call to Action	
Weedmark	804
Bust the Winter Blues Festival Brings Joy to Northerners	
McPhail.....	804
Edenwold Early Years & Youth Centre Helps Children Learn	
Crassweller	804
Northerners Take Lengthy Trips for Affordable Groceries	
Laliberte	804
Saskatchewan's Resource Sector Continues to Set New Records	
Gartner	805

QUESTION PERIOD

National Unity and Relationship with Federal Government	
Beck.....	805
Moe.....	805
Child Care Agreement with Federal Government	
Beck.....	806
Hindley.....	806
Health Care Staffing and Access to Health Care	
Conway	807
Cockrill	807
Proposed Purchase of ISC Shares	
Ritchie	808
Harrison, J.....	808
Investigation of Saskatchewan Marshals Service Employee	
Sarauer	809
McLeod, T.	809

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 21 — <i>The Construction Codes (Derelict Buildings) Amendment Act, 2025</i>	
Clarke	809
McLeod, T. (referral to Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee).....	810

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Speaker Goudy: — So in accordance with the Board of Internal Economy directive #23, Caucus Accountability and Disclosure, I hereby table the audited financial statements for the term of October 26th, 2020 to October 27th, 2024 as prepared by the Saskatchewan Party caucus.

And in accordance with the Board of Internal Economy directive #23, Caucus Accountability and Disclosure, I hereby table the audited financial statements for the term of October 26th, 2020 to October 27th, 2024 prepared by the New Democratic Party caucus.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. April is Daffodil Month and the daffodil symbolizes hope for people living with cancer. And with two in five Saskatchewan residents expected to be diagnosed in their lifetime, cancer will impact all of us and our families. Today I'm honoured to welcome five remarkable individuals from the Canadian Cancer Society sitting up in the west gallery, each carrying powerful stories and a shared mission to change the future of cancer in Canada.

Srini Correa is a volunteer, a young widow, and a single mother. She lost her husband, Eshan, to colon cancer when he was just 29 years old. And during his chemotherapy they welcomed their son, Laurenso, a miracle child who now gives Srini the strength to advocate for early detection and prevention in young adults so fewer families have to face what they did.

Emeka Elemamba is a father, a community leader, and a fierce advocate. When cancer took a beloved family member during the pandemic, Emeka stepped in to raise her six-year-old daughter. That loss became his calling to fight for a world where no child has to grow up without a parent because of cancer. And I just want to quickly thank Srini and Emeka for sharing their powerful stories with me earlier today when we had an opportunity to meet.

Also joining us today is Robin Speer, who's a board member and long-time volunteer. He's driven by the faces and names of the loved ones that he's lost. And with decades of experience in public policy, he's using his voice and his heart to raise funds and awareness across Saskatchewan. And I'll just stop and say, Mr.

Speaker, Robin is a proud constituent of The Battlefords and has done really incredible work in bringing the CIBC Run for the Cure to our home community. We've had two editions now; I've had the privilege of attending both. And Robin has done such a great job engaging survivors and patients and families in our community, and many thanks to Robin for that.

Also joining us is Andrea Seale, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Canadian Cancer Society, who has dedicated her life to making Canada more compassionate, just, and healthy. She leads with vision, with empathy, and a strong belief in the power of people to create change.

We also have Angeline Webb joining us, senior manager of advocacy, who has spent more than 20 years fighting for prevention, equity in access. And she stands up for those navigating their cancer journeys, making sure no one is left behind.

These five individuals remind us what it means to turn grief into purpose and purpose into action. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these guests to the Saskatchewan legislature.

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join the minister in welcoming these fine folks to the Saskatchewan legislature today. I'd like to welcome Srini, Emeka, Robin, Andrea, and Angeline.

Cancer is something that has profoundly touched my family, and so it is very personal to us. And my family is navigating some of those challenges of having cancer in the family right now. So it is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you here on behalf of our team and thank you for the work that you do.

I hear the commercials on the radio talking about how many people are touched and diagnosed by cancer every day and every year in Saskatchewan. And it is something that I don't wish on any family, but I am grateful for the fact that you are here doing this work. And thank you for your advocacy on this as well. It's something that no family should have to go through, and I'm very grateful, again, that you're doing this work.

So on behalf of our team, the official opposition, thank you and welcome to the Saskatchewan legislature.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Eric Schmalz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome several individuals who are seated in your gallery here today. They are officials with the Ministry of Government Relations, specifically with the municipal relations division.

I'm going to read the names, if you wouldn't mind just giving us a wave when you hear your name. We have Margaret Folk, Karla Hamilton — there we go — Jaki Biesenthal, Haley Seitz, Carly Hagerman, Mary Jane Zafra, Yuhong Zhao, Hanz Perolina, and

Darlene Larson.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my office, I would like to welcome them to the Legislative Assembly. And I'd ask that members thank them for their service to the province of Saskatchewan, the hard work they do every day. I have the privilege of seeing that work in action, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with this member in welcoming these fantastic Saskatchewan people to their Saskatchewan legislature. As the shadow minister for municipal affairs on our team, I've had the privilege to meet with many municipal leaders across the province, and I know how hard they work to represent their communities. And I'd like to again join in welcoming you to your Saskatchewan legislature. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Doug Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It brings me great pleasure to introduce a lady from the Southwest, a volunteer from the community of Eastend and the Southwest overall. It's what Saskatchewan is built on, the leadership of these individuals. Val Bidaux was here today receiving the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal award. And like I say, I've known Val for a number of years before I become a politician, back in my municipal days. And Val was always there for community, whether it was health care, education, you name it, she's there. That's what Saskatchewan is built on — on working hard, working with our people from the communities.

