



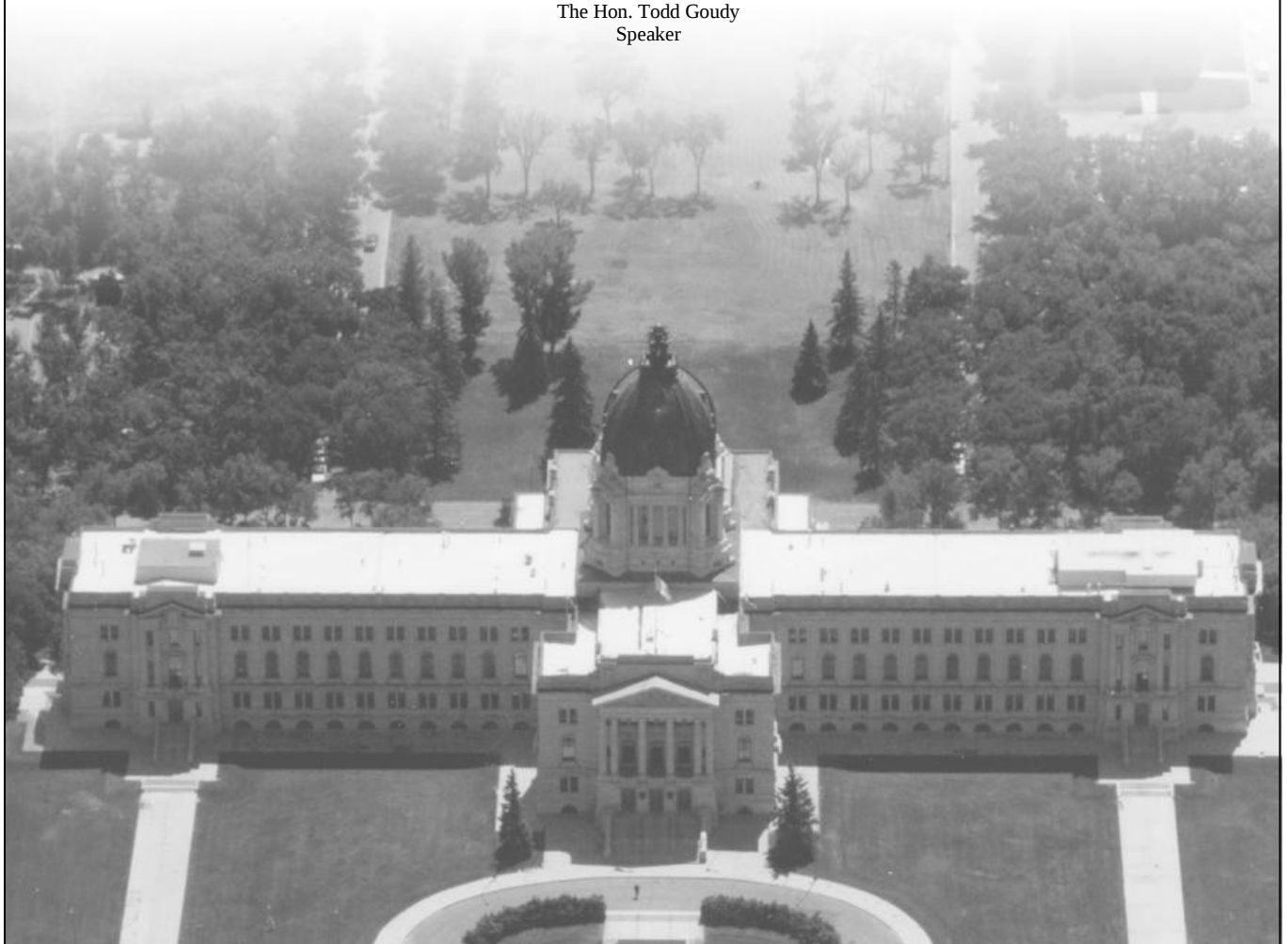
SECOND SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Todd Goudy
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd 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

Beaudry, Chris — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)
Blakley, Brent — Regina Wascana Plains (NDP)
Brar, Bhajan — Regina Pasqua (NDP)
Breckner, Kim — Saskatoon Riversdale (NDP)
Bromm, Terri — Carrot River Valley (SP)
Burki, Noor — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)
Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan-Big Muddy (SP)
Chan, David — Yorkton (SP)
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)
ChiefCalf, April — Saskatoon Westview (NDP)
Clarke, Jared — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)
Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)
Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)
Crassweller, Brad — White City-Qu'Appelle (SP)
Gartner, Kim — Kindersley-Biggar (SP)
Gordon, Hugh — Saskatoon Silverspring (NDP)
Goudy, Hon. Todd — Melfort (SP)
Grewal, Tajinder — Saskatoon University-Sutherland (NDP)
Harrison, Hon. Daryl — Cannington (SP)
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)
Hilbert, Racquel — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)
Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)
Housser, Sally — Regina University (NDP)
Jenson, Hon. Terry — Warman (SP)
Jorgenson, Keith — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (NDP)
Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)
Kasun, Kevin — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)
Keisig, Hon. Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)
Kropf, Barret — Dakota-Arm River (SP)
Laliberte, Leroy — Athabasca (NDP)

Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)
Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
Martens, Hon. Jamie — Martensville-Blairmore (SP)
McBean, Don — Saskatoon Chief Mistawasis (NDP)
McLeod, Blaine — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
McLeod, Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)
McPhail, Jordan — Cumberland (NDP)
Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Patterson, Megan — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)
Pratchler, Joan — Regina Rochdale (NDP)
Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Delisle (SP)
Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Ross, Hon. Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
Rowden, Darlene — Batoche (SP)
Roy, Jacqueline — Regina Northeast (NDP)
Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Schmalz, Hon. Eric — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)
Senger, Brittney — Saskatoon Southeast (NDP)
Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Thorsteinson, James — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)
Warrington, Darcy — Saskatoon Stonebridge (NDP)
Weedmark, Kevin — Moosomin-Montmartre (SP)
Weger, Michael — Weyburn-Bengough (SP)
Wilson, Sean — Canora-Pelly (SP)
Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Mount Royal (NDP)
Young, Aleana — Regina South Albert (NDP)
Young, Hon. Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Standings

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Iris Lang
Deputy Clerk — Kathy Burianyk
Principal Clerk — Robert Park
Clerk Assistant — Danielle Humble-Selinger
Clerk Assistant - Committees — Miranda Gudereit

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

Hansard and other documents of the
Legislative Assembly are available
online within hours after each sitting.

<https://www.legassembly.sk.ca/>

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Cheveldayoff.....	1081
Grewal	1081
Jenson	1081
Blakley	1081
McLeod, T.	1081
McPhail.....	1081
Weger.....	1082
Housser	1082
McLeod, B.	1082
Wotherspoon	1082, 1083
Warrington.....	1082
Sarauer	1083
Speaker Goudy.....	1083
Young, A.	1090

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Senger	1083
Gordon.....	1083
Grewal	1083
Housser	1084

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Regina Chosen to Host 2027 Grey Cup	
Crassweller	1084
Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres Does Vital Work	
Senger	1084
11-Year-Old Overcomes Obstacles to Hike West Coast Trail	
Weger.....	1084
Celebrating Canadian Islamic History Month	
Burki	1085
Dedication of Foster Parents Makes a Difference	
Hilbert.....	1085
Recognizing Truth and Reconciliation Day	
Laliberte	1085
Post-Secondary Internships Support Research and Innovation	
Weedmark	1085

QUESTION PERIOD

Government Response to Tariffs	
Wotherspoon	1086
Kaeding.....	1086
Rent Control Measures	
ChiefCalf.....	1087
Reiter	1087
Housser	1087
Warrington.....	1088
Government Response to Wildfires in the North	
McPhail.....	1089
Moe.....	1089
McLeod, T.	1089
Support for Community Services and Programs for People with Disabilities	
Senger	1090
Jenson	1090

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

McBean.....	1090
Crassweller	1093
Nippi-Albright.....	1095
Martens.....	1097
Wotherspoon	1099
Gartner	1102
Laliberte	1104

Kasun	1106
Senger	1108
CORRIGENDUM	1111

[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. First of all, I'd like to request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce, to you and through you, Mr. Speaker, some incredible individuals who are enhancing research and innovation in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'd first like to introduce Dr. Stephen Lucas, the CEO [chief executive officer] of Mitacs. We had a great announcement at the University of Regina today. Dr. Lucas is an accomplished leader in Canada, worked in many of Canada's most critical sectors, including health care, environment, and began his career in geology. In his current role, Dr. Lucas and the team at Mitacs are helping support post-secondary students through impactful leadership and internship opportunities. I am excited that we are continuing to work with Mitacs since 2007.

Speaking of future leaders, Dr. Lucas today is accompanied by a number of interns from the University of Regina and the First Nations University of Canada. Mesa Kennedy is here, Joshua Bear, Tyrone Perreault, Kamran Foroutan, and Jephthah Ofoe.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to hear about each of their research projects earlier this morning. Mesa worked for the First Nations Power Authority. Joshua and Tyrone were with the PTRC [Petroleum Technology Research Centre]. And they take advantage of this program; they are helping to build a strong future for Saskatchewan.

So, colleagues, please help me in introducing and welcoming to our Legislative Assembly Dr. Lucas and to the Mitacs interns to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join the minister to welcome Dr. Stephen Lucas and all the interns from Mitacs. And thank you very much for your unique and critical role for strengthening academia and an industry partnership to promote research and development for businesses. Thank you very much.

And while on my feet I also want to introduce some members from my constituency: D'Arcy, Donna, and Lily. They are seniors from Saskatoon University-Sutherland. They came here

to advocate for rent control for the problems, the issues they have with their building.

Please join all the members with me to welcome to their legislature.

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

Hon. Terry Jensen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you this afternoon, I'd like to introduce two individuals in your gallery. First of all we have Deb Davies. Deb is no stranger to this Assembly. She has been with the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association for the past 21 years before taking over the role of the executive director. And she's also fostered for over 20 years. So welcome Deb to the Assembly.

Joining Deb this afternoon is Kevin Harris, president of the Canadian Foster Family Association and chairman of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association. He and his wife, Lori-Lee, have fostered for the past 25 years, and together they are master trainers with the SFFA [Saskatchewan Foster Families Association]. They provide training for caregivers and human service workers on the effect of trauma and children in care.

We'll have a little bit more to say a little bit later on about the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association, and we look forward to that. So with that, I'd like everybody in the Assembly to join me in welcoming Kevin and Deb to their Assembly here.

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

Brent Blakley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to take this time to welcome Deb and Kevin to their Legislative Assembly from the foster families association. I know a couple of foster families personally that do such great work in our community and continue to advocate for children. So again I'd like to welcome them to our Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, it gives me great pleasure to introduce a group from Denare Beach joining us here today. We had a fantastic meeting earlier this morning with these folks. Joining us are Dustin Trumbley; his fiancée, Joanne; Joanne's parents, Jim and Kathleen Churchill; Rhonda Werbicki; Tasha Young; and Tasha's absolutely amazing children, Spencer and Josephine. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that all members please join me in welcoming these folks from Denare Beach to this, their Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Requesting leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure of mine to join the minister opposite in welcoming some of my constituents from Denare Beach. When I was up in Denare Beach, the mayor, Carl, had talked about movers and shakers that lived in his community. And the folks that join us here today are those exact people that I believe the mayor was speaking about.

We have Dustin Trumbley; Joanne Churchill; James Churchill; Kathleen Churchill; Rhonda Werbicki; Tasha Young, their kids, Spencer and Josephine. I've had the honour of knowing them over the course of the summer here.

I've seen incredible work and resilience coming from them and absolute determination to help their community rebuild. I thank them so much for the wisdom and the guidance that they have had bestowed upon me as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] to serve on this Legislative floor. And it's been an absolute honour to stand with them in many respects.

You know, these are hard-working folks, survivors of a wildfire that devastated their community, and a true testament to the heart and the resolve of northern people. And I ask all members of this House to join me in welcoming them to this, their Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I did notice in the gallery across from us here a father of one of our members here. It's his birthday. About a year ago today he was up in northern Saskatchewan. We had a good Benny brunch right before we got out and hit the doors of Cumberland. And I want to wish him a very happy birthday, and welcome him to this the provincial legislature. And I ask all members to join me in doing that.

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

Michael Weger: — Good morning, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome four of my constituents from Weyburn that have travelled up here today. We have Deidra Cameron and her three beautiful children, Xavier, Johanna, and Ivy. And I have more to say about the Cameron family in a members' statement, but I'll tell you this. They do not back down from a challenge, Mr. Speaker.

So I would ask all the members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Sally Housser: — Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to welcome 10 grade 11 students seated in your east gallery from Campus Regina Public. Wave? They're accompanied by their teacher Karen McIver as well as some parent chaperones, Tanja Maxie-Poitras and Gary Gott, who's a Knowledge Keeper as well. Very much looking forward to meeting with you folks after question period. Enjoy the show. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these students here today to their legislature.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to welcome my constituent Roger Derby to his legislature, seated in your gallery. I got to meet

Roger and many of his neighbours over the course of door knocking this summer. And he's been a really tireless advocate for seniors and for rent control in this province. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming him to the legislature.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Lumsden-Morse.

Blaine McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to introduce to you in the Chamber today a man who's become a real close friend in a very short period of time, as I've had the honour of being military liaison. In your gallery, Lieutenant Colonel Ed Staniewski, retired. Now Ed has recently moved to Regina Beach, back to his home in Saskatchewan. Moose Jaw would be where he was raised. But good to have you back, Ed.

Now many are going to recognize Ed as the all-star goalie who led the Regina Pats to their last Memorial Cup championship in 1974. Now Ed went on to a 10-year career in the NHL [National Hockey League], and then his real job began after that, as he was quick to say to me. Ed joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1985 and has served with distinction, which included operational tours in Afghanistan, Africa, the Middle East, Bosnia, Egypt, Israel, and Cyprus. I hope I didn't miss anyone there in that regard.

Thank you for being here today, Ed. Welcome to this, your Legislative Chamber. And thank you for the service to our province of Saskatchewan and the country of Canada. God bless you.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a tremendous honour to join the member opposite to welcome Ed Staniewski to his Assembly.

Ed is a tremendous and incredible leader within this province, within this country. He's an iconic hockey player of course, leading the way with the Pats, an all-star. Played with Hartford, St. Louis, and Winnipeg Jets as well and has dedicated his life to the Canadian Forces in serving all of us in this Assembly, our province, and our country.

So on behalf of a grateful province and the official opposition, I provide a very warm welcome and a big thank you to Ed Staniewski.

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

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, today I'd like to welcome Saskatoon Stonebridge constituent Jean Carroll. Jean has been working tirelessly over the last several months to engage folks in Saskatchewan on rent controls. She's not doing this for herself; she's doing it for the benefit of those experiencing a cost-of-living crisis.

So with that being said, I'd like everyone in this House to acknowledge and welcome Jean Carroll to her Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina

Douglas Park.

Nicole Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a school group that has joined us today. We have 12 grade 7 students from Prairie Sky School joining us along with their teacher, Jestina Beskowiney. Please give a wave, guys.

Thank you so much for joining us today. I hope you all have a wonderful time here watching democracy in action. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet — I'll keep it very short because they're no strangers to this Assembly — joined in the east gallery today with us are my two parents, Donna and Owen Sarauer. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly as well.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. She's already been identified and welcomed by the House Leader of the opposition, Mr. Speaker. But I want to welcome Jestina Beskowiney to her Assembly. And through her, to remember her mom, who has passed away but was a real icon in our community as a positive force for building our community — so many multicultural efforts, so many cultural efforts, so many efforts around workers' rights and human rights. And so to this Assembly I want to remember the late Barb Dedi, a very incredible person and the mom of Jestina Beskowiney.

Speaker Goudy: — And I also wanted to welcome Deb Davies to her Legislative Assembly. It's one of the highlights of my year when she comes and puts on a dinner to celebrate all of the foster families and foster parents in our community. So thanks again for all of your hard work that you all do with your organization.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

[13:45]

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to rise to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to fix the funding crisis in the disability service sector for community-based organizations.

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: the disability service sector faces a funding crisis that threatens CBO [community-based organization] workforce stability and ability to provide essential services due to the underfunding of transportation, meals, technology, and maintenance; that the Ministry of Social Services funds CBOs for benefits at approximately 16 per cent of salary funding, and this rate has remained relatively unchanged for 20 years.