Also along with Val today is her daughter Jade Verpy. Also Chelsie Lingenfelter. Right on, Chelsie, give us a wave. And an exchange student from a country a bit a ways away from where we are today, is Lucas Abreu, and he's from Brazil. He's with the educational exchange program in Eastend, Saskatchewan.

And I don't know if this gentleman needs any introduction. It's Lorne Scott. Mr. Lorne Scott.

And you might notice the other gentleman up in the Speaker's gallery, but I promised to let another colleague introduce him.

So I'd just like to say welcome to your legislature and have a great day. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take a quick moment to join in with the member opposite in welcoming somebody that I did not know was getting a Volunteer Medal. But I've known her from my time at SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] with municipal councillors. Val, who probably deserves another medal for having to share and talk politics with me at a drink in a hotel bar during the SUMA convention. She just brings an absolute light to her community.

And I know that from Regina we have to travel west to get to

Eastend, which can be a little confusing. But that's something that I know from the town of La Ronge, where you have to travel north to get to Southend and south to get to Northside.

So I just want to say, on behalf of our team here, a special thank you to all the folks here today, and a special shout-out to Val and thank her for her service to her community.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Megan Patterson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce a very special group of individuals from Moose Jaw and welcome them to this their Legislative Assembly. I would like to start by introducing Retired Lieutenant Colonel Lyle Johnson and Wayne Cameron, who both received the Volunteer Medal this morning for their tireless service to our community.

I would also like to introduce Fran Cameron, Wayne's wife; Joyce and Ron Walter; and Phil Adkins, who are members of the Friends of the Forces Fellowship.

Wayne Cameron is a devoted volunteer whose passion for service and leadership has made a significant impact in our city. As a board member of RuBarb Productions, he has been instrumental in promoting local theatre in Moose Jaw. Beyond the arts, Wayne's extensive volunteer work including serving as a president of Toastmasters judging speaking competitions and leading a student backpack program in Costa Rica. His service has been ongoing. He has previously received other accolades such as the Wakamow volunteer club Service Above Self Award and the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal.

Retired Lieutenant Colonel Lyle Johnson is a distinguished educator and community leader whose contributions span decades. A retired high school teacher from Moose Jaw, Lyle enriched the lives of countless students by producing and directing over 60 theatrical productions. In 1985 he founded Moose Jaw Crime Stoppers and is still involved today.

Lyle has been a dedicated Army Cadet League volunteer since 1972 and is a retired lieutenant colonel in the Canadian Armed Forces with 45 years experience. He keeps us all informed through his volunteer work producing *Moose Jaw This Week*. His service has been acknowledged with other honours, including the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal.

Please join me in congratulating retired Lieutenant Colonel Lyle Johnson and Wayne Cameron on being selected as medal recipients, and welcome all of our friends from Moose Jaw to this their Legislative Assembly.

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be back up on my feet again to introduce someone who's really important to me and played a big role in my life, and that is Mr. Lorne Scott up in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

For those who don't know, Lorne is first and foremost a farmer,

a conservationist, part of the Order of Canada, part of the order of Saskatchewan, has a lot of accolades including being featured in a book, *Protecting the Prairies: Lorne Scott and the Politics of Conservation*. Well worth the read, Mr. Speaker, if you want to look at conservation and the history of conservation in Saskatchewan and the role that Lorne has played over the last many, many decades, Mr. Speaker, so many decades.

I'm going to just tell one quick story. The first time I went out to Lorne Scott's farm south of Indian Head, he had invited me out. He said, "Jared, let's go band some young yellow-headed blackbirds." He's got a number of wetlands on his land and he said, "Come on out. We'll go out and spend the evening banding young yellow-headed blackbirds." So I drive the hour out of the city to get to his place. I get to his yard; he's nowhere to be found. I phone him. I said, "Hey I'm at your place. Are we banding?" He's like, "Actually I'm spraying right now so I'm not coming, but maybe we can organize it another time." And he's like, "Look around the yard and just see what . . . just have a look around the yard, see what birds you can find." I was like, "Okay, thanks." So I just drove an hour to get to you but okay, I'll go home.

So I look around his yard and I'm like . . . I see all his combines, and I'm like wow, Lorne collects antique combines. I later found out that's what he farms with, Mr. Speaker. So he's been farming for a long time and he's using the implements that he started farming with many years ago. But it is a great honour to welcome him to his Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

[13:45]

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

Sean Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and the members, up in your gallery for the first time ever this year, Sean Checkley. We both ran parallel lives on opposite sides of the province. Both of us are politically on this side of the House, both of us are or were mayors of small communities — mine being Buchanan, his being Fox Valley — and we both also have the proper spelling of Sean as our first name.

He likes to refer to me as the east version of him, but I refer to him the proper way — the west version of me. I invite him to join me for ice cream at Milky Way after. Please welcome him to his Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carla Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to take a minute to acknowledge the volunteer service medal recipients that we have joining us here today in their Assembly and congratulate them on a well-deserved honour.

Mr. Speaker, today myself, the Deputy Premier, yourself, and a number of colleagues had the opportunity to attend the 30th Volunteer Medal ceremonies at Government House, and it really was an uplifting day. Our province's motto is "from many peoples, strength," and the strength of our volunteers has made our communities right across this province so much stronger in so many ways. These are people who did not stick up their hand to volunteer for the accolades. In fact I had no fewer than three of them tell me when I was congratulating them today, "Oh, well

they all are deserving, but I don't know if I deserve this award."

At the risk of offending them, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say, you most certainly do. Your communities recognize the work that you do and the importance of that work in your communities, volunteering in so many ways. Your nominators recognize that work, and the provincial awards council also concurred with that judgment. Mr. Speaker, these volunteers, although it may make them uncomfortable because they are a humble lot, they deserve all of our praise. As members of this Assembly, I would invite all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

And briefly, while I'm on my feet, I feel both the need to welcome former minister Scott to his Legislative Assembly, and state on the record that he is definitely the best birder that we have in the Assembly here today. But I know you have an eager student in the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members to join me in welcoming these fine guests and minister Scott to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Noor Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you through you I will be welcoming a wonderful and remarkable group of students from Coronation Park Community School, our future leaders. And I want to say about this school, it is just behind my office, very close to my constituency.

And the best thing in this school that I can see, its diversity is there. And this school has one opportunity with many of the schools in my constituency that they offer every year on Christmastime. They give a free lunch to the students, warm meal, and they provide all variety of halal, veggie, and they provide all those kind of things. So I'm very proud of the teacher, administrators.

And the teacher that is with them is Ms. Bird, incredible teacher. Thank you, Ms. Bird, for bringing your class to this Legislative Assembly. And after question period, Mr. Speaker, I will be facing their hard and smart questions. They are all from grade 8, students of grade 8 class. Most of the time I'm more scared from grade 8 students than high school students because their questions are very smart and sometimes very tricky as well.

So I will request all members to join our future faces, to give them a warm welcome to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Joan Pratchler: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to, to you and through you, recognize some more child care providers here in our province. We have Brandi and Jesse, who are here from the Sask Poly child care provision, Play & Discover Early Learning Centre. They do wonderful work with the children. I've seen their work many times and it's wonderful.

So with me I'd like to ask everyone to join me in welcoming them to their legislature.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Brandi and Jesse from the Sask Poly early learning centre and to thank them for the great and amazing work that they are doing supporting children and families across this part of the province. And just reaffirm this government's commitment to looking forward to sitting down with the new federal government and renegotiating this child care deal for Saskatchewan.

So I'd ask all members, Mr. Speaker, to welcome Brandi and Jesse here to this, their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I just wanted to make one quick comment too. The Deputy Premier might be able to correct me, but today we heard some very wise words from our Lieutenant Governor. And she had said, I believe, "The reason that volunteers don't get paid is not because they're worthless but because they're priceless." And I think those were great words today. So again, thank you so very much for being here and all you do for the province.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Jacqueline Roy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to present a petition calling for equity in education for students with complex needs. In 2023 the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission conducted a review of the policies, programs, and funding models to provide targeted supports for students with dyslexia.

But learning can be impaired by many things beyond dyslexia, including autism, ADHD [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder], FASD [fetal alcohol spectrum disorder], dysgraphia, dyscalculia, deafness and hard of hearing, blindness and visual impairment, mental health challenges, intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic medical conditions, and other factors.

Access to education is a right under the Sask human rights code, and an untold number of students across Saskatchewan are being denied their access to their human right of an education.

We, in the prayer therefore read as follows, that we call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately work with the Sask Human Rights Commission to conduct an in-depth review of our public education system specifically around the policies, programs, and funding models designed to support children living with complex needs in our public education system.

Mr. Speaker, the undersigned are from Regina. I do so present.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to

this government putting at risk affordable child care in Saskatchewan. They note that 11 other provinces and territories have already found agreement with the federal government. There's only two provinces that are outstanding, this government being one of them. They recognize how important child care is, affordable child care, to families across this province; how critical it is for those families, but also for jobs and our economy as well. They identified that without access to affordable and accessible child care, families would be forced to leave the workplace, which would have impacts of course on them and their families and our economy and their communities.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately renew the federal-provincial child care agreement to save jobs, help families, and boost our economy.

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents from Regina, Saskatoon, Carrot River, and La Ronge. I so submit.

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet today to present our petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for mandatory intimate partner violence education.

The undersigned residents of the province wish to bring to our attention that Saskatchewan has the highest rate of per capita intimate partner violence — IPV, also known as domestic violence — in Canada; the economic impact of IPV 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; that mandatory intimate partner violence and workplace orientation would include all genders from all walks of life in all areas of the province; and that employers and employees need to know the signs of IPV and where to call for help. Mr. Speaker, education is key to changing the rates of intimate partner violence.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Kim Breckner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the Government of Saskatchewan to address the affordability crisis.

The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that inflation is the highest it's been in more than three decades; that according to Angus Reid, 84 per cent of Saskatchewan people are feeling stressed about money — that's the highest such rates of financial insecurity in Canada; that half of Saskatchewan residents were living paycheque to paycheque before transportation and food costs skyrocketed in 2022; that the Sask Party government's power, PST [provincial sales tax], and tax hikes make life more expensive; and that while other provinces have acted, the Sask Party continues to ignore the opposition's call for gas and grocery relief.

With that, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to meaningfully address the affordability crisis in Saskatchewan.

The signatories to this petition reside in Regina. I do so present.

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

Noor Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following. The province of Saskatchewan is responsible for ensuring the safety of drinking water. Many citizens of Regina do not have safe drinking water because the pipes that deliver water to their homes are both old and made of lead, resulting in high concentrations of lead leaching into their drinking water.

This situation has unequal impacts on the health of vulnerable people, including children, low-income residents, Indigenous people, seniors, renters, and new Canadians living in Regina's urban core. The province of Saskatchewan administrator administers federal infrastructure funding that's intended for revitalizing core infrastructure, including safe drinking water.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to call on the Government of Saskatchewan to ensure access to safe drinking water for all Regina residents by providing support to the city of Regina to replace lead water main quickly and safely.

The signatories of this petition reside in Regina. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Innovative Seed Farm Recognized for 55 Years of Service

Sean Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Robert Ostafie and Ostafie Seed Farm from Canora. Robert was recognized for 55 successful years of pedigreed seed production beginning in 1970. In January of this year Robert was awarded the Long Service Certificate from the Canadian Seed Growers' Association. This is an amazing achievement and is a demonstration to his dedication and excellence in the farming community.