With that I shall read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to commit to a three-year funding plan that strengthens CBO capacity, stabilizes the sector, while simultaneously collaborating with CBOs for job analysis for the disability service sector, as well as a full review of operational funding standards to ensure adequate funding for areas including, but not limited to, transportation, maintenance, food, technology, and insurance.

The signatories of this petition reside in Preeceville and Rama, Saskatchewan. I do so present.

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

Hugh Gordon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to renew the federal-provincial child care agreement.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: the federal government renewed its \$10-a-day child care agreement with 11 provinces and territories until 2031. Saskatchewan is one of two provinces that have not renewed the agreement; child care operators and parents have all voiced their concern. They know that affordable and accessible child care is critical for families, our economy, for jobs, and for our future.

Licensed child care centres have contributed to the economy by providing local jobs, opportunities for professional development, and by allowing parents to join or to rejoin the workforce. And without access to affordable and accessible child care, families will be forced to leave the workforce, which will have impacts on our economy and our communities.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request 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.

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

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

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to address the housing crisis through affordable homes and tenant protections.

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: the cost of housing and rental housing in Saskatchewan has skyrocketed, making it increasingly difficult for many individuals and families to secure stable and affordable housing. The Government of Saskatchewan is investing \$496 million on empty housing units, and more than \$194 million has been lost on the utilities, grants-in-lieu, and forgone rent. Market vacancy rates are low in Saskatchewan's urban centres, and monthly rent costs have significantly increased while the wages for Saskatchewan families have

remained stagnant.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately implement a comprehensive, affordable housing strategy aimed at stable and affordable housing.

This petition has been signed by residents of Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Sally Houser: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present this petition to the legislature of Saskatchewan, specifically to implement rent control.

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that Saskatchewan leads the nation in average rent increases; that Saskatchewan's average rent has continued to increase, rising 4 per cent in the last year, and that average rent in Saskatoon has gone up by 5.4 per cent in the last year; rent control would protect tenants from excessive and unreasonable rent increases; and that British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island have all implemented rent control.

I will now read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately protect tenants and implement rent control.

The undersigned reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Regina Chosen to Host 2027 Grey Cup

Brad Craswell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to say that once again the Grey Cup is returning to the heartland of the CFL [Canadian Football League]. Mosaic Stadium will host the 114th Grey Cup game on November 7th, 2027.

Earlier today the Premier and several ministers and MLAs were at the official announcement, along with Commissioner Stewart Johnston and the president of the Riders, Craig Reynolds. This will be the fifth time Saskatchewan has hosted the Grey Cup. The most recent game occurred in 2022.

These major events not only give fans a chance to celebrate the great Canadian sport of football, it also has a major impact on our economy. The 2022 game had an economic impact of \$67.8 million and added 25.7 million to the province's GDP [Gross Domestic Product].

Commissioner Johnston said, "Rider Nation is legendary, and Saskatchewan's winning bid was an unmistakable reflection of this incredible fan base, filled with passion, celebration, a strong sense of community, and of course, a deep love of Canadian football."

Congratulations to the Riders who won the bid to bring one of Canada's biggest sports traditions to the place where it belongs the most. I know that our incredible volunteers here in Saskatchewan will once again step up to put on the best Grey Cup we have ever seen yet. There is no place I'd rather be than a Grey Cup in Saskatchewan, and I know thousands more will feel the same way. Go Riders.

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

Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres Does Vital Work

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to recognize the vital work of the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, or SARC, and their incredible members.

For over 50 years SARC has represented community-based organizations that deliver essential services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Today SARC includes nearly 100 members serving over 6,500 clients and employing more than 4,600 people in 90 communities across Saskatchewan. Their work profoundly improves the health, safety, and quality of life for people with complex needs. Through SARC they make a positive impact on the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the privilege of meeting SARC members and visiting their group homes across the province. The message I keep hearing is clear. They need more funding. The current model is outdated and inadequate, making staff retention a growing challenge. Burnout, low wages, and underfunded benefits are pushing dedicated workers to the brink. When CBOs struggle, it's the people they serve who pay the price.

SARC helps people of all abilities reach their full potential. It's time the government showed the same commitment.

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

11-Year-Old Overcomes Obstacles to Hike West Coast Trail

Michael Weger: — Mr. Speaker, to recognize that last week was National Down Syndrome Week in Canada, I would like to share an inspirational story.

This summer at the beginning of August, my young friend Xavier Cameron set out to prove that having Down syndrome is not something that is ever going to hold him back in life. Xavier's mom, Deidra, had previously completed the 75-kilometre West Coast Trail, and this year she decided it was time to challenge her children. So 11-year-old Xavier and his seven-year-old sister, Johanna, began training for the hike by walking around Weyburn carrying weights in their backpacks.

During the trek, Xavier and his family climbed 100 ladder systems with heavy packs of camping gear. Xavier overcame many obstacles, including the fact that he was born with pulmonary hypertension and is still living with the effects and the damage caused to his lungs when he was young. With words of encouragement from his mother and fellow hikers that he met on the trail, Xavier never quit. There were times when he was tired, there were times when he was scared, but he never quit.

Mr. Speaker, I was lucky enough to sit down with Xavier to look at some photos and watch a video of Xavier climbing one of those many ladders. My favourite part of the video was when Xavier reached the platform and he exclaimed, “I did it!” Yes, Xavier, you did it. And I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that this young man will continue to challenge himself in the years to come. And I look forward to hearing about more of his “I did it” moments in the future.

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

Celebrating Canadian Islamic History Month

Noor Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m pleased to rise today to recognize October as Canadian Islamic History Month. Canadian Islamic History Month recognizes and celebrates the many important things Muslim communities have done for our province and country.

In Saskatchewan, Muslim Canadians have been a part of our shared history for over 100 years. They have built businesses, served in our health care system, enriched our schools and universities, and contributed to the vibrant cultural diversity that makes our province strong.

Canadian Islamic History Month is a time to honour this history. We can create a future of mutual respect and understanding. Equally important, this month is also a time to reflect upon racism and discrimination that many Muslim people in Saskatchewan still face. We must continue to work together to build bridges between all communities and break down harmful prejudices and stereotypes.

As we celebrate Canadian Islamic History Month, let us continue to build a compassionate, inclusive, and safer Saskatchewan for everyone. I would ask that all members join me in celebrating Canadian Islamic History Month. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Humboldt-Watrous.

Dedication of Foster Parents Makes a Difference

Racquel Hilbert: — Mr. Speaker, as Foster Families Month comes to a close, I want to take a moment to recognize and celebrate the important contributions of foster families across Saskatchewan.

Foster families open their homes and their hearts to children and youth who need stability and support during some of the most difficult times of their life. Mr. Speaker, our commitment helps ensure that children and communities continue to grow and heal in nurturing environments often close to their homes and

communities and cultural connections.

We are deeply grateful for the compassionate and dedication shown by foster parents. They are an essential part of our child welfare system and true partners in the work that we do to support families and well-being and children’s safety.

To every foster family across Saskatchewan: thank you for making a long-lasting difference in the lives of children and youth. In the constituency of Humbolt and Watrous, I personally know three foster families, and they have improved the lives of those in their care. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Recognizing Truth and Reconciliation Day

Leroy Laliberte: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. September 30th is a day in which all Canadians are reminded that every child matters, in spite of the deep impacts that were made by the Indian residential school system. I was happy to share a message with my constituents throughout northwestern Saskatchewan on Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation, MBC, encouraging folks to wear an orange shirt that day.

I was also pleased to join the Meadow Lake Tribal Council, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Western Region 1, and the city of Meadow Lake in an event to commemorate that day that brought together so many in that community.

I was encouraged when seeing these different organizations collaborate on this event, Mr. Speaker, because it was only last year, on September 30th of 2024, that two Indigenous court workers were sent home for wearing orange shirts in Meadow Lake. One of these court workers, Mr. Speaker, was actually a survivor themselves. I don’t bring this incident up to shame anybody, but I bring it up in the Assembly today to hope that it could all be corrected, Mr. Speaker.

My constituent, former MP [Member of Parliament] Georgina Jolibois from La Loche, promoted this day being federally recognized as a national holiday. I call upon the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, to recognize this day as a holiday within our province as well so all can spend it reflecting on our shared history. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Post-Secondary Internships Support Research and Innovation

Kevin Weedmark: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Research and innovation in our post-secondary sector play an important role in helping our province thrive. It supports Saskatchewan’s economy, helps develop a skilled workforce, and advances our global competitiveness. That’s why our government is proud to invest in programs that give Saskatchewan students access to vital research opportunities.

[14:00]

In 2025-26 our government is delivering \$1.58 million dollars in funding to support Mitacs research internships. These internships

offer students unique and valuable opportunities to make connections, access resources, and advance innovation at Saskatchewan businesses. This investment supports over 300 research internships for Saskatchewan students. Mitacs enhances student learning through hands-on, practical experience in the workforce, while helping businesses innovate, grow, and achieve their goals.

Mitacs offers several opportunities that support students in a variety of areas, including the Indigenous Pathways initiative. This connects post-secondary students to Indigenous organizations across the province, helping build meaningful collaboration. Since 2007 our government has invested \$9.34 million supporting over 2,000 Saskatchewan internships. We're proud to work with Mitacs to support research and innovation in Saskatchewan, ensuring that students have the opportunities and support they need to get the best start and contribute to our province's future. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Government Response to Tariffs

Trent Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, today we're going to look at the facts of how little that government has done to build our economic future and to fight back against Donald Trump's tariffs. Today Trump is slapping on new tariffs, tariffs that'll cost people jobs and increase financial anxiety, which is already the highest here in Saskatchewan in all of Canada.

The Premier, well he promised to get tough on Trump, but he's been, you know, inactive. He's been slow to doing so, Mr. Speaker. For example on March 6th, 235 days ago, he promised to end contracts with American companies as part of the fight back. For the record, how many contracts with American companies has that Premier ended?

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

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's no secret 70 per cent of what we produce in this province we export, and we need a strong and robust economy to continue to provide that strong, safe, and secure Saskatchewan. Very strong, consistent, diplomatic approach is ultimately what our business sector has asked for, what our trade partners have asked for. Those that are building this province expect that from this government, Mr. Speaker.

What we find, reactionary policy that other jurisdictions have tried has really proven to be very counterproductive. You know, we've seen the inflammatory, knee-jerk reactions that we've witnessed in other jurisdictions has not added anything positive to the equation. Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that the only place that knee-jerk reactions is maybe successful in is a Disney movie.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — The question was to the Premier. A

minister got up. No answer there at all, Mr. Speaker, other than to make excuses for Donald Trump's reckless behaviours. We'll stand up for Saskatchewan people any day of the week — Canadians — as opposed to making excuses for Donald Trump.

And there was no answer to how many contracts were ended, but I'll provide that answer: it was zero. Zero contracts were ended. But it gets worse. On July 11th, this Premier made the out-of-touch claim that Trump's tariffs would have a minimal impact. Well let's look at the fact: trade with the United States is down 13 per cent; trade with China is down 75 per cent.

Given this, will the Premier stand and apologize to the producers, the steelworkers, the manufacturers, the lumber sector, businesses, workers, and families for downplaying this very real tariff threat, which is costing them their jobs and their ability to put food on the table?

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

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we understand the relevance, the importance of what tariffs are meaning to this province. Again, 70 per cent of what we produce leaves this province, Mr. Speaker, and from what I understand, now over 160 countries that we currently do business with.

However we have two very significant trading partners. The US [United States] — we'll never be able to separate ourselves from that trade relation with the US. It is an important trading partner for us and always will be.

China — very important trading partner for us, Mr. Speaker. In fact for our ag commodities, I believe over 30 per cent of them go to China. Two very important trading partners.

And the relationships that we've been able to build through our trade offices for the world that we are currently working with, Mr. Speaker, these are the relationships that we currently have. Yes, business is down to China, to the United States. Business is up, Mr. Speaker, in all the other trading partners that we are currently doing business with. That is why this government had the foresight — how many years ago? — to establish those international trade offices to ensure that we are not beholden to two different trade partners.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — The question of course was to the Premier. No answer here again. And no action either by that Premier, who wants to act like it's just business as usual when it's anything but.

Eighteen years of this Sask Party government, and our economy and our economic outlook just simply aren't where they should be. After years of slow growth under that Premier, TD Bank [Toronto-Dominion Bank] predicts Saskatchewan will miss the Sask Party's growth targets both this year and next. These are people's jobs at stake. It's their livelihoods. It's their homes. It's their money to buy food and to put it on their table for their families.

Why won't this Premier stand up to Donald Trump and take any action, even some of the basics, like taking US booze off the shelves or ending our contracts, that government's contracts with US companies, like our fishing and hunting licence system?

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

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again we certainly recognize the importance that we've got with our two major trading partners, currently we have some issues with. But I'd say the diplomatic approach that our Premier has taken, this government has taken in building those relationships to ensure that we will continue to have these markets open to us in the future is very important to us.

However, Mr. Speaker, what we maybe forget to hear from the other side here is private capital investment up significantly in this province: \$14.7 billion, 17.3 per cent increase from 2023, first in the nation. Saskatchewan's total capital investment: 22.1 billion, up 10.8 per cent, ranking first in the nation. Saskatchewan's GDP growth: all-time high in this province, an increase of 3.4 per cent, second in the country, Mr. Speaker. Building permits — great indication of where we are in the economy — \$2.9 billion, first seven months of '25, up 33.6 per cent.

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

Rent Control Measures

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to helping the people of Saskatchewan, this Sask Party government doesn't have a clue. There are things they could do right here and right now. Rent has skyrocketed in Saskatchewan — eight straight months of increases.

We're joined by seniors in this gallery today who are demanding this government bring in rent control. They need this to keep a roof over their heads. Will this Sask Party government listen to these seniors?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I welcome those seniors to their Legislative Assembly. And we certainly understand the cost-of-living pressures across the province that are putting stress on our homes, our families. It's not unique to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's around the country indeed and most places around the world.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to rent control, we believe that the best way to keep rent affordable is by increasing the amount of rental properties on the market and by letting people keep more of their money in their own pockets. Last election, both the government and the opposition made their case for affordability measures. It was a key part of both platforms. I'm pleased to tell you today, Mr. Speaker, that the government as of last spring had met all the promises under that platform. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Westview.

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say, the people that are here today are not here because they're happy with what you're doing. Saskatchewan leads the nation in rent increases. We led the nation in increases for eight straight months this year. The people of Saskatchewan are feeling it. Many are forced to leave the place they call home.

Other provinces such as BC [British Columbia], Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and even Doug Ford's Ontario have already implemented rent control measures to protect tenants and maintain housing affordability. Why won't that minister join in and protect Saskatchewan renters?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, while we understand the inflationary pressures that all the people of this province are feeling, including renters, here's the situation: Saskatchewan has the lowest rent in the nation. It's the most affordable province in the nation. The two largest centres, Regina and Saskatoon, are the two most affordable large centres in the country.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talks about areas with rent control. Let's look where the highest rents in the country are — two provinces that have rent control, Mr. Speaker, Ontario and British Columbia. You know who else is feeling immense pressure right now? Their rents are increasing faster than Saskatchewan — NDP [New Democratic Party] Manitoba, who has implemented rent control.

Mr. Speaker, don't take my word for it. Let's look at what the experts have to say on this . . . While the members ask a question, they apparently don't want to hear the answer. What does Saskatchewan Realtors Association want to say? Rent control risks moving us in the wrong direction.

I'm happy to take another question, Mr. Speaker.

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

Sally Housser: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am joined by my constituent Roger Derby in your gallery. Mr. Derby is expecting a rent increase of \$278 per month, a 9.2 per cent increase. Back in 2021 when he first moved in, he paid \$515 a month less than he does today. That is not sustainable for anybody, let alone for those people on a fixed income. One of Mr. Derby's neighbours tragically said to me that she simply couldn't afford to live as long as she planned to.

To the minister: how much more do Mr. Derby and his neighbours have to pay before they will admit that there is a rent crisis here in Saskatchewan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, our government's extremely concerned about inflationary pressures on all people in this province, including renters.

In the case of seniors, as the member opposite has raised, if it

comes to government housing, Mr. Speaker, our government's made important changes to improve access to social housing by lowering the age requirements to 55 and raising the asset limit, which allows more seniors to qualify.