[14:00]

His mission was to provide for sale to local farmers a top-quality seed product at a price that was affordable. He soon learned that wholesaling their product to big companies was not in the books for them. Robert is proud to say that they continue that trend today.

Robert wanted to make a difference where farmers came first. He relied on the knowledge passed on to him from his university peers on how to make that happen. It was possible with hard work, dedication to growing pedigreed seed crops, making seed sales to local farmers, and a lot of family labour and sacrifices.

Today Robert still plays an active role in the seed business. The heavy lifting is now being done by his son Brendan and their employees. They have become the seed business with many of their new and exciting ideas being implemented today.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to congratulate Robert and the Ostafie's Seed Farm on 55 years of business. Thank you.

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

Silverspring Community Association Appreciated for Their Good Work

Hugh Gordon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to bring to the attention of this Assembly all the good work done by the Silverspring Community Association in my riding.

Earlier this year, I was fortunate to receive an invite from the association by their president, Adam Day, to attend their meeting on February 11th at the Silverspring Elementary School. Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to attend, knowing that I was the first MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Silverspring who had ever attended any of their meetings.

Mr. Speaker, the Silverspring Community Association is doing so many positive things in my riding to help support the community and make Silverspring a better place to live. It is through the tireless efforts of the community association and many other hard-working volunteers that they're able to do things such as publishing a monthly newsletter; family events such as Fun Day in the Park, Summer Theatre, and the Winter Festival; as well as maintaining the outdoor rink.

They also provide public forums regarding important community issues such as electoral, city development, planning, traffic, and zoning issues, which help them to effectively advocate on behalf of the community of Silverspring. Mr. Speaker, the Silverspring CA [community association] also provides several youth and adult programs like pickleball, basketball, dance, yoga, skating, floor hockey, martial arts, babysitting, arts and crafts, and so much more.

So I'd like to thank the association members Adam Day, David Rorstad, Trent Sievert, Andrea Carroll, Geoffrey Svenkeson, Paul Fraser, Kaiden Deck, and Sue Foreman for all the great work they do in my riding. I look forward to helping them in their success in the next four years.

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

Cancer Society's Daffodil Month Is a Call to Action

Kevin Weedmark: — Mr. Speaker, each year as the snow melts and daffodils begin to bloom, we're reminded of the power of resilience and renewal. April is Daffodil Month, a time of reflection, remembrance, and resolve. Every daffodil pin worn in this House today represents a life touched by cancer — a parent, a sibling, a friend, a neighbour. It's hard to find a single person in this province who hasn't been touched by this disease.

The Canadian Cancer Society has led Daffodil Month for over 65 years. They've walked beside families in their darkest moments. They've helped fund life-saving research, provided comfort and care, and advocated for policies that give people a fighting chance. Their work has saved lives and changed them.

But cancer doesn't wait, and neither can we. Until April 30th every donation made to the Canadian Cancer Society will be matched, doubling the impact to fuel groundbreaking research that could transform how we prevent, detect, and treat this disease.

Mr. Speaker, we wear these daffodil pins with pride, but also with purpose, because behind every pin is a story, a diagnosis, a battle, a goodbye, and sometimes a miracle. To the survivors, the caregivers, the grieving, and the fighters, please know that we see you, we honour you, and we stand with you. Let this month be more than a symbol. Let it be a call to action. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Bust the Winter Blues Festival Brings Joy to Northerners

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people of northern Saskatchewan know that winter can be a challenging time of year. Extreme cold warnings that can last for weeks, windy days, blizzards, and sunsets that begin at 4:30 in the afternoon make it easy for the winter blues to settle in. That is why it is so important for northerners to come together as a community with events and winter festivals like Bust the Winter Blues, which is held in Creighton.

This event provides a fun opportunity for the families and communities of Creighton, Flin Flon, and Denare Beach to participate in activities like snowshoeing, trivia nights, turkey curling, bonfires, sliding, outdoor snow soccer, card making, an annual poker derby, community dances, and a celebrity smooshing contest, which I was able to participate in with the members of the Creighton town council — which I'll clarify is skiing on two-by-fours across the parking lot at the Sportex. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to announce here that we placed first in the smooshing event.

Events like these wouldn't function without the hard work put in by the organizers, volunteers, and sponsors. They bring joy to families, strengthen communities, and embrace what it means to be a northerner. I am very happy that I was able to bring my wife and children to this year's Bust the Winter Blues festival, as we all had a great time there.

I would like all members to join me in thanking and congratulating all the organizers, volunteers, and sponsors for their hard work and a job well done.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from White City-Qu'Appelle.

Edenwold Early Years & Youth Centre Helps Children Learn

Brad Crassweller: — Mr. Speaker, today I would like to highlight a tremendous asset to the community of Edenwold, the Edenwold Early Years & Youth Centre. At the Edenwold Early Years & Youth Centre they know that children develop and learn best with hands-on experiences through play and exploration.

The programs offered at this centre allow children the opportunity to make choices about their activities, fostering independence and creative experience. The centre focuses on a holistic approach, with a well-rounded focus on social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and the spiritual needs of all the children. The centre currently provides care for 21 full-time and 10 part-time children.

Mr. Speaker, the Edenwold Early Years & Youth Centre program is based on the developmentally appropriate practice of each child, being mindful of all the underlying values of parents and caregivers of the children in their care. I'm honoured and our constituency is blessed to have such a great staff working hard to meet the needs of our most valuable asset: our children. I ask all members to join me in thanking the staff of the Edenwold Early Years & Youth Centre for their commitment to our next generation of learners. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Northerners Take Lengthy Trips for Affordable Groceries

Leroy Laliberte: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month, the member from Cumberland and I had the privilege of visiting the furthest north region of the province. This was a special visit for me, Mr. Speaker, as we were able to really sit down with northerners and hear their concerns and share regarding provincial matters.