As I was saying in the previous question, let's listen to what the experts have to say. The realtors association said:

While well intentioned, rent control does not achieve the desired outcomes. Instead it leads to a gradual decline in the quality of rental housing and discourages the very investment needed to grow supply.

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

Sally Housser: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After 18 years of inaction from this Sask Party government, Mr. Derby took action into his own hands. He went door to door with the rent petition introduced earlier today and collected over 60 signatures in his building — 60, Mr. Speaker, in one building.

Seniors are fed up, and they are the experts on this very issue because they're the ones that have to deal with it every single day. They're tired of being gouged for their rent year in and year out, and if this continues, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Derby will have no choice but to leave.

To the minister: why should Saskatchewan seniors be taken advantage of by large corporate rental companies?

Speaker Goudy: — Just a comment. Rule 51 talks about involving people in our galleries in the questions and debate. Though it hasn't been brought up this session, I will ask in general that we remember the questions that are being asked, to make sure that we include those in, but please, we shouldn't be involving members in the galleries.

I recognize the Minister of Finance.

[14:15]

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as we said, we're extremely concerned about rental increases. That's why we implemented programs like the secondary suite incentive. Again as I reiterated earlier, the most important way to deal with pressures like this is to have more opportunity on the market, to have more suites available on the market, Mr. Speaker.

Here's what the Regina and Saskatoon region home builders' association had to say. And the opposition will be well aware of this because the letter was sent to them after they announced they were in support of rent control, which by the way, Mr. Speaker, they have flip-flopped on over the years during most election campaigns. One year they're in favour; next year they're not. It just depends on the way the wind's blowing.

Mr. Speaker, that letter to them said, "We believe that rent control is a misguided approach that will not achieve the intended outcomes. In fact it'll make the situation worse over the long term."

The other quote said, "Strict rent controls discourage private

sector investment and new rental housing, particularly in the purpose-built rental market." That's what we need, Mr. Speaker: more investment, more housing.

Speaker Goudy: — Sorry. Just a comment again. Thursday I made a judgment on a comment from this side. Whichever way the wind's blowing, you know, flip-flopping — let's try and keep our comments fair.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon Stonebridge.

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is ignoring its low-income, fixed-budget seniors. Jean Carroll, a constituent of Saskatoon Stonebridge, sits in this legislature yet again, advocating for rent control. She, along with friends and family, have gathered hundreds of signatures from both rural and urban citizens across this province.

The Minister of Social Services might recall her situation from this spring. Jean had faced a 29 per cent increase in her rent, and that does not include other fees tacked on. Now she faces a 17 per cent rent increase again. People can't afford this in a cost-of-living crisis.

Does the Minister of Justice — who the Minister of Social Services said needed to deal with rent controls if it were to be dealt with — does he think it's okay for people like Jean to be faced with such large rent increases? And could he acknowledge that 17 per cent rental increases are not acceptable for how our low-income, fixed-budget people and families operate in this province?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier . . . I'm not aware of Jean's specific situation. If it's in a government housing facility, we've made some changes in that regard. If it's not, if it's private, as I mentioned, the best way to solve this problem is by having more investment and more housing on the market. That's why we introduced a secondary suite incentive, Mr. Speaker. That's why we let people keep more money in their own pockets through income tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, in virtually every jurisdiction where rent control's been tried, the exact opposite happens. It dries up investment. It dries up new housing starts. And in turn it hurts the very people that we're trying to help. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Darcy Warrington: — Mr. Speaker, Jean's rent rose \$225 this year alone. Her pension and old age security increases only increased a small fraction of that amount. Some of her neighbours have had even higher proposed rent increases for the new year and face the same fixed-income issues with the higher cost of living. I guess this is what seniors can come to expect after 18 years of this tired and out-of-touch government. Saskatchewan seniors deserve affordable options to keep roofs over their heads. They shouldn't be punished for wanting to stay in their home.

Can the Minister of Justice, who the Minister of Social Services

told Jean Carroll needed to address this issue . . . beyond hopes and prayers, how seniors can, on fixed incomes, be saved from these predatory rent increases that will force them from their homes?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, inflationary pressures across the board, but particularly in housing, are acute right across the country, including in provinces who have introduced rent control.

In fact if you look across the country — there's been a number of studies done on this, Mr. Speaker — probably the worst ones in the country, as I mentioned earlier, are British Columbia and Ontario, who have rent control. Mr. Speaker, that is not the answer. As I read into the record quotes from many of them . . . Well the member asked what the answer is. It's very simple. It's more investment and it's more housing markets . . . [inaudible].

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan . . . Well if he'd listen to the answer, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan for many months now has led in housing starts, which is part of the solution. This is a problem across the country. That's part of the solution: making more housing available, right across the piece, including for renters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Government Response to Wildfires in the North

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The North will rebuild and recover from devastating wildfires, and that's a testament to my incredible constituents and their strength.

The people of the North were failed so badly by the Sask Party government this summer, and this can never happen again. Entire communities burned to the ground. Water bombers were grounded. Evacuees were forced to sleep in their tents. Some never received the financial aid that they were promised.

What does this Premier and his Minister of Public Safety have to say to my constituents who were failed so badly by this government this summer?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite, and I appreciate the delegation that we have here from Denare Beach. Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to meet with a number of them a few weeks ago and again today.

I would say with respect to what was one of the most devastating wildfire years that we have had, certainly the case with the loss of not just houses but homes, that occurred this past summer, Mr. Speaker, the government has made a number of decisions — I would say, many of them unprecedented — in the way of supporting the community and rebuilding.

And we will continue to make those decisions as a Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, to support the community not only of Denare Beach but also East Trout Lake, as well as some other homes that were lost in Eagle Point just north of La Ronge,

for example, and other communities as well.

If I could, Mr. Speaker, just beg the floor's indulgence for one minute. I had the opportunity a number of weeks ago to visit the community of Denare Beach. I should have been there sooner. Mr. Speaker, often in this business we get busy putting up guards to protect whatever it is, our family, ourselves, and I certainly have been competent, as shown this past summer, in doing just that.

Mr. Speaker, there's a period of time when there should have been a leader of this province in the community of Denare Beach to provide the support — personal support — for those families, and I wasn't there. And for that I apologize to the folks that are here today, through them to the other community members in Denare Beach.

But I also offer to them that this will be a government that is going to work with them every step of the way as we rebuild — and not just the community — as we rebuild not just buildings and houses, but as we provide you with the opportunity to have the confidence that you and that next generation is going to be able to rebuild homes in Denare Beach. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the Premier for recognizing that it should have been a lot less than 116 days to go and visit those members of the community, and will reiterate that it's a shame that they had to drive eight hours to this Legislative Building to get the ear of the Premier after two-thirds of their community was lost.

They didn't drive to the legislature this week because everything was fine this summer. Half of the water bombers were grounded. And now there are allegations that they overspent \$100 million too much on those water bombers. The contract for these bombers was never put out to a public tender. No one else was allowed to bid.

Why were so many of our water bombers grounded at such a critical time? And how much did we have to overpay for those planes?

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

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency] uses a combination of land-based and amphibious wildfire tankers to deliver the services that this province needs and deserves, Mr. Speaker.

Our province was a leader in the nation in acquiring four new water bombers to add to our fleet, one each year for the next four years, Mr. Speaker. Other provinces that are in the same position, looking for an addition to their air tanker fleet, will be waiting for three, five, seven years before they get their first water bomber. Our government is a leader in this respect, and we have a new Q400 tanker that's providing service to the province of Saskatchewan, that was delivering services to the North this summer, Mr. Speaker. And we will have another plane every year for the next three years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for Community Services and Programs for People with Disabilities

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are joined today by members of the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, or SARC. Many of the folks here rely on funding through the government's community living service delivery or CLSD program to operate group homes for people with intellectual disabilities. And they're here today because CLSD funding hasn't kept up with rising costs.

Will the Minister of Social Services meet with these leaders from the disability sector to hear their concerns and fix CLSD funding to ensure that they can put healthy food on the table for their clients?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government is putting the people of Saskatchewan first in supporting the well-being of residents by helping individuals and families to live safer, healthier, and more connected lives through the support of their different community services and programs. And I'd like to thank SARC for being here today.

I spent most of the spring, summer, and early fall travelling the province, visiting group homes, also having discussions with SARC at their head office in Saskatoon. I've been able to go out and listen to what the concerns are, Mr. Speaker. You know, we're deeply grateful for the dedication and compassion that these front-line staff at SARC and all the other CBOs that my ministry has the privilege to deal with, who work so tirelessly to support individuals across this province, including the disability community, Mr. Speaker.

This is something we take extremely seriously as a government. We'll continue to do those meetings and have that collaboration and get to a better understanding with all of our community-based organizations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Ministerial statements. Oh, sorry. I think we have another introduction from the member . . .

Aleana Young: — Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request leave for an extended introduction.

Speaker Goudy: — Yeah. The member from Regina South Albert has asked to give an introduction and is asking leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Aleana Young: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, my thanks for the indulgence.

I did want to pop up and recognize a gentleman sitting in the east

gallery: 6 foot 2, 240 pounds of pure man, most of which is beard; a divemaster, a TV editor, a videographer, overall ray of sunshine in my life, someone who's swam in four out of the five oceans. And when I asked him today to list his favourite sea creatures that he's dove with, he listed off manta rays, whales, sharks, and blue-tip sharks, and then went on a lengthy narrative about some terrifying experiences with sharks, Mr. Speaker.

This is of course my little brother Brodie Young, who's in just for today visiting from Winnipeg where he works in film and the TV industry. He is an epic uncle and just a great friend to me. Mr. Speaker, we used to fight like cats and dogs when we were little, but then he got much bigger than me, much quicker. And I'm so pleased to have him in my life as a wonderful little brother and, more importantly, as an incredibly engaged and beloved uncle to his niece and nephew.

Also while I'm on my feet, happy birthday, Dad. Sorry I missed it. Have a great 72nd year. And with that Mr. Speaker, thanks for the indulgence. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming two of the important men in my life to this, their Legislative Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Michael Weger, seconded by Terri Bromm, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Jordan McPhail.]

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

Don McBean: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With great humility and if not still a certain amount of disbelief, I rise today to speak in this honoured Chamber from the distinguished position, offer my response to the Speech from the Throne.

[14:30]

I signed up to do this speech the first day, and then we saw how that turned out. But I was following a strategy that I would give my students often that, you know, the teacher marking was a little more generous and forgiving with the early presenters. And I guess I'm hoping that the colleagues and the honoured members across will afford me the same privilege.

I've had a few extra days, and I'm in some ways very grateful to not have to stand up immediately after my colleague MLA McPhail. I watched his passionate and powerful discourse on the wildfires a few more times, and I'm trying very hard not to hold myself in comparison.

As we do, my first and very most important acknowledgement is the reiteration of my appreciation and honour to be a member of the Legislative Assembly for the riding of Saskatoon Chief Mistawasis. Some words I spoke almost a year ago have become

my mission statement: that every member of the constituency — whether they voted for me, someone else, chose not to vote at all — are deserving of my commitment to serve with honesty, passion, determination. And my gratitude for this remarkable opportunity knows almost no bounds.

A year ago people suggested I must be living in a steep learning curve. I often responded with that it wasn't a curve but rather a vertical wall, 360 degrees. We're now a year later. And with a bit of the caveat that I will describe in a moment, I have a much better idea of what's going on, and I can see the horizon in many directions.

A year ago I was also very concerned about the question of personal versus political, being a retired principal or an MLA in the opposition. It's still a bit of a thing, but I'm much more comfortable. It's fascinating, interesting, an evolving exercise. And today I want to share that the personal grabbed me by the throat at the beginning of this year. And I'm taking advantage of this opportunity to talk about the personal within the political; why I missed the last week of spring session.

In January we discovered the love of my life, my wife, Valérie Labé, was being affected by a large petroclival meningioma, a benign tumour in a most complicated region at the base of the brain. On May 14 she underwent a very significant medical procedure, 15-hour surgery, for its removal. That was followed by two-plus days of not waking up, and then a total of 50 days in the hospital, and since early July ongoing recovery at home.

My position here allows me to shout out loud what an amazing health care system we benefit from. Ninety per cent of this roughly golf ball-size tumour was removed by an impossibly skilled neurosurgical team. Recovery with every person — in her care in the ICU [intensive care unit] neurological ward; weeks as an in-patient and the continuing out-patient therapies at City Hospital rehabilitation — performing their duties with care, respect, compassion, expertise, that thankfully I haven't had to experience so much, and I hope none of us do. But what a privilege we enjoy.

Yes, we did witness some of the very disturbing realities that our health care system suffers from. During the second week of recovery we discovered a blood clot and the delicate balancing of dissolving a clot and not impacting the healing of major neurological surgery. We wheeled through RUH [Royal University Hospital] daily for imaging, and we witnessed up close the chaos of the emergency ward hallway packed with patients and families, such as have come into view again in the last few weeks. At the time I wasn't thinking about it so much, because frankly it just seemed like it was normal.

Today all I want to say is, I celebrate our health care privilege and express endless gratitude to the people who make it work. And in addition, an element of this opportunity is my desire to share public expression of the great appreciation for the support of this caucus. So many different communities, friends, neighbours, family.

A timely side note is how just a few weeks ago I attended the annual North Saskatoon Business Association lessons from life, an invitation to business leaders to share their insights. All four of the amazing Saskatoon business leaders and entrepreneurs

emphasized the same core guiding values. Take care of your family. Take care of yourself. Respect your employees to the degree that you allow them to do the same.

It was fascinating and ultimately reassuring to me that the lessons from the business world align so clearly with the tenets of all walks of life: respect, care, compassion. This caucus modelled these for me.

And while the twists and turns and highs and lows of the last months have somewhat straightened and flattened into a still long journey forward, the knowledge that Valérie, our family, and I are not alone has made it so much easier to navigate. I thank our leader, Carla Beck, the opposition. I thank my caucus. I thank the LAS [Legislative Assembly Service]. I thank the members opposite with whom I've had the chance to share this. Together we travel far.

And one more. I have to thank and celebrate my constituency associate, Paras Kumar. Through the last months, with expertise and insight well beyond his young life, he has made, represented, and continued the work to which I am dedicated. And he was in the gallery on Thursday. He's not here today but I bet he's watching. Thank you, Paras.

The Throne Speech. The Speech from the Throne: "Strong, Safe, Secure." And now I don't throw stones at anyone taking advantage of alliteration, but my immediate response to that title was, what a statement of power. What a statement of hubris.

Many years I have wondered what it is that the government stands for in Saskatchewan and in various jurisdictions. I know what I believe in. I know why I'm sitting on this side of the legislature, historically and currently. And strong, safe, and secure didn't reassure me.

Some things that are in the speech: numbers. So many numbers. 15 million, 14.7 billion, 17.3 per cent increase, \$690 million reduction, 11 more nurses here, 141 emergency shelter spaces. And now that we've heard the first two responses from the other side, I'm reminded and not particularly looking forward to hearing all of these numbers repeated and repeated and repeated.

Superlatives. I mean the Government of Saskatchewan has us being the best and coming in first in just about everything. I love this province, not because we're the best at everything but because it's home. My motto and the licence plate on my car is GBAT. Stands for getting better all the time. I do not see what the Speech from the Throne is targeting to make Saskatchewan better.

Now there's a lot that I don't know about the world. But I do know about education so I did study that aspect a little more carefully. It's amazing reading through all of the superlatives and numbers of the education portion that the government is even taking credit for the historic teachers' CBA [collective bargaining agreement].

How is it possible that I have to remind all of us — I don't think I have to remind this side — that the negotiation of the CBA started with taxpayer-paid billboards speaking untruths about teachers' salaries, obliging teachers to walk out in what was a truly historic showing of solidarity. And the government fighting

tooth and nail before budging the proverbial 2.2 centimetres through binding arbitration.

It seems too obvious to point out that numbers and superlatives don't really mean much. I am somewhat reminded that there's a saying about if something is repeated often enough . . . and I'll leave that there.

So I'm looking forward to a year from now — not — when the prorogation in a year's time we'll get to hear again of the victory talk of the incredible achievements of this Speech from the Throne with more superlatives and numbers.

One little bit did catch my attention — tailgating. It was probably two months ago, a small article in the paper, possibility of tailgating parties. And with my shadow ministry assignment of SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] this struck me as something worth investigating. I inquired. Didn't learn much. And I parked it away as something to keep an eye on given the situation at that time. Between forest fires and the fallout of that debacle, health care crises exploding and exposing themselves left and right, I didn't really see how tailgating parties became important. And until this past Wednesday I'd forgotten about it until it was included in the speech, even warranting its own Act.

Now don't get me wrong; I like a party. Of course I like the Roughriders. I grew up in Saskatchewan. From Swift Current we made the annual trip to the Labour Day Classic. I like to have a drink, and I'm a strong advocate of responsible consumption. Aging myself, and I'm sure some members remember this, when I first was allowed public consumption of alcohol in a bar you couldn't even stand up with your beer. If you wanted to move to your friend's table, you had to call the waitress over.

So progress, yes. I guess that the tailgating Act is going to be another step forward. But I'm just not quite sure how or . . . And I do look forward to seeing the legislation, hopefully understanding something of how this became a priority political action in the current government.

Through much of my life I've learned that what is important, as important as what is being said, what is not said often speaks even more loudly. Who's at the table points out who is not at the table. The next part of this response is a little bit of the things not said.

It jumped out at me that nowhere in the Speech from the Throne is the word "surplus." Last spring we heard without end about the surplus budget that was being put forth. It was the government's favourite word. And even within weeks, perhaps days, it was obvious that some of the actions, such as the bait and switch of carbon tax reduction, meant it was impossible that \$12 million surplus survived the end of the year.

This summer I heard some of the hon. members on the other side continue to talk about a balanced and even surplus budget. A quick Ctrl F of the Throne Speech shows zero occurrences of the words. I guess that means that we agree that it's not going to be a surplus budget. Maybe just a coincidence that the shining beacon of fiscal responsibility of the Saskatchewan Party government has been extinguished.

Climate. Again it's a quick Ctrl F, and nowhere does the word "climate" appear. There is a certain amount of emphasis and some dog whistling about energy. This very critical, important topic will be honestly, realistically, transparently articulated from this side of the legislature. It's already begun its rollout with the grid and growth plan. A number of colleagues will be highlighting our real and honest plans.

I feel beholden to point out that a conversation on energy that purports to be strong, safe, and secure, but does not include any conversation about climate, makes one sound like a climate change denier, or at least a proverbial ostrich with its head planted.

For the record, I knew the answer before I did the search. There was nothing about sustainability or renewable resources in the document either. Safe. Secure.

[14:45]

There is an absolutely terrifying and disturbing stain on humanity occurring in the Middle East. Yes, we're a provincial jurisdiction. Maybe talking about this in the Throne Speech is viewed as an overstep, but this is global. Everyone is affected. Everyone is talking about this.

Earlier in the summer I attended with a couple of the members from the other side to a B'nai Brith-sponsored documentary at the Remai theatre in Saskatoon promoting the hurt being experienced by the Jewish people and the state of Israel. I was able to follow it up with a lovely and congenially compassionate assessment of the situation with a local Saskatoon leader of the Jewish community.

So when in the Throne Speech the topic of trade and economic development came up with more numbers and superlatives, yes, of course the lists of trade offices and missions that the government has undertaken, and as absolutely critical, the diversification and expansion of trade, of the global economy, especially given the debacle of our nearest and largest trading partners.

But it was just a few weeks ago that the government proudly broadcast that they met with the ambassador from Israel to sketch out increased trade relations. I listened. I didn't hear the word "Israel." It seems to me that perhaps the government does recognize that this is not well received by the people of Saskatchewan who have joined in the global horror of the United Nations-declared genocide in Gaza. In short, the omission of the word "Israel" or any other mention of that impossibility, visible to us all — atrocity — isn't really a surprise.

And I'm getting the wink so I get to skip over a few of the last points that I want to make — I hope I get the opportunity to bring them back up — of the things missing from this Throne Speech. "Strong, Safe, Secure." Sure, I guess, if you say so. Inclusive, equitable, transparent, humble? Not so much.

I look forward to the continued conversation, and with that, I second the motion to amend as presented by MLA McPhail last day.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from White City-

Qu'Appelle.

Brad Crassweller: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's truly an honour to stand before you today in response to the Throne Speech. You know, I had a great summer meeting with so many constituents and going to many different events and continuing to build relationships throughout the constituency. I want to thank my family. I thank them for their support and for filling in the gap that I've left in our family-run small business. It's been quite a large transition with me being out of the picture as much as I am to be able to do what I do as an MLA.

But, Mr. Speaker, most of all I want to take a minute and acknowledge my wife, Sandy. She's always been so supportive in whatever I set my mind to doing, and I can't imagine doing life without her. She wears many different hats, and she seems to be able to put on the right hat at the right time for every situation she finds herself in. She's an incredible wife, mother, grandmother, business partner, and my best friend. And I know for a fact, I wouldn't be standing here today if it wasn't because she's standing beside me every step of the way — for the past 37 years, I might add. So, honey, I love you and thank you.

I also want to take a minute and thank the great people of White City-Qu'Appelle for the honour of serving them as their MLA. It's almost been a year and what a year it's been. It's truly been a privilege to get to so many events and activities throughout the constituency, meet so many great people, and continue to build relationships, because after all, life is relationship. And I look forward to continuing to strengthen those relationships as we work together to see every community in White City-Qu'Appelle grow and prosper.

I'd also like to thank my constituency assistant, Nicole Entner-McCullough. She runs our office so efficiently. She handles whatever comes her way with confidence and grace, and it's so good to know that when somebody reaches out to the office needing help or direction, she'll be there and she will make sure they are well taken care of. So, Nicole, thank you from myself and our entire constituency for how you serve us all with excellence and integrity. It's truly a pleasure to be your teammate.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my fellow MLAs. Thank you for your friendship, for your advice, but most importantly for being willing to step up and serve your constituents and ultimately the great people of this province.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk to you about environment. Now before the Minister of Environment gets all excited — I think I just want to make sure he wasn't sleeping — the environment I want to talk about is not the actual environment of water, land and soil, and climate, although that environment is extremely important to this government. I'm talking about environments in general, environments that everyone in this world finds themselves a part of on a daily basis. We all live in this physical environment we call the planet. And we're all involved in and take part in — what I would dare say are responsible for — creating and maintaining many different environments.

Early on in life, I found myself a part of these different environments. I was born into a wonderful family — I'm the

youngest of four siblings — wonderful family environment that I enjoyed throughout my life. I had a lot of friend environments as I went through elementary school and junior high and high school and college. A lot of sports environments as I played soccer from age five on through to college. I even tried basketball and volleyball in elementary school, but my height was a little bit of an inhibitor. But in senior high I was on the wrestling team. What a great environment to be a part of.

All of us, Mr. Speaker, are involved in so many different environments. But here's what I want to get at. We need to be intentional about our environments and about our input into those environments.

So let me give you an example of what I'm talking about. When I got married, there were a few things that were important to me about the environment that I was creating for my future bride. I wanted to be the best husband and eventually the best father I could be. And to do that, Mr. Speaker, it required me to take some action. But it also required me to avoid some other actions.

And that action was a mentality; it was a mindset. I said I want to create a particular environment for my wife, and eventually for my kids, that would enable them to reach their full potential. An environment where they felt safe and secure. An environment where they could succeed in whatever they set their mind to. I believe everybody would love to be in an environment that enables them to succeed, but also to feel safe and secure along the way.

Mr. Speaker, environments can and do contain many words, many actions. But to build great environments requires intentionality. But for a minute, can you imagine and could everyone in this room imagine — and anybody watching, can you imagine — being in a better environment than one that is strong and safe and secure?

I know that's what I wanted for my wife and for our marriage, was to make sure that whatever I did, the choices I made, every action I took would make sure that my wife felt that she was in an environment in our marriage that was strong and it was safe. Mr. Speaker, we just celebrated our 35th wedding anniversary back in April, and together we've worked at creating this environment together. A few years into marriage, as we started having kids, again we wanted them to grow up in an environment that was safe and was strong, an environment that would enable them to succeed in whatever they set their mind to.

But environments like that don't just happen by chance, Mr. Speaker. It takes commitment. It takes hard work. It needs to be a priority. Mr. Speaker, in my mind this is critical if we want to see our kids, our spouses, our grandkids, our family members, our workers, our businesses, our province succeed. Because the environment in which you live and work and play can have a monumental impact on your ability to achieve what you set out to do.

I fully believe — and I think we can all agree — your environment will help you. It will enable you. It will empower you to accomplish great things. Or it can hinder you, can hold you back, and even at times defeat you on a regular basis.

Mr. Speaker, what I'm trying to say is that environments matter.

And I will also acknowledge there's been many people that don't find themselves in great environments, and many of those people make choices to not allow their environment to hold them back. They break out of those unhealthy places and accomplish great things. And they themselves work hard to be sure that they're part of creating environments so that others don't have to suffer or be hindered or held back like they were. And those kind of individuals, Mr. Speaker, are heroes in my mind.

We just witnessed that in our gallery today from our little fella going on a hike, not allowing his disability to set him back, not allowing his environment to set him back. But he chose a proper path, a healthy path.

But, Mr. Speaker, who wouldn't want to be in an environment that's strong, safe, and secure? But, Mr. Speaker, we also need to acknowledge that those kinds of environments aren't built overnight. They don't happen by making a few choices over the course of a few months. They take commitment, I would say, month after month, year after year. And it really comes down to a long-term commitment — a lifestyle, if you will.

And they're only built with a fierce determination, Mr. Speaker, that as best as you can, every choice, every decision, every direction has one end goal in mind: the environment we're seeking to build. Each of those choices, decisions, directions has to pass the test, and the test is this: if I do this, am I creating the environment I want to create, or will this decision hurt the environment I'm trying to create?

Mr. Speaker, it's so important to realize and acknowledge good, strong, healthy environments are not built overnight. It takes years. On the other side of that coin though, Mr. Speaker, is that those environments can be destroyed almost overnight with bad choices, bad decisions, bad policies. So when I hear the Throne Speech — the state of our province is strong, safe, and secure — I'm reminded that it's not a catchy phrase. It's the result of a commitment of many years of intentional actions by this government.

So for a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk about those three words: strong, safe, and secure. Mr. Speaker, with all the work that's been done to create an environment where investment grows our economy, we can see the fruit of creating environments that are attractive to investors and businesses, which benefits everyone in our province.

And, Mr. Speaker, in an article I read from the TD Bank on September 22nd, 2025 they were speaking about the strong economy in Saskatchewan. And I quote:

The Saskatchewan economy is set to outperform the nation as a whole in 2025. Our province ranks seventh in the world for mining investment and number one for mining investment in Canada. We're the world's leading potash producer, second-largest uranium producer, and Canada's largest helium producer. Our potash and uranium are up 20 per cent year to date.

Mr. Speaker, that sounds fairly strong to me. But if that's not enough, let me just add to it: the second-lowest unemployment rate in Canada.

And as much as we maybe don't like numbers, numbers do tell a story, Mr. Speaker, and I like numbers. Private capital investment last year increased by 17 per cent to \$14.7 billion — and we ranked first amongst the provinces for growth — and it's expected to reach 16.2 billion here in 2025. Saskatchewan also currently has the best credit rating in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, that is a strong economy, and that didn't happen because we got lucky. That didn't happen because we made a few decisions over the course of a few months. Mr. Speaker, that happened because this government made choices long ago to create an environment, to build relationships through our trade offices around the world, to work hard at creating an environment that's conducive to investment, conducive to small business — the backbone of this province.

Environments matter, and these numbers I just shared with you, I believe, prove that. But to further my point about environments, listen to this statement from the president and CEO with Nutrien:

We have six large world-class potash mines right here in Saskatchewan, and so we have a close relationship with the Government of Saskatchewan. Nutrien invests [listen to this carefully, Mr. Speaker] with a 20- to 30-year horizon which requires stability, predictability, and consistency in government policy.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I hear statements like that, what I hear is environments matter. And this government has been creating that kind of investment environment for years, and it's paying off when you hear these kind of statements being made by the likes of the president and CEO of Nutrien.

I'm so thankful for this government and for the choices that have been made over the years, especially since a particular election took place south of the border. The environment that's been created, the strength that's been displayed, the choices that were made months and years ago by this government have, I believe, enabled us to be in a very strong place in some of the most tumultuous times we've seen globally.

Mr. Speaker, the state of our economy is strong, but don't believe for a minute that this government won't continue to work on that environment to make it even better for the people of Saskatchewan. And you know, Mr. Speaker, you can hear it said . . . I can hear it now. Some people will say, it's not perfect; it needs this or it needs that. And to those people I would say, you're right. I've never said it was perfect. Not once have I heard our Premier say it was perfect, nor the Minister of Trade and Export Development or the Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement say, it's good enough. It's good but let's keep going. Let's keep making that environment better and stronger.

And we're going to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. We're going to tweak it where it needs tweaking. We're going to evaluate where it needs evaluating and make the appropriate changes that are needed to strengthen the different environments we find ourselves in. But, Mr. Speaker, environments matter, and we will continue to create an environment that will enable us to have a strong and growing economy which will benefit everyone who calls Saskatchewan home.

So, Mr. Speaker, this leads me to another area I'd like to talk

about. It's not just enough to have a strong economy and an environment that's conducive to growing our economy if people don't feel safe. And secondly I believe this government is working hard to create safer communities. Once again, Mr. Speaker, this requires dedication and action. It requires a commitment to make sure that we have safe communities for our families to enjoy.

This government is continuing to create safer environments for the people of Saskatchewan, funding 100 additional municipal police officers, funding 180 new RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] positions, funding 70 officers within the marshals service, funding 14 new safer communities and neighbourhoods personnel.

[15:00]

And, Mr. Speaker, I would say, if you take a look at many of the actions taken by the Minister of Policing, Corrections and Public Safety and the Minister of Social Services and combine that with the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, you'll see exactly what I'm talking about. These ministers and the ministries which they lead are making decisions and taking actions that are all about continuing to create environments that are safe, Mr. Speaker, environments that will help the public to feel safer and more secure, but more than that, environments that will help those who find themselves caught in a life of addiction and helplessness.

Environments matter, and I want to commend each of these ministers for the work they're doing and for the lasting impact that this kind of environment can create — an environment where people can be given the opportunity to make better choices, to have the supports around them, to get them into environments where they can be given the tools and the help they need to be successful in getting out of a life of addiction and hopelessness. And it's fittingly, Mr. Speaker, that that environment is so often referred to as a recovery-oriented system of care.

This government is focused on creating environments where business can succeed, but more than that, creating environments where people, the great people of this province, can succeed by getting the help they need and where people feel safe in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the environment of a secure future, we have so many things we can discuss. But I'm going to focus on one in particular, our investment in education. Our Minister of Education is working hard to make sure we have the right direction, the right policies in place that will help to create the best environment for our young people to learn and grow.

If you take a look back at what I said, environments take months and years to build. So let's look back. This government has built, replaced, or renovated 115 schools since 2008, creating better environments for our young people to learn.

Our K to 3 [kindergarten to grade 3] reading initiative, it's all about creating an environment to help our kids succeed. And there's been a \$2 million boost to enhance K to 3 reading. Mr. Speaker, that's creating an environment so that our kids, our young people, our future, can succeed.

Mr. Speaker, for a second we have to stop and talk about the amazing teachers we have in this province, who are also working hard on a daily basis to create great learning environments. I've had the privilege of getting out to a number of schools in my constituency and meeting just some of the amazing people that on a daily basis work with our young people. And it's these teachers that work hard to create environments that are conducive to learning and growing and thriving.

We have thousands of incredible teachers in this province, and together we all want to be creating the best environment we can for our kids to succeed. And that's why we're funding another 500 additional teachers.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, environments matter, and environments in education and in health care and in so many different things. We've come a long ways, and I believe this government's worked very hard over the years to create an environment that is strong and safe and secure in education, in health care, in social services, in agriculture, in infrastructure, and so much more.

There's always more work to do, more tweaks to be made in anything and everything in life. And I believe that it's this government that will continue to create the environments needed to make sure that Saskatchewan gets stronger, safer, and more secure.

Again, Mr. Speaker, every environment we find ourselves in requires the utmost attention to make sure the decisions we make — and in our case, the policies that we put in place — will help to make this environment that we call Saskatchewan even better.