We heard the concerns about the price of groceries, amongst others, Mr. Speaker. They often travel together to ensure safety, driving 10, sometimes up to 16 hours to get to the nearest city centre to shop for bulk and to go back to the North. As they travel — again, 10 to 16 hours, mostly on winding gravel roads — in order to feed their families, most of the people within the far North communities have invested in radios in order to communicate with oncoming traffic and to make sure that everyone gets home safely, Mr. Speaker, something my colleague and I had seen. This is what the people do for survival, Mr. Speaker.

When we go home tonight, let's remember that the people in the furthest northern regions, northern communities, are likely travelling today in order to get affordable groceries into their community. And for more services, they're taking their own measures to ensure the road's safety. To my constituents in the far northern communities, I want to thank you for hosting my

colleague and I. We are grateful for all you shared with us. Mahsi cho. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Kindersley-Biggar.

Saskatchewan's Resource Sector Continues to Set New Records

Kim Gartner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to announce that Saskatchewan's resource sector continues to set new records. A record 15.1 million metric tons of potassium oxide was produced in 2024, an increase of 8 per cent from 2023. Mr. Speaker, as the world's leading potash producer, Saskatchewan accounts for approximately one-third of global production.

But it's not just our potash industry that's thriving. Our uranium industry continues to set records as well. Last year uranium sales reached an impressive \$2.6 billion, surpassing our government's ambitious 2030 target of \$2 billion. Uranium production also hit a remarkable 16.7 thousand tonnes, which is a 28 per cent increase from 2023. The resumption of operations at the McClean Lake mine, along with other projects nearing construction, will further boost uranium production in our province.

Mr. Speaker, uranium exploration spending reached \$200 million in 2024 and is estimated to rise in 2025, helping us achieve our critical mineral strategy goal well ahead of schedule. The uranium industry employs over 3,400 dedicated individuals and procures hundreds of millions of dollars in goods and services from local businesses.

Mr. Speaker, these are remarkable achievements. Our province is not just meeting expectations, we're exceeding them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

National Unity and Relationship with Federal Government

Carla Beck: — This morning Canadians woke up to a new federal government. Now it's time to put the election behind us, and it's time to focus on building Saskatchewan's future within a united Canada. Yesterday, on election day, Donald Trump again threatened the sovereignty of Canada. He urged voters to elect the leader who would ensure that Canada becomes the 51st state. Mr. Speaker, these threats to our country are not acceptable. They're damaging and they have to stop.

Will the Premier stand in this House today and condemn Donald Trump for his threats to Canadian sovereignty?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — I've been asked many times with respect to, you know, comments that the president of the United States makes, and I have said many times, Mr. Speaker, that we should take what the president says very seriously. I don't always take what the president says literally, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly what we are in this nation — and we are part of this nation, Mr. Speaker — is a strong and independent nation. And I watched with great interest last night the federal election that we had, Mr. Speaker.

And I have made an offer to the new Prime Minister, the new — I suppose you'd say somewhat new — Liberal administration to reset the relationship with Saskatchewan so that we can ensure the policies are in place, not just the words but the policies are in place to ensure that Canada can become an energy superpower, as was stated in his election campaign to ensure the policies are in place to attract investment into the sectors that are creating jobs for people from corner to corner to corner in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly that is the offer that I've made to this new Prime Minister that was elected last night with his minority administration, Mr. Speaker, and it's the offer that we look forward to engaging with.

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

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier has taken on a new, conciliatory tone. I note that. But the fact is that the Premier's own friends, like Preston Manning, have suggested that the West would be better off separating from Canada should the Liberals gain another mandate. Premier Smith has said that she will hold a referendum on Alberta separating from the rest of the country.

Mr. Speaker, this is hurtful to our economy, it plays into Trump's hands, and it threatens the future of this country. We need a united Canada more now than ever before. Will the Premier stand in this House today and will he commit to Saskatchewan people that he will never hold a vote on Saskatchewan leaving Canada?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more that we need a united Canada. What we saw last night was the official takeover of the NDP [New Democratic Party] Party by the Liberal Party of Canada. What we saw on full display was the division that we have in this nation, the division that starts on the west side of Toronto and extends right over the Rocky Mountains into the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, including this province, of which voted 65 per cent not for the governing party, Mr. Speaker.

And so it is incumbent on us, on us as the Government of Saskatchewan, to represent Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, with the federal administration that we have. But it's also incumbent on us to do our level best to work with the federal government. And I would expect that, as Saskatchewan is part of the nation of Canada, that we will have a new beginning with this Prime Minister and his cabinet and his caucus, Mr. Speaker, a new beginning that will treat Saskatchewan industry, Saskatchewan families, and Saskatchewan communities most certainly like we are a part of Canada.

That's the offer that I provided to the Prime Minister this morning, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward to engaging with him on Saskatchewan being treated like and being a full partner in the Confederation of our nation.

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

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, it took a while for the Premier to not answer the question. Now clearly, clearly Canada can no longer rely on the US [United States] to be a stable trading partner while he's in the White House. And clearly in this country, we need more rail lines, more pipelines, more power lines built across the country from coast to coast to get our products to market.

[14:15]

Now the federal government has certainly failed to get this done. But, Mr. Speaker, so has the Sask Party. They've been in power for 18 years. Why did this government, why did they neglect this critical infrastructure and leave this province so vulnerable?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, when this party was formed just over 25 years ago, there was eight founding principles. And I would point all members — all citizens of the province — but members on the floor of this Assembly to the eighth of those founding principles that were put in place in 1997 when the Saskatchewan Party was formed. The eighth one reads, and I quote, "The constant improvement of Saskatchewan's economic and social conditions within a strong and united Canada." It's a very founding principle of this party, Mr. Speaker.