And I believe that is what you will see. That's what you see in this Throne Speech, and that is what you've seen from this government since it took power. We will remain committed to what was started many years ago. We'll continue to create an environment that attracts investment, that looks after the needs of the people of this province, that has policies in place to continue to make sure Saskatchewan is the best place in Canada to live and work and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, environments matter. Policies matter. And for those reasons, along with everything I've said here today, I'll be supporting the Speech from the Throne moved by the member from Weyburn-Bengough and seconded by the member from Carrot River Valley. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. God bless you, and God bless Saskatchewan.

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

Betty Nippi-Albright: — Miigwech, Mr. Speaker. Before I respond to the Throne Speech, I begin with gratitude. I rise today as the shadow minister for Mental Health and Addictions on behalf of the people of Saskatoon Centre and citizens across this province. Mr. Speaker, I carry the stories, struggles, and hopes of those who deserve better.

To my constituents, thank you for your trust. To my CAs [constituency assistant], thank you for your dedication. To my family, thank you for your love, your strength, and your support. To the experts I consult — front-line workers, researchers, and

people with lived experience — your insights shape our path forward. To the service providers, you are the front line. You meet people where they are. You carry hope into places others have abandoned. To the first responders — paramedics, firefighters, police — thank you for your courage and compassion.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my heartfelt condolences to every family who has lost a loved one to overdose or suicide. Your grief is not invisible. Your loss is not in vain. To those praying for someone struggling, I join you in prayer. May healing find them. May hope hold them.

Mr. Speaker, prayers alone are not enough. Compassion without action is just performance. We are in a drug crisis. One person a day is dying in Saskatchewan and the Sask Party government is slow to respond. Mr. Speaker, this government created the crisis. They've been in power for 18 years. They've cut funding to mental health for years. They cut services, they ignored the repeated warnings, and lost the pulse of the very communities they were elected to serve. Now the Sask Party government is scrambling to catch up. That's not leadership; that's damage control.

And they keep talking about their recovery-oriented system of care. But that system depends on a well-trained, trauma-informed, culturally competent workforce. And we know in Saskatchewan we are burning out our health care professionals. We are burning out our mental health and addictions professionals. And there aren't enough of them to begin with.

The recovery-oriented system of care centres abstinence as the goal, sidelining harm reduction and culturally grounded healing. It focuses on individual recovery while ignoring the structural causes: poverty, racism, housing insecurity, colonial trauma. Mr. Speaker, without clarity, without investment, without accountability, this model is just window dressing. Recovery is not a slogan; it is a responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, the government says 500 in-patient treatment beds is enough. But only 300 have been opened so far, and that certainly isn't enough. Mr. Speaker, we need a massive expansion of funding for in-treatment beds, not just in select regions but province-wide. That includes both on-reserve and off-reserve beds, in rural and urban communities, and in northern regions where access is the most limited.

Mr. Speaker, the province currently funds a select few on-reserve treatment beds. However that's not enough. The government must expand to support additional beds across other on-reserve treatment centres where demand is high and services are stretched.

The province receives federal health transfers that include First Nation communities. Mr. Speaker, the resources exist. What we're missing is the political will to invest equitably. That includes investment in harm reduction services, expanded detox and stabilization services, support to grow sober living homes for long-term healing, a continuum of care that actually meets people where they are.

Mr. Speaker, treatment is only as strong as the people delivering it. We must recruit, train, and retain addiction and mental health

professionals and offer real incentives for providers to serve in underserved and remote communities. We must ensure publicly funded services are available and accessible.

Saskatchewan does not need out-of-province, for-profit companies parachuting in with one-size-fits-all models. Mr. Speaker, these companies do not know our people or our realities, and they are not accountable to the citizens in this province.

Mr. Speaker, what we need is to strengthen the publicly funded, culturally grounded providers who've been doing this for years. They are trusted. They are trauma informed. They are committed to healing, not profit. And yet this Sask Party government is asking them to do more with less. The provincial government must ensure these trusted Saskatchewan-based providers have the capacity to offer help when it's needed, not weeks or months later. That means real investment, Mr. Speaker, long-term funding, trusting the people who've been showing up even when the Sask Party and the system hasn't.

In the Throne Speech, the government is proposing the compassionate intervention Act. There are no details, no clarity on who will be targeted, how long people will be held, or what long-term consequences they may face. Once this bill is introduced we will review it carefully and consult with experts and stakeholders.

But let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. Involuntary treatment must be rare, monitored, and rooted in compassion, not punishment. It must include clear safeguards, transparent criteria for intervention, legal representation for those detained, independent oversight, and appeal mechanisms, culturally safe care and after care. And any move toward involuntary treatment must begin by addressing the lack of voluntary services. Let me say that again. Any move toward involuntary treatment must begin by addressing the lack of voluntary services.

People who are actively seeking help are being turned away. We often hear stories of how many can't access in-patient treatment when they want it. Mr. Speaker, without expanded access to voluntary care, involuntary measures will only deepen the strain on our system. Let me repeat that again because it's very important. Without expanded access to voluntary care, involuntary measures will only deepen the strain on our system.

The Sask Party government assumes treatment leads to abstinence. Yet we know, Mr. Speaker, and evidence shows you cannot force someone into recovery. Recovery requires trust, stability, and support. It cannot be coerced.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, detox may take days. But healing the brain, especially after trauma, substance use, and systemic neglect takes time. It takes care. It takes continuity. And while the government claims to be addressing substance use, they are introducing the tailgating Act, legislation that would promote public drinking and public intoxication. Let me be clear. Alcohol is a substance that causes harm to many families and individuals. Again alcohol is a substance. It is the most normalized and socially accepted substance, and it destroys lives.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan already has one of the worst

impaired driving records in the country. We have the second-highest rate of impaired driving in Canada. Now in the middle of a substance use crisis, the Sask Party is introducing legislation that promotes public intoxication. That's not harm reduction; that's harm promotion.

Across Saskatchewan community-based organizations are doing extraordinary work, often with limited staff, limited funding, and limited recognition. Let me acknowledge the Regina Street Team, a grassroots initiative doing vital outreach with people in crisis. They help connect individuals to substance use recovery services, bridge gaps in mental health supports, and collaborate across organizations. They are trusted, they are trauma informed, and they are not alone.

The Regina Street Team is just one example of the kind of care and commitment that exists in our communities. But like so many others, they rely on your funding. They are being asked to do more with less, and still they show up.

Mr. Speaker, the province must commit to sustainable, long-term investment, trusting the Regina Street Team, local and culturally grounded organizations across Canada, and in-patient treatment centres already doing great work. They often are doing this work with limited resources and little recognition.

In the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, there are several glaring omissions. There's no mention of reconciliation. There's no commitment to meaningful duty-to-consult. And there certainly isn't any recognition of the treaty relationship our ancestors signed. There's no acknowledgement that First Nations people were here long before Saskatchewan became a province 120 years ago. Mr. Speaker, this silence speaks volumes. Reconciliation is not a slogan. It is a responsibility. As a residential school survivor of nine years, reconciliation means something to me. I walk that road.

We must also recognize the role of poverty, trauma, racism, and isolation in driving substance use harms. If we are serious about recovery, we must be serious about equity. That means addressing the root causes, not just the symptoms.

Mr. Speaker, there are people in this province who, through no fault of their own, have lost the ability to make safe choices, access care, or protect themselves. And how we respond to them as a province and as legislators must be rooted in compassion, urgency, and evidence. Mr. Speaker, we must build systems that support people whose needs are complex while ensuring their dignity is never compromised.

Behind every policy is someone's child, someone's sibling, someone's parent, someone's grandparent, or someone's friend — someone deserving of care, not condemnation. Mr. Speaker, we need leadership that sees addiction not as a threat to be punished. We need leadership that sees substance use harm not as a threat to be punished but as a wound to be healed. And I'm going to repeat that again. We need leadership that sees substance use harms not as a threat to be punished but as a wound to be healed. And we need to build a system that offers real hope, not hollow headlines.

Mr. Speaker, we must meet people where they are with care, not judgment, and build a system that truly reflects their worth. And

that is why, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the government's Throne Speech, and instead I will support the amendment presented by my colleague from Cumberland. Gichi-miigwech.

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

Hon. Jamie Martens: — Thank you and good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I am honoured to rise in this Chamber for my second reply to the throne. I am thankful to my family for having adjusted their lives this last year, my colleagues for all the support, and my CA, Lisa, for all that she does for me, including being my grammar coach.

You say that trust is earned, not given. So the fact that the people of my constituency, Martensville-Blairmore, have placed their trust in me, I don't take that lightly. I carry it with me every day. This isn't just a role; it is a privilege. I wouldn't want it any other way. They have given me the chance to be their voice in rooms where decisions are made, where budgets are balanced, and where the coffee is sometimes questionable but the responsibility is always real.

What makes this job so special isn't the title, or the meetings and more meetings. It's the people. It's hearing the stories at the grocery store, getting an earful at the hockey rink, in the best way, and being reminded every day why this work matters.

We're not just working on policies, Mr. Speaker. We're working on futures, safer streets, better schools, stronger families, and communities that actually care for each other. And every time I walk into a meeting, cast a vote, or make a call, I remember who I do it for — you, the people of Saskatchewan.

What seemed to be an impossible dream came true for me. Thank you truly for trusting in me with something as important as your voice, your concerns, and your hopes. And I think my constituency proves that it takes community to move mountains, and to hold some seriously impressive pancake breakfasts.

I live in a place where people don't wait to be asked. They just show up early with coffee and ready to help. Let's start with our volunteers flipping burgers at fundraisers, organizing bottle drives, picking up trash, or helping neighbours during the winter storms. They are all the heartbeat of our community.

Then there's our volunteer fire departments, always willing to help as they move faster than most of us when coffee is ready. When the call comes in, they don't hesitate. They run towards danger and not away from it. And they do it for one reason — because our communities are worth protecting. We thank you for every night, every late night, every emergency answered, and every moment you've stood between us and danger.

My constituency has been full of festivals and community events this summer, from the Filipino festival in Martensville Lions Park to parades during the Dalmeny Days, Saskatoon cultural nights, and food truck wars that test the limits of your waistband. Our community events bring us together in the best way.

So to all of you that have given your time, your energy, and your heart, I thank you. You've turned this constituency into more

than a place on a map. You've made it a home.

We may come from different places, speak different languages, and worship in different ways, but we're all part of the same story, Mr. Speaker, a story still not written. The next chapter is not written by anger or fear, but by courage, compassion, and common purpose. So I ask you in Saskatchewan not to give up. Don't turn away from your neighbour. Have patience and have purpose, and let's keep working towards keeping Saskatchewan the best place to live.

I was very fortunate this summer as I was able to attend the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conferences in Fredericton and Quebec City. This opportunity showed me how strong we are here in Saskatchewan. I was proud to bring representation from our province as others respected our leadership style and were very interested in many of our policies.

And, Mr. Speaker, on the few days off I had this summer, I chose to spend it in my constituency at the race track. I volunteered with the race team, took on a hobby most 48-year-olds wouldn't ever think of doing, and I realized that G-force is a serious thing. And yes, every race that I was active in, I did need to attend a local chiropractor after.

The best part of the experience was not only to see the improvement in my driving or to learn more about cars, but was to meet the young fans that come sit in the car and know that their dream can also be a reality. I'm happy to say the closest that I came to getting a checkered flag was second place, so that's not bad for a rookie. Just goes to show that you put your mind to it and you can almost accomplish anything.

I witnessed other racers helping each other when they saw someone in trouble, the president of the club not batting an eye as he reacted to a situation when he saw a vehicle on fire. He was there to pull the driver out with no hesitation. Drivers having friendly competition and witnessing the true definition of teamwork was definitely a highlight of my year.

This summer I was also able to take a tour of the marshals in Prince Albert, as well as be involved in their all-staff meeting. We listened to senior officers bring stories of tragedy and situations most never would dream of being in. One story stood out, as I've been in situations in rooms similar to the one described in this story. On November 1st, 2023, the Estevan police responded to a call regarding a seriously injured woman in a residence, and she later died. A 19-year-old man was arrested in connection with the homicide investigation. The 19-year-old was taken to the station, and during processing, a confrontation occurred in the booking room. The young man gained control of a police officer's firearm and shot the officer. The officer was seriously injured. The suspect then was shot by another officer and died later that day.

The woman, age 46, passed away. The 19-year-old suspect was her son, who also passed away. And why does this matter? Because even though you may have thought about the officer, the suspect, or the victim, in a situation like this we should be thinking about all who are involved and how it came to this — the officer, as well as fellow officers living with this till today, and everyone that goes through it differently.

We need to be there for our officers and give them the tools that they need to keep themselves and us safe. I want to commend all those that were involved in that situation, and in situations every day, all that took the necessary steps to educate the other officers on how to handle difficult situations. That day was a powerful day at the marshals' meeting, Mr. Speaker, because that day everyone could gain a little more understanding.

I've learned over the years that through tragedy comes renewal. We learn through these experiences, and we choose to put our best foot forward rather than dwell on them. When I think about the situations of fear and confusion that I've been put in in my life, I can think about how blessed that I am that I've made it through.

And as the member opposite from Athabasca was very passionate and emotion when he delivered his Throne Speech reply, I understand that compassion and emotion, and I think we all do. And for him to have an incredible, fearful situation happen to him and his family is devastating. I know I thought and prayed for them as the fires grew near, and I am so happy that they were able to go home and get through this together.

[15:30]

I want the member opposite to know that we all care about these terrifying experiences. I know that my colleagues worked tirelessly around the clock this summer to come up with solutions in assisting with tragedies. As we learn from new challenges, we continue to build a strong, safe, secure Saskatchewan together. To all of the firefighters across Saskatchewan, I thank you.

Every generation faces its own tests, moments that ask, who are we and what do we stand for? How far are we willing to go for one another? And sometimes the best answers don't come from history books or big speeches. They come from ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

And let me tell you a story, Mr. Speaker. In 1912 a fire swept through the small town of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. It tore through homes, shops, and hope. It roughly destroyed eight city blocks. The people had little — no modern fire engines, no backup plan, just each other. But instead of watching their town burn, they formed a human chain from the river, passing buckets hand-to-hand. They worked through the night — farmers, shopkeepers, children — shoulder to shoulder, blistered, coughing, freezing, and afraid.

By early morning the fire was out. The damage was real, but so was their victory. Because what mattered most wasn't the loss, but that they refused to lose their spirit. That spirit and that spark is what built Saskatchewan. It's what has always carried the people through blizzards, droughts, economic struggles, and heartbreak. It's what fuels every nurse who works through exhaustion, every farmer who seeds their fields when there is no rain, every young person who dreams of a better tomorrow. And that same spark lives in every one of us today.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of our government and the strong leadership and commitment to safe communities and securing our future. We're inspired — inspired by our farmers, our entrepreneurs, our health care workers, and our educators. These are the individuals who keep our province strong. We look

around this province and see people who roll up their sleeves and say, let's get to work. And that's exactly what our government is doing. No need for stats in this speech, Mr. Speaker. We see the progress every day.

There are moments in history that shake us, moments when violence breaks through. And it breaks through the noise of everyday life, leaving us to question the world around us. Whether it's an attack on public figures, a tragic act of hatred, or senseless loss of life, these moments remind us of both our fragility and our shared humanity. In times like these, fear often rushes in first. We worry about the safety. We worry about our children. We worry about the kind of world we're leaving behind, Mr. Speaker.

But today I want to talk about something stronger than fear, which is courage. Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to be a part of many medal ceremonies this year. As we gathered at Government House to honour some of the most remarkable citizens of this province, one of those ceremonies was the Canadian humane association bravery medal, a distinction reserved for those who have gone above and beyond fear, and acted in true courage when it mattered most.

Bravery. It is the moment when a person sees danger, and instead of turning away, steps forward. That moment, the heartbeat of decision, reveals the best of who we are. The individuals honoured this year have done just that. They have risked their own lives to protect others — neighbours, strangers, and even animals — without thought of receiving recognition, and no expectation of reward. Whether facing fire, ice, flood waters, or an unfortunate accident, they acted.

In Saskatchewan, courage often looks humble while wearing workboots, hospital scrubs, or a winter parka. But what unites our honourees is their humanity that reminds us every day that life matters, that helping others is what truly makes us Canadian.

The Canadian humane association bravery medal is more than just a symbol of heroism. It is a reminder to all of us that courage lives on in every day. It lives in the volunteer firefighters who run towards a blaze. It lives in the passerby who drives into icy waters. You have inspired children who now believe that they can also be heroes. On behalf of the communities, your province, and your country, we thank you. May your example continue to guide us towards a kinder, braver Canada. And congratulations to all of those that received the medal this year.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am thrilled to be a part of a government that is willing to continue to put women's safety first. We live in a time when the conversation about safety, especially women's safety, can no longer be whispered in the dark. It must be spoken loudly, clearly, with purpose, because the truth is every woman deserves to live free from fear. Every woman deserves respect, dignity, and peace in her home, in her workplace, and in her community.

We are seeing the rise in violence against women across the world. Working to prevent interpersonal violence isn't easy. Unlearning silence and being willing to speak up, even when it's uncomfortable, as well as believing in survivors, holding perpetrators accountable, educating young people not just about what not to do but also on how to properly treat one another. Each

of us has a role to play, whether you're a teacher, a friend, a parent, a police officer, a neighbour. Your voice and your effort matters.

When you listen to someone who's afraid to speak, you're a part of the solution. When you support shelters, advocate for stronger laws, or create safe spaces, you're a part of the solution. We are working to be a bigger part of that solution. Every step we take, every voice we raise, every heart we reach brings us closer to the day that no woman has to live in fear from violence again.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my government. I thank my friends and family and everyone who has trust in me to stand here like many before me. God bless you and God bless Saskatchewan. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion put forward by the member of Weyburn-Big Muddy, seconded by the member from Carrot River Valley. And I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a tremendous honour to enter into a response to the Throne Speech on the floor of this Assembly on Treaty 4 territory and the homeland of the Métis, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the good people I represent across the communities of Regina Mount Royal. So thank you for that time. I know I've been given . . . I'm going to write down what time I started so I don't get in trouble — 3:38 — get in trouble with our Whip. She runs a tight ship, Mr. Speaker.

I want to just recognize off the hop Jannet Shanks in our constituency office, Mr. Speaker. You're not going to find a finer servant of a community and of people and somebody that serves. And she's an awesome partner to go about this work with, Mr. Speaker. And I know a lot of times when people are reaching out to us in our offices, they're reaching out at a time of stress and challenge in their life, often crisis, Mr. Speaker. And I'm just so very thankful to be working with Jannet and for the care and service and advocacy that she provides and that we're able to provide together. So thank you to Jannet Shanks. She does so much beyond that office as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we don't serve alone. We talk about our families and, you know, that's true. And I'm very thankful for my family, certainly our extended families. We're pretty damned lucky as a family to have healthy parents, both Stephanie and I. Brother-in-law and sisters and their families, Mr. Speaker, and they're all part of it.

But you know, to Stephanie and to William, just a thanks to them for all the ways that they're involved in this service as well, Mr. Speaker. Of course Stephanie is a teacher in the community as well, Mr. Speaker. Works hard on that front. William, he's grade 6, Mr. Speaker, and super active in hockey right now, playing on the school volleyball team, and still a ready partner to get out and enjoy Saskatchewan when we have the opportunity to do so, Mr. Speaker. Of course we both love, our family loves the outdoors, Mr. Speaker — fishing, hiking, and hunting, and camping, and all these sorts of things. And I'm pretty lucky to have him there as a partner, along with our family as well, Mr. Speaker.

And they're involved in the broader community as well. Last night they joined me, Mr. Speaker, out in the very fine constituency of Last Mountain-Touchwood to join the Bulyea fall supper, Mr. Speaker. And what an awesome night, Mr. Speaker, it was. Hundreds of people there, incredible pie, awesome turkey, and just wonderful conversations. But that's just but one example of how my family jumps in and joins some of our service as well, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank all those that I'm so privileged to work with and for, the good people throughout Regina Mount Royal, Mr. Speaker. Across the communities of McNab and Mount Royal and parts of Rosemont, Westerra and Normanview West, Mr. Speaker, Fairways West and Greenside as well as Westhill and Edgewater.

I couldn't work for finer people, Mr. Speaker. Proud, hard-working, caring people that work to certainly build for their families, to build opportunity, Mr. Speaker, but also build and strengthen our community and our province every day. And it's that sort of service and that sort of approach that should inspire all of us in this Assembly to do our best with the tasks that we've been presented, Mr. Speaker.

And it's with that, and through that lens, and on behalf of the good people that I rep, Mr. Speaker, and that I work with that I take a look at this Throne Speech and that I assess it, you know. And you ask the questions of, you know, did it make life more affordable, Mr. Speaker? Did it strengthen our economy and address the biggest economic and trade challenges we face right now, Mr. Speaker, China and the US? Big challenges we face, Mr. Speaker. Did it step up on those fronts?

Did it step forward and fix and build health care, Mr. Speaker? Build those supports for seniors, Mr. Speaker? Did it repair the damage that has been caused by the choices and budgets of this government in our kids' classrooms, who deserve nothing less than the best shot at their future, Mr. Speaker, the best education we can provide them?

Did it make a difference in making our communities safer, in addressing crime, Mr. Speaker? Did it act to support the most vulnerable among us, Mr. Speaker? Did it step up to support those facing challenges with respect to mental health or in the grips of addiction, Mr. Speaker? All too many, all too many lives been lost on these fronts, Mr. Speaker.

Now unfortunately when I look across the front and I read that budget, and if we look to the substance of it beyond the words and the rhetoric, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the answer to all of those questions is no. No, it did not, Mr. Speaker.

And I think we see, you know, a government that isn't as interested in getting the job done as they once were, Mr. Speaker. A government that all too often is just mailing it in. A government that seems, on front after front — and it surprises me each day — from cost of living to the importance of the jobs that are at risk, the jobs that are needed by Saskatchewan people, a government that all too often is just out of touch, Mr. Speaker.

A government that on front after front isn't getting it done, Mr. Speaker, that's failing the people of our province. A government that's not making progress or headway or turning the dial, but in

fact has us sliding backwards in all of these key areas: education and health care, cost of living, and our economy, Mr. Speaker. And a government that seems more and more interested or caught up in their own political interests, their partisan self-interest, Mr. Speaker, and so much less so in the interests of Saskatchewan people, of producers in this province, of people in this province, Mr. Speaker.

[15:45]

You know, that was on full display last week when the Leader of the Opposition rose in this Assembly to bring forward a motion to send a united message to Ottawa and the world with respect to ending the EV [electric vehicle] tariffs on China, but to eliminate the tariff that China has placed on our producers — on canola, on peas, and on pork, Mr. Speaker. A straightforward motion that could have been a powerful message sent by a united legislature, brought by the leader of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, who I should also say I'm so damned proud to serve with every day, Mr. Speaker.

To watch a government twist that up and twist themselves up and to fail to use that opportunity to send that message, instead to make amendments that were all about themselves and back-patting and boasting, you know, wanting a participation medal when the game is still on. And frankly when this government isn't winning it for Saskatchewan producers and people, Mr. Speaker, is not on. It's not acceptable.

And it's that sort of day and that sort of moment that really speaks volumes about who this Sask Party government has become and who they're failing in the process, Mr. Speaker. So you have to kind of ask yourself, what's the state of the things we care about most in Saskatchewan right now? That's what I look at as we work to make a difference for those that we serve.

Health care. Well unfortunately, last in Canada. Last in Canada. You see it in surgeries, access to a doc, pressures in emergency rooms — last in Canada.

Crime. Double the national average, Mr. Speaker. And I think if you ask a lot of people across communities in this province, most will say, "I've never seen it like this." I've never seen it like this, Mr. Speaker. They don't recognize some of the communities that they've built, that they've built their lives in, Mr. Speaker, and the peace of mind and safety that they deserve and that they've enjoyed in the past, Mr. Speaker.

Cost of living. Well unlike what the government says, trying to paint a picture that everyone's, you know, got more affordability than they deserve, the reality is that families are working so hard just to make ends meet. Cost of living is a serious hardship and one that's been made worse by this government time and time again, sticking additional costs on the backs of Saskatchewan people time and time again, sticking taxes on the backs of Saskatchewan people and businesses time and time again.

Our economy. A province filled with such incredible resources and opportunity and entrepreneurial spirit and business leaders and innovators and workers, well this government has put us in second-last place in Canada over this Premier's tenure — second-last place economically, Mr. Speaker — denying Saskatchewan businesses and people and producers and workers

and young people the opportunities they deserve, Mr. Speaker.

People in this province deserve so much better. They deserve a government that will work from sun-up to sundown. They deserve a government that gets the grind that Saskatchewan families are caught up in and working every day to build their lives. And they deserve a government that will at least try to work as hard as they are, Mr. Speaker.

So on behalf of the good people I represent, these are the lens that I bring to this Throne Speech. And certainly this Throne Speech fails.

I'll delve just a little bit into a couple of my shadow ministries, Mr. Speaker, and you know, I'll start with Finance.

This is a government with just a dismal fiscal record. A record of mismanagement, Mr. Speaker, of waste, Mr. Speaker, of a lack of accountability, and a failure to manage that's costing Saskatchewan people. It's costing Saskatchewan people their hard-earned dollars, because this is a government who mismanages and wastes, drives up debt, and then sticks Saskatchewan people with the cost, with the taxes, Mr. Speaker.

And then this is a government as well that when they fail to deploy dollars in a way that gets value for money, Mr. Speaker, that fails to build the opportunity we have in this province. A government that will excuse wasted dollar after wasted dollar, not recognizing that when one dollar is wasted, that that's a dollar not being deployed to something that matters to people. Like addressing crime. Like fixing health care. Like paying down debt, Mr. Speaker.

It's a government that's more than quadrupled the debt, and in this year alone now has driven the cost to service that ballooning debt . . . over \$1 billion to service that debt. Those dollars flow to Bay Street and Wall Street, Mr. Speaker. Those are dollars that aren't supporting programs and services here in this province. A record of tax and squander. A record of waste.

And we know the waste. We know the list. It just keeps growing, right. You know, whether you're looking at all these IT [information technology] projects that have gone sideways, wasting hundreds of millions of dollars. Whether it's hundreds of millions of dollars on these out-of-province contract nurses instead of investing in the labour force in our hospitals here in Saskatchewan. Whether it's sending the women of this province to Calgary at 10 times the cost for basic services they should have here, like mammograms. Whether it's procuring something like a plane, Mr. Speaker, and spending now what's been alleged as over \$100 million more than they need to, Mr. Speaker.

Now we've seen this in the past. We've seen it in big ways — the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] scandal, the bypass that went off the rails with over \$1 billion overrun — but all of this comes at a cost to Saskatchewan people. And no one in this province, regardless of their political stripe, should tolerate this sort of mismanagement and waste, Mr. Speaker. No one should accept that they have to pay the bills for the cost of this mismanaging government.

Mr. Speaker, on agriculture, I've already spoken again about the ineffective and insufficient response to make sure we're

addressing market access. We need to make sure that we end those tariffs with China and restore market access. This is a government that would rather play political games than get real about the kinds of actions that are needed to have the backs of our producers.

When it comes to our producers in this province, we need to act now. We've needed for a long period of time, Mr. Speaker, to build out our rail and port infrastructure, our transport infrastructure. No one knows this better than producers in this province because it's always producers that are left paying the price when that rail system fails, Mr. Speaker. And the system as we've had it has been underperforming for years, Mr. Speaker. It's been kid gloves that this government has brought to the table to step up to ensure performance, and now is the time to build out that transport infrastructure. The same can be said on trade. We need to build out those markets for our producers.

With respect to things like foreign ownership and enforcing the Farm Land Security Board Act, Mr. Speaker, again this is a government that looked the other way while Saskatchewan was being bought up, Mr. Speaker, and that didn't bring forward common-sense measures to protect producers.

And when they don't do that, Mr. Speaker, they set up a situation that's not fair to the producers of this province. Because it's not right and it's not fair for the hard-working producers of this province to have an un-level playing field, to have to compete potentially with billionaire or pension fund dollars from outside of Canada, Mr. Speaker, which is supposed to be illegal. It's not fair for them to have to compete with the People's Republic of China, nor is it in our interests for the People's Republic of China to own farm land. Mr. Speaker, this is a government that's looked the other way.

With respect to meat processing and the consolidated multinational out-of-province, out-of-country meat processors, Mr. Speaker, we need to act to get value for consumers and to get value for our producers, to make sure they get a fair shake on the live cattle that they're selling. We need to crack down on the anti-competitive behaviours of that industry, Mr. Speaker. And we should be building that industry, meat processing and the jobs and opportunity, here in this province, building jobs, building value for producers and choice — and same for consumers, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll wind up real quickly, Mr. Speaker, as I see the time. But I want to identify as well those producers in this province, down in the Southwest particularly, that have dealt with protracted drought for year after year after year. Those in around the RM [rural municipality] of Big Stick and the neighbouring RMs have dealt with protracted drought for over nine years. As a result of that, the business risk-management programs aren't there to be able to have their backs at this critical time. They're facing an emergency. They've reached out to this government. They've called for action and we've seen nothing, Mr. Speaker.

We saw some changes that were brought forward, Mr. Speaker, that are some improvements across the province that we've called for as well and that we support, but no measures to support those that have been hardest hit, leaving those that have been hardest hit high and dry in a real stressful situation, Mr. Speaker. And it's inexcusable for this provincial government to walk away

from having their backs, Mr. Speaker. And we see nothing in the Throne Speech once again to address that very important issue, Mr. Speaker.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I won't be supporting the Throne Speech. I will be supporting the amendment put forward by the member from Cumberland.

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

Kim Gartner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been almost one year since being elected to this legislature. I want to thank my family for their support. It's been unwavering and inspirational. My dear wife reminds me daily of my commitment to the constituents of Kindersley-Biggar. She's been my co-pilot to many functions, and although she may drive a bit too fast during parades — my short legs can't keep up — I'm grateful every day for the laughter and the encouragement.

Mr. Speaker, the summer's been full of conversations with constituents, both in group settings and in private. In my Kindersley office I have three individuals that job-share the CA position. Each day they deal with both complimentary comments and difficult personal situations. They are undoubtedly some of the most efficient and compassionate individuals working for the benefit of our constituents, and I thank my lucky stars every day for their contributions.

Mr. Speaker, there are two ways to approach life. One is as an optimist and the other is as a pessimist. I and my colleagues prefer to approach the challenges of our province with a glass-half-full, positive attitude, while the members opposite seem to focus through a glass-half-empty, negative lens.

This province is leading the country with the strongest economy, leading in year-over-year job growth and unemployment rate, and leading in capital investment growth. This province is led by a premier and a government focused on what is possible, focused on the potential of a vibrant and diverse economy, and what a vibrant and diverse economy can provide for the residents of this province.

Through every trade mission, every intergovernmental engagement, and every conversation with business leaders, entrepreneurs, employees, young families, students, and retirees, the focus of this government has been stability — stability as a trade partner, stability as an area open to investment, stability in financial capacity, and stability in the delivery of services to the residents of Saskatchewan.

There are many economic anchors in this province, and west central Saskatchewan is home to a vibrant agricultural and energy sector that supports the residents and families of this great province. Supporting, protecting, and encouraging these two important anchors is not a new-found notion or a speaking note of the day for this government. This government realizes that these are foundational economic drivers and they have and will continue to be supported by this government.

Encouraging and supporting investment like the recently completed Cardinal Energy SAGD [steam-assisted gravity drainage] oil recovery project in the rural municipality of Reford.

This project has and will provide stable, well-paid employment opportunities for local entrepreneurs, investment and municipal tax revenue for the local municipality. With this investment Cardinal joins other companies like Cenovus, Strathcona Energy, Whitecap Resources, and Enbridge Pipelines as corporate citizens investing in the oil and gas sector, employing thousands of people across this province, supporting our communities and the economy of Saskatchewan.

[16:00]

Mr. Speaker, the 2025 crop is in the bin, and our producers are looking for support and clarity as they navigate the uncertainty caused by international tariffs. Diversification and expansion of international markets means Saskatchewan is in a better position to weather these trade uncertainties. Thank you to this Premier for initiating the negotiation process with China as we work with the Canadian government to remove tariffs on canola and other agri-food products.

We are encouraging an investment in the agriculture sector like the construction of a field pea cleaning and processing facility operated by Holman farms in the community of Luseland, a family-based, farmer-owned business created to enhance and coordinate the farm's marketing capacity, created with the intent to sustain and grow the family farm for their next generation. A review of *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act* will look to strengthen farm landownership rules and continue our rich history with many farms being passed from generation to generation. Mr. Speaker, these are just two examples of the hope, resilience, and confidence that exists in our province.