It's very different from what we are seeing from the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, as we see the completion of the takeover of the NDP Party in Canada by the Liberal Party. Mr. Speaker, they are now officially, officially . . . We are now seeing officially what we have seen in practice through a confidence-and-supply agreement across this nation, Mr. Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition asks about why we don't have pipelines built in this nation. It's because the NDP supported the Liberal Party every step of the way. It's because . . .

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

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, their inaction, their willingness to play silly political partisan games while Saskatchewan people hurt is having consequences. People in this province, people in this province right now are more financially stressed than anywhere else in the entire country. And families are facing serious economic challenges right now, Mr. Speaker.

Right now we have punishing Chinese tariffs on canola, on peas, on pork. The federal government should be making this a priority to have those tariffs lifted, and that likely means, Mr. Speaker, removing the tariffs on Chinese EVs [electric vehicle]. However all of the federal parties, including the Conservatives, ran on keeping those Chinese EV tariffs in place.

Today I ask the Premier: what will he do to pressure both the federal Liberal government and the opposition Conservatives to get these EV tariffs removed?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Like I've said, Mr. Speaker, I've raised this with the previous prime minister, the current Prime Minister. The Minister of Agriculture had actually raised this with the previous Agriculture minister as early as last fall when the Chinese tariffs on electric vehicles were applied — again an electric vehicle that nobody wants, Mr. Speaker, protecting an industry in Canada of which there is nobody working in.

So I would say this is a prime example, Mr. Speaker, of where policies really do matter. Policies of different levels of government really do matter. And we need to think, Mr. Speaker, and we need to advocate with our federal parties with respect to what policies they're bringing in and what the actual impacts are going to be on Canadians.

All too often when there is some type of a disagreement, either with China or India, it's agricultural products that are being hit, agricultural products that are disproportionately being produced in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And it's often due to policies that are brought in by the Liberal government.

And as I said, and we see this in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, with a Saskatchewan New Democrat running as a Liberal, the takeover of the NDP Party in Canada is now complete.

Speaker Goudy: — Sorry, just one second. I'm just going to ask that . . . I think we were all hurt as a province last night, and let's keep our partisanship, saying things . . . Well maybe not everybody was hurt, but there was a lot of Saskatchewan stirred up last night and a lot of division. So we don't want to see that in this Chamber. This is a place where, I think, statements shouldn't be made across the way of the intent of one over the other.

So I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Child Care Agreement with Federal Government

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, policies matter. So do programs that deliver relief from the cost of living to Saskatchewan families. This Minister of Education has made every excuse in the book as to why he couldn't sign on to the federal child care program. And, Mr. Speaker, we're one of only two provinces who've yet to do so. The other one is Alberta, and their premier isn't even sure that she wants to be part of the country.

Now the Sask Party minister said that it was because of the federal election that he couldn't sign on to this important deal for Saskatchewan families. Well, Mr. Speaker, the election is over.

Will that government, will that government do what it already should have done? Will they sign on to the national child care agreement?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know there's some new members in this Chamber, but the Leader of the Opposition is not one of them. And she should know that the election was just not even 12 hours ago. And they already expect that apparently there's been a cabinet appointed federally. It shows you how little they know about how this actually works, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this government remains committed to negotiating a child care deal. We want to ensure that we get the best deal possible for Saskatchewan families. Hearing from people right across this province, Mr. Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — Order. Let's have some decorum so that we can hear the conversations, the questions, the answers.

So please, Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hearing from people right across this province who have questions and concerns about the existing child care agreement. For example, someone who'd said:

A child who turns six ages out of the system. And very often a child who might be born early in the year will turn six and not have a school to go to right away . . . So those are pressures right there, challenges to the current system that we have.

Who said that, Mr. Speaker? Member for Saskatoon Meewasin in adjourned debates just a month ago. So these members opposite, they would have us sign the exact same deal without . . . Mr. Speaker, this is remarkable. These members opposite, they'd sign the exact same deal the way it is. We're going to make sure we get the best deal possible for Saskatchewan families.

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

Health Care Staffing and Access to Health Care

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education is right that that is a gap in the child care agreement. Many provinces have moved to fill it. He refused to. They haven't put a single extra dollar into child care since they signed that federal agreement. Stop pointing fingers all the time.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday we asked questions in this House about the 4,000 days of emergency room blackouts in this province in the last five years — these are days when there was no health care in Saskatchewan communities for those dealing with a medical emergency — and in response that Minister of Health chose to talk about the virtual physician program.

Does the minister think the virtual physician program is an adequate substitute for a functioning hospital emergency room?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we can be very proud of the virtual physician program that's in communities all across the province, been used over 1,500 times in nearly 30 communities. This is a stabilization strategy, Mr. Speaker, while we work to recruit staff to communities. This allows, while we're waiting to recruit staff or working on that, to continue making those services available to local residents.

It isn't the final solution, Mr. Speaker, but it helps us ensure that

people in the province, wherever they live, have access to the care that they need.

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

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the question was whether this is a substitute for open ER [emergency room] rooms. And I congratulate the Minister of Health because he appears that he must have a perfect bill of health. Because it doesn't appear he's spent a lot of time in an actual ER room. The virtual physician program is meant to complement emergency rooms. It is not meant to replace them when they're closed because of lack of staff.

If there are no doctors, no medical or lab techs, if there are no nurses, there is no treatment. I mean, does the Minister of Health actually think that a virtual physician can treat a broken leg, appendicitis, a heart attack, abdominal pain, confusion, a sick kid, a mental health crisis virtually?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite took the time to understand what the program is, she would understand, Mr. Speaker . . .

Speaker Goudy: — Actually yes, that is . . . Minister, please don't . . . I'm sure that they're working hard at their job just like you are at yours. So, please.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Fair enough. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd take the opportunity . . . I'd be happy to speak directly to the member opposite about the program and provide details to her at her convenience, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, in these communities where the program is offered, we have qualified health care professionals working on the front line and then working with physicians virtually and through our HealthLine system to make sure that they can get advice on how to care for the patient in front of them, Mr. Speaker.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this is all done as a stabilization strategy while we work to continue to recruit and retain staff under the nation's most ambitious health human resources action plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, even better, I have been talking to front-line health care workers about the program. And it wasn't just ER closures we were asking about, Mr. Speaker. We were asking about the 500 days of closures to obstetric wards when he touted the potential of virtual physicians.

And I'm just trying to wrap my head around that, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to need him to break it down for me. A woman goes into labour. Her obstetric ward is closed. She logs in to access a virtual physician. Like, how exactly does this work? Where does the minister propose she position the webcam? What comes next, Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question was about emergency rooms. I answered the question about emergency rooms, talking about our virtual physician implementation program.

When it comes to other disruptions that we may have in services or facilities right across the province, I've spoken before in this House many times, including yesterday, how again our most-ambitious-in-the-country health human resources action plan is working to fill those positions, making sure that those services are available to Saskatchewan residents closer to home when they need them, Mr. Speaker.

424 full-time positions filled through the rural and remote recruitment incentive, Mr. Speaker, highly successful in communities right across the province. That's why, just a couple weeks ago, we added 16 more communities who are now eligible under that incentive. We've heard positive feedback from people in those communities, health care workers in those communities as we use these incentives under our ambitious plan, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that staff can be added and services can be bolstered. Thank you.

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

Meara Conway: — I think, Mr. Speaker, it sounds like we can agree that a virtual physician is not a substitute for an open obstetric ward. Hopefully we can agree that there are some cases where there is just no substitute for in-person, well-staffed care.

And all joking aside, this is serious stuff. Our obstetric wards have been closed for 500 days; emergency rooms, 4,000 days across the province in the last five years, Mr. Speaker. The people of La Loche, they need an emergency room. The people of Shellbrook, they need an emergency room. The women of Saskatchewan do not want to find themselves in the situation of Kendal Carlberg, who went into labour, was turned away from her local hospital, and ended up giving birth on the side of the road, Mr. Speaker.

Virtual physicians can be used to complement the system in narrow situations, but virtual care is not a substitute for virtually no care. It is not a replacement for shuttered ER rooms.

So again to the minister: what is the plan to address escalating health care disruptions across Saskatchewan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are challenges in different communities that pop up now and then. Some of these disruptions are very fluid and short term in nature. Most disruptions last less than 24 hours, Mr. Speaker.

Again what this comes down to is staffing and making sure that we have adequate staff in our facilities to . . . Mr. Speaker, this is all about ensuring that we have adequate staff in our facilities to make sure that when you or many others around the province or your family needs that care, Mr. Speaker, you can go into your local facility and receive that care.

Mr. Speaker, I've spoken at length in this House many times, spoken in committee about the efforts being made under our health human resources action plan. These actions are showing results. That's why we're doubling down. We're doing more. We're working on recruiting physicians from the United States, for example, from all over the world, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite laugh. This is serious. This matters to Saskatchewan people, and that's why this government is working on it.

Speaker Goudy: — Member from Meewasin and member from Cumberland, please come to order.

Next question. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Proposed Purchase of ISC Shares

Erika Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the beginning of April, the private holding company Plantro Ltd. announced its interest in buying up to 15 per cent of shares in ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan]. Just yesterday they extended that offer for a second time, and ISC is warning shareholders to reject them.

[14:30]

The Sask Party privatized ISC years ago, but CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] still holds some of the shares. Plantro, meanwhile, is a private entity registered in Barbados. If they acquire a controlling interest in ISC, they will control Saskatchewan people's data and their access to it. They'll raise fees for people and cut jobs and costs. Will the Minister for CIC speak out against Plantro's takeover bid?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister for CIC.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member asked these questions in estimates a number of weeks ago. And she knows what the answer is — I think all members do — which is that of course the government can't comment on the particulars of the circumstance. But what I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, is that the government through our representatives on the board will make sure that the best interests of the taxpayers of this province are taken care of.

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

Erika Ritchie: — Well, Mr. Speaker, there was a time when that Sask Party government actually would speak up in favour of Saskatchewan's interests. You'll recall in 2010 when Premier Brad Wall called on the federal government to stop BHP's takeover of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And they did.

But in 2025 that minister looks away and claims it's none of his business. It is, Mr. Speaker. It is government business. Will that Sask Party government stop shying away from this issue and speak out against a foreign takeover of a Saskatchewan company?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member of Crown

Investments Corporation.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I had mentioned in my previous answer, we fully canvassed this in committee a couple of weeks ago. And the answer, as the member very well knows, is that it is not just inappropriate; it's probably illegal if I were to comment directly on the . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well there you go. There you go, Mr. Speaker. They know better, I guess. But it obviously would be inappropriate for the minister to be commenting directly on that market transaction.

But what I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, is that the best interests of the taxpayers of the province are going to be represented through the board members that are appointed by the Government of Saskatchewan.

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

Erika Ritchie: — Right, Mr. Speaker, ISC was certainly government business when the minister appointed and reappointed John Teal as the Chair of the board. What did Mr. Teal have to say of this takeover? He and the board described Plantro's takeover attempt as "abusive and coercive." Does the minister stand by his appointee's extreme concerns about this takeover?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well I think the member is making my point, Mr. Speaker. The representatives of the Government of Saskatchewan appointed by the government to serve on that board will act in the best interest of the taxpayers of the province.