Our government is committed to providing the economic environment required to foster a vibrant, stable, and investor-friendly land of opportunity. We are incentivizing investment and growth through initiatives like the small and medium enterprise tax credit, the Saskatchewan young entrepreneur bursary, the Saskatchewan critical minerals innovation incentive, and the Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive.

Mr. Speaker, the communities of this province are as diverse and dynamic as anywhere in the world. After being involved in municipal administration for over 30 years, I have always appreciated and participated in the volunteer aspect of my community. I am the first to admit that my focus in the past has naturally been on my own local community, but after a summer of parades, car shows, rodeos, fish fries, cultural events, and fundraising functions, my appreciation for the people of Saskatchewan and the diversity of our communities has expanded immensely.

Mr. Speaker, imagine going to a professional bull rider event and the 50/50 draw spontaneously turns into a fundraising opportunity raising more than \$75,000 for the local Health and Wellness Foundation. That happened in the community of Kindersley. Imagine local farmers, farm supply stores, and grain-marketing companies coming together to plant, harvest, and market a crop for the benefit of the local school community. That happened in the community of Luseland.

And, Mr. Speaker, imagine an annual fish fry in a community with a population of nine, hosted by the Stranraer Elks with a membership of over 30 individuals, raising hundreds and

thousands of dollars for area improvements, including contributions to the reconstruction of the Doddsland hockey rink that was recently lost to fire. Imagine being a participant in a dunk tank fundraiser for an assisted living facility and having your own wife spend \$20 just to put you in the water. Yes, that was my wife.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I do need to mention the cultural celebration that is the world bunnock championships, held in my home community of Macklin. This event draws participants from around the world and triples the size of my community for one weekend each year. All services provided on that weekend are supplied by local non-profit organizations, contributing over \$1 million towards facilities, programs, all for local benefit.

Events such as these provide an avenue for the community to rally around a cause and to support the important programs in all of our communities providing recreational, educational, health, and community services. Mr. Speaker, through a realistic lens there is a recognition that challenges exist, and that not every community desire can be met through a provincial government agency or provincial government program. Local programs and initiatives often fill an immediate need and spark widespread conversation throughout the province.

The character of our communities, the compassion of our communities, and the integrity of our communities is demonstrated every day through these community events, through the individuals and corporations that donate, and through the volunteers that work tirelessly towards their success.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the many community events that occur in this province each and every day. Communities large and small are the heartbeat of this province, working together to support and enhance the lives of their residents, and helping to ensure we continue to promote a strong, safe, and secure province.

That is why our government continues to support the fabric of our communities through programs like municipal revenue-sharing program, Saskatchewan Lotteries community grants, the community arena affordability grant, and the recently released school playground equipment grant. Through a strong and stable economy, we are able to support our communities and partner with them to enhance our quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, it is through a strong economy and strong partnerships that we foster strong communities. As a rural constituency, we recognize there are challenges with providing services into rural and remote communities. The attraction of health care professionals is just one such challenge.

Through partnerships, communities join with the Ministry of Health to discuss and enhance recruitment efforts that address specific local needs.

The rural and remote recruitment incentive was expanded to 70 communities. This incentive offers up to \$50,000 over three years to eligible health professionals who work in specific rural communities like the town of Kerrobert. This incentive was used to help address the shortage of ambulance personnel, which was causing disruption of services, and it is now fully staffed and adding to the safety of Kerrobert residents.

Mr. Speaker, keeping our communities strong often brings together government, municipal councils, and community partnerships — partnerships that provide for the expansion of daycare spaces in communities like Kindersley and Biggar where municipalities, businesses, private citizens, and non-profit organizations have come together to raise funds towards much-needed expansion. I want to thank the daycares from my constituency for the open dialogue and for their written contributions towards a revised rural daycare operating agreement and improvements to a renewed Saskatchewan-Canada agreement. Your patience and input are greatly appreciated.

There are community partnerships that provide for the operation and expansion of residential and vocational opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities. The creation of a second Farm in the Dell location is a partnership between the province of Saskatchewan, the town of Biggar, the rural municipality of Biggar, and the Farm in the Dell organization, providing two new group homes for people with intellectual disabilities. This is a supportive living program that operates in conjunction with a farm-based vocational program.

Mr. Speaker, there are partnerships that expand and secure the safety of our communities and the workers and families that reside there. WorkSafe Saskatchewan is a partnership between the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety. Working through an integrated provincial injury prevention strategy, this partnership involves both employers and employees striving towards zero workplace injuries.

It is through many, many partnerships that we will continue to support our strong, safe, and secure communities.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I would like to address some comments made in this Chamber this past Thursday. For many years I had the honour to work with many dedicated public servants, working alongside them to improve the social and economic fabric of this province. This past fire season, dedicated public servants from across this province rallied to provide the expertise required to coordinate an immediate and unprecedented fire response, a response that crossed all ministerial responsibilities: public safety, health, social services, government relations, Crown corporations, and environment, just to name a few.

Our public servants, along with community associations, volunteer agencies, and firefighters from across this province, paused their personal lives, joined hand in hand and side by side with local officials, municipal employees, and community volunteers who were being directly affected by the fires. To the local and provincial public servants, to the firefighters from across the province, to the health and safety workers, to the community volunteers, and to the aid agencies, I say thank you. Your commitment and dedication should not be questioned. We are comforted that you have and will continue to respond to our communities' needs, wherever and whenever required in every corner of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support policies that promote a strong economy, policies that strive for safe communities, and policies that promote a province where every community, large or small,

have the abilities to secure a future for their residents.

I will be supporting the motion as moved by the member from Weyburn-Bengough and seconded from the member from Carrot River Valley. I will not be supporting the amendment.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Leroy Laliberte: — Deputy Speaker, thank you so much. Mr. Speaker, every moment that I have the opportunity to rise in the Assembly, I do so with both humility and gratefulness to the people of Athabasca. Now they have given me the opportunity to represent them here at the Assembly. Tomorrow now is going to be a year. Time, you know, sure flies by when you're having fun, is what they say.

To all the friends and family members that I have, you know, throughout Saskatchewan, throughout the province, throughout the North, I want to say thank you for, one, you know, giving me this great opportunity to be here, Mr. Speaker. I want to say thank you to my wife, my children, my family for all of the support that they give me to be able to do this work.

You know, I want to thank my home community of sîpîsisihk, Beauval. Whether it been Beauval or the subdivision of Sakamayack or all the way up to Camsell Portage, Black Lake, Athabasca is a big riding, and I have friends, like I said, throughout that I have the opportunity to represent here today. I want to say thank you for allowing me to bring these important concerns, matters, and voices to a place where decisions are made on your behalf. Mr. Speaker, I hope and I continue to do the region justice and fight the good fight here, and it's a pleasure to be able to do that for all of the constituents of Athabasca.

I also want to thank the Leader of His Majesty's Official Opposition in the Assembly for her trust and allowing me to also serve as the shadow minister for First Nations and Métis Relations. Now this gives me the opportunity, Deputy Speaker, to be able to meet with our Nations throughout this province. We have 74 First Nations in this province that I have the opportunity to work with, and of course the Métis communities that I have the opportunity to serve as well.

[16:15]

And before I continue on with the content of the speech, Deputy Speaker, I want to again repeat myself again and again. And you'll see as I move forward here that words can't express how grateful I am to be able to work with people that are fearless volunteers of this province. Thank you to all of those people who fought the wildfires throughout the summer. And I know that, you know, my little brother here, the MLA from Cumberland, had the opportunity to share about this wildfire season last Thursday.

And I want to say that the service of these volunteers doesn't go unnoticed, Mr. Speaker. There's a lot of people that we have to, you know, give thanks for because there's a lot of work that took place this summer and right into this fall, Deputy Speaker. Like I said, it won't go unnoticed and without gratitude. I must also thank northern leaders and volunteers who stepped up, you know, for these very hard situations that we were put through

throughout the summer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to say there wasn't much of a summer for the northerners, you know. It was a time where we would be . . . You know, it would be an understatement to be able to say that. Because the summer is usually a time where these communities come together. They have camps. They have all of these different things that happen throughout the summer. And it gives them the opportunity to also reconnect, but there wasn't much of an opportunity for that as well. Instead, Deputy Speaker, northern communities were left with having to deal with the wildfires.

Now this caused damage and loss for many. We had some visitors here today, Mr. Speaker, that travelled all the way from Denare Beach. And we've all seen, everybody in this Assembly, has seen first-hand what these community members had gone through, where they lost their homes. They lost a lot of, you know, personal things, a lot of things that they've had memories that were tied to, Mr. Speaker. So it was nice to have them here today.

I wanted to say that, you know, I can't express how sorry I am to those individuals, and to a lot of the people and the community members throughout the North that have lost so much, Mr. Speaker, especially in the Cumberland constituency, for the losses of their homes, their cabins, and their property. It was devastating to hear and devastating to see first-hand.

Now when the wildfires broke out through the northeast in May and June of this year, people in my home community of Beauval intended to organize the local BDI [Beauval Development Inc.] gymnasium for travel as a checkpoint for people that were fleeing from the wildfires, just to get some snacks for them, use of a washroom, get some rest before continuing with their journey to head south or else to wherever it is that they had family members.

In the midst of the fear of the worst and the time of uncertainty, most of the folks didn't even have a clue where they were going to call home for the next while. And I know first-hand. I was sitting at that BDI gym and having conversations with a lot of the people that were travelling from Hall Lake or even from La Ronge because they have to travel through that because of the road closures.

Deputy Speaker, northerners look out for northerners. And you know, for a lot of people in here, it doesn't matter if it was on this side or on the other side, you'd see first-hand that the northerners, northern people are good people. They really do care about everybody in this province, Deputy Speaker.

Now because of that, my community opened up their doors for a short-term-basis place for evacuees to bring their families to safety from Hall Lake and La Ronge or the Cumberland constituency, you know, or else they were looking to get a place in the big city where . . . A lot of people from the North, and especially our Elders, have never been to the big city centres, and it was a difficult time for everybody.

Now this was not the fault of any particular workers or volunteers. This was a prime example, Deputy Speaker, as to what happens when you don't have a plan. This is what happens. And there was not a plan in place by this government. There was

not a plan in place, and this is why we had had people in scramble mode.

When our northwestern communities opened their doors to neighbours and residents, I witnessed a lot of inspiring things. You know, although we had so many that were coming through, we had people that were donating food and clothes and all of these things. Because a lot of times when people are evacuated, they're given 20 minutes to grab what is important and have to leave — what they feel that they would need to head south. So we'd had a lot of people from throughout the province make deliveries to the North to be able to ensure that they'd had everything that they needed.

I was also encouraged to see that the people from La Loche were driving loads of clothes and different things to people even in the South, that ended up being placed in the South, to see that they were helping, or people at Pinehouse school that drove down to Beauval to volunteer to cook meals. And you know, the amount of leadership that the people had shown during that time was remarkable.

It was the words of one of the many volunteers in . . . [inaudible] . . . centre here in Beauval that caught my attention, Deputy Speaker. While decompressing from a busy day — because it was a busy summer — you know, she said to me in secret, "If we had to be evacuated here in Beauval, I hope that we'd be taken care of just like this."

You know, and it's unfortunate that people had made their way to the South, Deputy Speaker, and they weren't getting the service or the resources that they need, right when they were evacuated into those city centres.

One by one, communities would call for mandatory evacuations. Now this is something that we seen more and more of over the past few years, and this is why I say that, you know, it's important to be able to have a plan in place. Because it's inevitable that we're going to be going through a wildfire season. We knew that we were going to be going through a . . . We were already in a three-year drought. So when, you know, we'd asked in the spring sitting what the plan was, there wasn't anything there.

Now I want to also talk about the ways that the federal government could have been used, Deputy Speaker, because I'm all about solutions. Now we had asked a few times, both the MLA from Cumberland and myself, and our leader and this caucus, to bring in the federal government and the resources that we needed to be able to help these individuals. And you know, as my colleague the MLA from Cumberland said that the Premier had made the . . . Like what is it that they would have done?

For a lot of people that know the northern riding, they know that there's only one road in and there's only one road out. Those roads were blocked by this fire situation, Deputy Speaker. And so we couldn't get any supplies in or out of the far North, for one thing, when La Ronge was on evacuation. The federal government could have been used to take up supplies and food, you know, milk, Pampers for the babies, and everybody that was up there. The federal government could have been used when English River-Patuanak road was blocked. But it was our people that came together and got stuff for them and drove actually, or went by boat across the lake, into Patuanak, and delivered

supplies that they needed there.

So it was a crazy wildfire season and we all know that. These were experiences felt by all northerners, Deputy Speaker. There's no excuse. And I remember my colleague, my little brother from Cumberland, the little MLA here, questions the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety whether the government was prepared. And like I said before, there was no plan.

And when I say I'm all about solutions, Deputy Speaker, this is going to give us the opportunity now to . . . You know, moving forward there's got to be a plan in place because we know for sure that it's inevitable that we're going to be going through another wildfire season. Now's the opportunity to start working towards having an actual plan in place. This is the time to be able to do that.

We've had numerous opportunities, and there was a lot of times where, you know, we presented solutions for a lot of these different things that were going on in our province. But you know, sometimes the government will make a little amendment and call it their own. Sometimes those things happen here, I guess, because I've seen that twice now. This is the second time that I get the opportunity to respond to the Throne Speech, and to me it doesn't seem like anything has changed from the first one that I was here seeing.

I was taught, as a lot of people know here, I was taught to be able to . . . If you were going to be an *oskâpêw*, which is a servant, we were taught to do that with integrity, to practise humility, to put ourselves in the places of people that would be struggling, to do it honestly and with respect.

One of the things that I want to say, and I'm always one to show respect when respect is given, and I want to acknowledge one person. Because there was one person that reached out to me, when we were going through these things, from this government. I want to acknowledge the MLA from Saskatoon Willowgrove. He gave me a call, and you know, all politics aside, he just asked to see how we were doing up there. And so with that, out of respect, I just want to say thank you to that individual.

Now seeing that with the Throne Speech, Deputy Speaker, and like I said, I haven't seen any major changes. We're still in crisis when it comes to the cost of living. We're still in crisis when it comes homelessness, still in crisis when it comes to health care, with addictions. I didn't see anything where there's actually a plan in place to tackle those either.

One of the things I was hoping, and I'm hoping that this is going to come soon, is that . . . We have a lot of Elders in the North, but we don't have a long-term care facility for them. We have bigger populations in our reserves throughout the North, or through the communities, than some of the population for the communities in the South. But our Elders are the ones that are filling the facilities down here. And it makes no sense to me, Deputy Speaker, that our Elders have to be placed in homes all over the South, which makes it really difficult for families to be able to visit with them. And a lot of times the next time that we bring them home is when it's time to bury them.

I was hoping that there was going to be some commitment to the roads in the North as well, Deputy Speaker, but I didn't hear

anything about that either. Because our roads in some of the places . . . We have a place like English River. The lifespan for that road was 20 years and that was put down in the early '70s, and they're driving on the base of it right now.

And in cases of an emergency, our ambulances then have to drive on those roads to get them to a hospital which is in the South, most of the times, that are able to treat them. Still in 2025, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we don't even have cell service in those cases of emergency throughout the North, throughout the Northwest. And so I was hoping that, you know, there was the possibility that something like that would have been mentioned.

Now when I say about solutions and I talk about respect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had had chiefs here during that Throne Speech that were sitting on the floor of this Assembly. And the only thing that was mentioned in there when it came to our Indigenous community was the homelessness in this province, which seemed very disrespectful to me and to the people that I represent.

[16:30]

So there's still a lot of learning that needs to be done by this government and the people, that we need to make sure, Deputy Speaker, that we serve everybody in this province with equality.

We have a beautiful province. We have good people in this province. And I'd recommend that we do this, again with the teaching that was taught to me at a young age is to practise, you know, serving this province with the teaching of humility. So that way we could see first-hand what it is that our people are battling with.