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

Investigation of Saskatchewan Marshals Service Employee

Nicole Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Corrections and Policing refused to disclose what exactly his suspended marshal is being investigated for. Now the marshals service is accountable to that minister, Mr. Speaker. In fact they created it to be exactly that way.

I have a very simple question for the minister today: does he know what his suspended marshal is being investigated for? Yes or no?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Policing and Corrections.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And as I said yesterday I can confirm that the Public Complaints Commission is investigating this matter, as they investigate all matters involving police officers when allegations are made.

Those allegations need to be proven before any inappropriate conduct has been established, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we have the Public Complaints Commission in the first place. They are an independent, civilian-led organization that handles

complaints like this. They are at arm's length from the government. It would be inappropriate for the minister to comment on any ongoing investigation while it is currently under way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Nicole Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister didn't even touch my question, and it was a very, very simple one. Does he know what his suspended marshal did? Yes or no?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Policing and Corrections.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, when a complaint is made against any officer, whether it's a municipal police officer, an RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officer, or a marshal, the minister's office isn't involved in that. The complaint goes to an independent, civilian-led organization called the Public Complaints Commission.

What I can tell you is that what the people of this province deserve is more boots on the ground. They deserve more police officers, and that's what this government is providing. We are adding more police officers, 70 new marshals, 100 new municipal officers. Mr. Speaker, our people in this province deserve safer communities and that's what this government is delivering. The members opposite are left standing with a bag of inappropriate questions and a marshal's hat in hand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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.]

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet today to join into debate on Bill No. 21, *The Construction Codes (Derelict Buildings) Amendment Act, 2025*. As the shadow minister for Municipal Affairs I have been working hard to connect with many stakeholders in regard to this bill and hear what things they like about the bill and what things they don't like about the bill, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to kind of touch on a few of these pieces.

Certainly what I have heard, and our team has certainly heard, is the need to address the derelict buildings across the province. We understand, you know, when a small village is decommissioned and an RM [rural municipality] takes over the derelict buildings

in that small community, those are a financial burden to those rural municipalities to deal with. And we know that removal of those buildings can cost municipalities a lot of money, and if you have a number of those derelict buildings in the RM, that can cost the municipality a lot of money. And that goes for, you know, not only RMs but also villages, towns, and even in cities, derelict buildings are a concern.

So we certainly have heard the need to address this. But, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of and I've heard a lot of concerns about this bill and what is in it and what is not in it. So right now this bill gives the minister the authority to determine if a building is derelict, and then the ability to actually demolish it by fire. What this bill does not do is include any of the "how is that going to happen" or any of the regulations.

And so many of the stakeholders that we have talked to have shared concerns about having not been consulted with at all on this bill so far. The government has said that they will do those consultations in the lead-up to the regulations, but lots of folks continue to have lots of questions.

One of the things that I would like to just touch on before I allow the bill to pass on to the next stage, Mr. Speaker, is really about the liability here. We've heard from some municipalities that they used to burn derelict buildings, but they don't do that anymore because the insurance companies would not cover any liability. And so we're wondering, and we've asked the Assembly these questions around who is liable if there is a derelict building that, you know, gets out of control and burns an adjacent property that is still being inhabited. Who's liable? We haven't heard those answers from the government, and I hope when we go to committee here on this bill, that they will be able to provide some of those answers.

One of the other things that we've certainly heard is hazards for the firefighters. And I understand that the minister wants this to be an opportunity for training. And we certainly agree that training opportunities for volunteer firefighters, for volunteer firefighting organizations, is important across this province. They do amazing work. So many communities rely on them across the province, and it is important for training opportunities.

However, in this Chamber we are currently also discussing a bill that extends presumptive cancer cases for wildfire firefighters. We did firefighters last year, and we're expanding that legislation this year. But we are passing legislation that literally says if you get cancer as a firefighter, we assume that it's because of your job.

Firefighters are being put in these hazardous positions to keep community members safe, to keep property safe, absolutely. And we really admire and respect the work that they do. But should we be putting firefighters in more hazardous situations just because we want to get rid of these derelict buildings?

There are other alternatives. Government can give funding to municipalities to help deal with these derelict buildings. Right now we know that SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] has asked . . . In February, they put out a press release asking for financial support from government to address these derelict buildings.

With this bill, Mr. Speaker, government's not putting any money into this. And so they're wanting to allow, you know, villages, municipalities, to be able to light these houses on fire, but they haven't actually supported municipalities financially to do this work. So we have a lot of concerns.

We've heard from firefighters around their concerns, around hazardous materials being still in these derelict buildings. We've heard from the minister that those hazardous materials are not going to be removed or won't have to be removed. So things like asbestos, things like asphalt shingles, things like lead, things like old batteries in these buildings, they don't have to be removed.

And again going to the liability piece and the contamination piece, if we're in a small town and there's a derelict building and the property adjacent to you or to the derelict building is occupied by people, and we burn the building and hazardous materials contaminate the yard of the adjacent building or the adjacent landowner, who's liable for that? Who is responsible for cleaning up that contamination? There's actually money in the Ministry of Environment's budget around reclamation of contaminated sites. So will municipalities then access that funding to decontaminate the soil of these derelict buildings?

So I'm not going to speak to this a whole lot longer, Mr. Speaker, but we continue to have important conversation with stakeholders, and I look forward to asking some of these important questions. Understand that a lot of the consultation is supposed to happen, or the government wants to have happen during the regulation construction in this policy. But we are hoping that they will be able to answer some of these questions when we go to committee so Saskatchewan people can have clarity on who's liable, how are these hazardous materials being addressed, and also why the government is not coming to the table with other financial supports to help municipalities deal with derelict buildings.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to let the bill pass to the next stage. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 21, *The Construction Codes (Derelict Buildings) 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 Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Speaker Goudy: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committees, I move that this Assembly do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:45.]

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