So with the solutions, Deputy Speaker, again I just want to say that there's still a lot of work that needs to be done. There has to be a plan in place in order for us to fix a lot of things that are going on in our province. Wildfire season is going to come up again fast. There has to be a plan in place. And you know, there's a lot of opportunity where we have, as MLAs, as representatives of this province, to have a united front. I've seen that many times. But making small amendments just to play political games is just not going to fit for me, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with that, I'm not going to support the Throne Speech. I'll support the amendments that were made by my colleague, my little brother, the MLA from Cumberland. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Kevin Kasun: — Thank you, Deputy Speaker. As is my tradition and as an act of reconciliation, let me first begin by acknowledging the constituency I represent, Prince Albert Carlton, and its location on Treaty 6 territory. And today I speak on Treaty 4 territory — both territories the homeland of the Métis people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, last fall we said that this is a new beginning. And what an appropriate title for the start of the thirtieth Legislative Assembly. And with everything that has happened since, we can now put forth our commitment to a strong, safe,

and a secure Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan's economy is strong, our communities are safe, and our future is secure. And our government is working hard to keep that momentum going, both in the city of Prince Albert and across this great province.

Today Saskatchewan is leading the nation in financial stability, holding the highest overall credit rating amongst the provinces. We are also seeing continued record job growth and low unemployment, proving again that Saskatchewan is the best place to live, work, and raise a family in Canada. That strength is making a real difference. Before I talk more about our great province, let me talk about the constituency that I represent, Prince Albert Carlton in the city of Prince Albert, and how they're affected.

Since 2007 revenue sharing for my city has more than tripled, from nearly 3 million to over 9.4 million today. That's an increase of almost 215 per cent. That gives us more resources to invest in local priorities, things that matter most to Prince Albert residents, including the new lakeland co-op leisure centre. This is the largest recreational infrastructure project in our city's history and will provide many activities for residents and visitors. Education continues to be one of our top priorities.

This year the Prince Albert Catholic School Division is receiving 36 million, including 1 million for maintenance. The Saskatchewan Rivers School Division will receive almost 109 million and 3.4 million set aside for upkeep. That means safer schools, better classrooms, and more support for our students and teachers.

For French-speaking families, we're investing nearly 44 million in the francophone school division plus 4 million towards a new francophone school in Prince Albert.

While we continue to invest in our children's future, we're also making investments to ensure greater access and quality, timely health care. Construction is moving forward on the new Prince Albert Victoria Hospital. Families will soon have access to more space, more services, and shorter wait times so they can get the care they need close to home.

Public safety also remains a key focus for our government. We are investing 5.7 million into the Pine Grove Correctional Centre to improve facilities, strengthen our justice system, and keep our communities safe.

These are just a few of the many ways that we are investing in our community of Prince Albert. Across Saskatchewan our government is focused on keeping our economy strong and making sure that the benefits go back to the people of this great province. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to represent the people of Prince Albert Carlton and to be part of a government that is focused on what matters most. I'll say it again — a strong economy, safe communities, and a secure future for generations to come.

Deputy Speaker, this government truly cares about Saskatchewan and its greatest assets — its people. The children are our future and this government will be there to help them succeed at this journey of life. Over the past two years, 2 billion has been invested into community safety — more accessible court systems for municipal bylaw officers; record municipal

sharing of 362 million, an increase of 22 million; more than 284.9 million in funding for First Nations and Métis people and organizations.

I truly believe that this government has listened to the people of this province. I believe that the people of Saskatchewan have trusted this government to keep our economy strong and growing, but has also trusted us to bring in the changes that need to be brought in to bring our province to the next level.

Deputy Speaker, my desire is to stay focused on making our province, our communities a better place to live, work, and play. Those are the reasons why I put my name forward and made myself known to the people of Prince Albert Carlton to be their representative in this House.

Deputy Speaker, to keep things strong, safe, and secure we also have to keep things affordable, and Saskatchewan remains the most affordable place to live in Canada. Compared to 25 major cities across Canada, Regina is the most affordable city in which to buy a home, with Saskatoon close behind. Saskatchewan has the lowest rental rates amongst the provinces.

Although we remain the most affordable place to live, we know that Saskatchewan residents are feeling the impact of rising costs. That is why our government delivered on its promise to lower the cost of living for seniors, students, families, and homeowners. We'll keep moving on delivering the second step of our four-year plan for the largest personal income tax cut since 2008. Our tax cuts will result in over 54,000 people being removed from the tax rolls altogether and paying no provincial income tax.

To keep Saskatchewan the most affordable place to live, along with the aforementioned tax cuts, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* will also include making life more affordable for small businesses by keeping the small-business tax at 1 per cent, making life more affordable for homeowners through the home renovation tax credit, making life more affordable for persons living with a disability and their caregivers by raising the disability tax credit and the caregiver tax credit, making life more affordable for post-secondary graduates and encouraging them to stay and start their careers in Saskatchewan by raising the graduation retention program benefit, making life more affordable for young people buying their first house by raising the first-time homebuyers tax credit, making life more affordable for low-income residents by raising the low-income tax credit, making life more affordable for seniors by raising the senior supplement and the personal care home benefit.

Deputy Speaker, these are not just one-time measures. These are ongoing government measures that will ensure Saskatchewan continues to be the most affordable place to live in Canada.

Deputy Speaker, education is a huge priority for our government. We are putting students first by focusing on improving kindergarten to grade 3 outcomes. Having students read at the appropriate grade level is one of the most important measures to guarantee future academic success. Students who learn to read by grade 3 read to learn for the rest of their lives.

Deputy Speaker, in response to the Throne Speech which was introduced last week, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation president said in a press release, and I quote, "I have had positive

conversations with Minister Hindley centred on working together to address the challenges students and teachers face. We support this new direction." Further in the release she said, "Teachers remain committed to working with the Ministry of Education and sector partners to create the future we all want and need."

This government is putting students first by funding 500 additional teachers to ensure classrooms are manageable and that students are given the attention that they need to succeed. This year our government signed a historic teachers' collective bargaining agreement which will see 131 million going to address student enrolment and classroom complexity. Deputy Speaker, funding for teachers, increasing capacity and learning spaces, and meeting the needs of students where they're at will give our students their best start.

Deputy Speaker, safety is a huge part of this government. Everyone in Saskatchewan deserves to feel safe and secure in their homes and their communities. Our government will continue its work with the RCMP, the new Saskatchewan marshals service, and all of our great municipal police forces to track down, arrest, and prosecute the criminals who threaten our communities. We are committed to funding 180 new RCMP officers; 14 new safer communities and neighbourhood, or SCAN, personnel; 70 new officers in Saskatchewan marshals service; and 100 additional municipal police officers.

Deputy Speaker, these officers have more tools than ever before to keep our communities and families safe. An example of that is the new safe public spaces Act and amendments to *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act*, and *The Trespass to Property Act*. Mr. Speaker, these tools will help law enforcement and communities deal with some of the root causes to bring that harm out of our communities.

Deputy Speaker, our health care is ensuring that everyone has access to the care they need. Health care is changing, not just here in Saskatchewan, but the world. It's changing in how we access the resources we need. And in those changes our province is facing challenges with recruitment and retention of health care professionals but, Mr. Speaker, we are making progress. Since the health care human resources action plan was introduced, there are 346 more doctors and 2,083 more nurses in Saskatchewan. Are we there yet? Well it's a start in the right direction.

The Saskatchewan HealthCare Recruitment Agency is actively recruiting health care professionals in the United States and other countries, highlighting the benefits of practising in Saskatchewan — benefits like competitive compensation, supportive physician networks, and numerous opportunities for career growth, and of course a lower cost of living. This government is putting patients first. We're working to ensure that everyone in Saskatchewan has access to a primary health care provider by 2028.

Deputy Speaker, I am reminded of our motto, "from many peoples, strength." Saskatchewan's motto is a reminder that our province is made up of people from a variety of backgrounds from countries around the world. All peoples bring their diversity and unique cultures and interests which make our province great. That is why in this coming session we'll introduce the from many peoples, strength Act. This Act will allow for permanent recognition of those special days, weeks, and months requested by various groups. We are grateful for all those who've come and

choose to call Saskatchewan their home.

Mr. Speaker, a year ago tomorrow, October 28th, 2024, the people of this province made a choice. They made a choice to choose once again hope over fear. They made a choice to keep going in a direction of growth. They made a choice to keep our economy strong. They put their trust in a government that doesn't change its mind and stays the course, but knew this government will keep our province going in the right direction.

And I thank you for my constituency for choosing me, but I thank all the other constituencies that made the same choice of hope over fear. That hope is what allowed this province to have the economy we have and the excitement that we are the best place to play, live, and raise a family in Canada.

You know what majority didn't vote for? They didn't vote for the lost and reckless NDP; an NDP that just recently held their party convention; an NDP that brought forward resolutions that will harm Saskatchewan, ruin our economy, and most importantly jobs and future job growth.

[16:45]

Just a few examples of the topics discussed on their convention floor.

Be it resolved that the NDP will immediately repeal *The Saskatchewan First Act*. Mr. Speaker, this is an Act that protects and supports using Saskatchewan people and their strength.

Be it resolved that the NDP stands opposed to the construction of a small nuclear reactor in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the SMRs [small modular reactor] will allow us to use our own natural resources to power our future and meet the coming electrical demands of our growing province.

Be it resolved that the NDP will undertake a comprehensive review of the potash royalty and taxation regime. Be it resolved the NDP will take ownership of public, socialized oil and gas sector.

Mr. Speaker, those last two resolutions are the ones that hit the most. They suggest the old days of governments stopping investment into our province and destroying the public investment into our growing economy.

Mr. Speaker, we can't go backwards. We can't go back to the days of being a have-not province. Mr. Speaker, entrepreneurs and businesses know what Saskatchewan has to offer. A quote from Murad Al-Katib, president and CEO of AGT Foods, said in an AGT Foods video, and I quote:

Saskatchewan is an entrepreneurial ecosystem. It's one that's growing; it's vibrant. We've got all the elements of success here. We've got the raw material, government policy, a work ethic, and an entrepreneurial culture, an ability to commercialize and reach world markets. Saskatchewan is the perfect landscape in which to start and grow your business.

And he stands behind what he said, with AGT Foods' newly built logistics and processing hub in Delisle.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be amiss if I didn't thank our Premier and the ministers that are directly involved with this ever-changing world. I want to thank their families as well as all the MLA families for the sacrifices that they have made. I am thankful to the opportunity to speak here today. God bless Prince Albert and this House. God bless Saskatchewan, and God bless Canada. And God save the King.

Mr. Speaker, in closing let me repeat what others have said in that I'll be supporting the motion put forward by the member from Weyburn-Bengough and seconded by the member from Carrot River Valley. I will not be supporting the opposition's amendment.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Southeast.

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, I am incredibly fortunate to have people in my life that believe in me, keep me grounded, and remind me why this work matters. Before I share my response to the Throne Speech, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to those who support me every single day.

I am privileged to have the most supportive family. And I'm so thankful for my grandparents; my parents; my siblings and my friends; for my best friend Meghan, her kiddos; and for my friends across the country who are always available when I need them and see me when I visit. I would not be able to fulfill my duties as an MLA without their constant love and support.

I also want to thank my constituency assistant Sarah, as well as Sebastian and Matthew who have worked in my office, and my colleagues and caucus staff. Their dedication and work behind the scenes ensures that we are able to serve the people of Saskatchewan to the very best of our abilities.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, most of all I want to thank the people of Saskatoon Southeast for the trust they have placed in me. It is the greatest honour of my life to represent them in this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, over the summer I spent time on the doorstep in Saskatoon Southeast, listening, learning, and sharing the work that we've been doing. Over the course of a few months we canvassed the entire constituency and spoke to thousands of people.

Mr. Speaker, what I heard was clear. After 18 years, people are frustrated with this Sask Party government's neglect of social programs, their lack of support to educators, and their inability to address the health care crisis. Frankly I am disappointed in this government's failure to listen to the public, hear from community leaders, and support all workers and all families. These are the very people they are elected to serve.

Mr. Speaker, affordability is top of mind for families in Saskatoon Southeast. Despite this government's claims that Saskatchewan is the most affordable place to live, the reality is very different. Saskatchewan people are the most financially stressed in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke to seniors, young people, and families that

are concerned about rent and the cost of living. I heard from an elderly couple that had to move because their rent had increased by \$200 a month that year. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I spoke with students that were paying double the tuition that I paid less than a decade ago. And I heard from new mothers that aren't sure if they will return to work or have to leave the workforce because they won't be able to afford child care. These are not isolated stories.

People are worried about their future, about how this government is handling our relationships with trade partners, about tariffs, about the absence of a real economic plan. They see no clarity, no contingency, and no direction. People aren't just worried; people are scared.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, affordability isn't the only thing that's keeping people up at night. It's also the fear that if they or a loved one fall ill, they might not get the care they need. I've heard horror stories from people that visited emergency rooms in Saskatoon. They spent hours in hospital beds in hallways at Royal University Hospital. They were already anxious about their health, only to receive care with no privacy. It's undignified and unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, people feel helpless. They are worried and fearful about if a loved one were to fall ill, and even more worried if that were to happen in rural Saskatchewan and they were met with an emergency room closure.

Deputy Speaker, just last week, 450 health care workers from Royal University Hospital wrote to this government about deplorable working conditions, and yet not a single mention of that letter or of their concerns appeared in the Throne Speech. Saskatchewan people aren't asking for miracles. They're asking for leadership, for action.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people in Saskatoon Southeast are deeply concerned about the state of our education system. Schools are already over capacity, teachers are overworked, and children who need extra support aren't getting it. Parents are worried about the quality of their children's education. And they should be because when you underfund classrooms, you're not just failing teachers, you're failing children, and you're failing the future of the province.

One message came through over and over again. People know that strong social programs are the foundation of a healthy province and a healthy society. Investments in transitional housing, income assistance, mental health supports, and community-based organizations aren't luxuries. They are necessities.

I've spent the past year visiting CBOs across Saskatchewan, in Yorkton, Swift Current, Maple Creek, Regina, Saskatoon, La Ronge, Prince Albert, Gull Lake, and so many other communities. Everywhere I go I hear the same thing. Community-based organizations are being asked to do more with less. These organizations are performing work that should be the responsibility of the government, yet they aren't receiving adequate funding. Some aren't getting funding at all.

This government claims to care about ending interpersonal violence, but Saskatchewan continues to have the highest rates

of gender-based violence, more than double the national average.

Deputy Speaker, I think it's important to recognize all forms of interpersonal violence. However, expanding the definition does nothing to stop it. What does? Education, prevention, support.

Deputy Speaker, it is often children and young people who are experiencing cyber harassment, cyberstalking, and violence. Yet this government introduced a bill that prevents young people from being educated on signs, symptoms, and resources available to victims of IPV [intimate partner violence].

Bill 137 prevents qualified third-party educators from teaching students about IPV, gender-based violence, sexual violence, online harassment, and cyberstalking. Instead, already overworked teachers, some of whom have their own trauma, are expected to take on this vital work, or parents are told to educate their children. But what happens when the abuser is the parent? Plain and simple, Mr. Speaker, this government must repeal Bill 137 and allow experts back into schools to protect children.

Deputy Speaker, earlier today we were joined by members of SARC, people who support those with disabilities by providing housing, day programs, and essential services. They are exhausted. They are underfunded, and they are losing hope that this government will ever listen.

Deputy Speaker, this Throne Speech is titled, "Strong, Safe, Secure." It claims to make life more affordable for everyone, but it fails families caring for loved ones. It fails children with complex needs. It fails workers in group homes, like those who joined us today, and it fails people with disabilities.

This government is setting people up to fail. How can we call Saskatchewan stronger when people with disabilities are being penalized for working a few hours a week, when someone's losing benefits for receiving a birthday gift, when a person is taught to save responsibly and then loses their SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] support because they opened a tax-free savings account?

Deputy Speaker, schools are being forced to turn children away because they lack the resources to support them. Families are exhausted. Wait-lists are endless. And the only help available is through underfunded community-based organizations that offer a fraction of the support that these children need.

Deputy Speaker, I've spoken to countless parents of children with disabilities. Their stories are heartbreaking. They wait months for testing, only to receive the news that they feared. Their child will live with lifelong challenges. And instead of finding a system ready to help, they find closed doors, confusion, and endless paperwork that leads nowhere.

One mother told me about her son. Before he was born, she imagined his future — university, a career, a family. After his diagnosis, her vision changed. Now she wonders, who will care for him when I am no longer here?

These families aren't looking for sympathy. They're looking for support — real, tangible, meaningful support. But instead they are left to navigate an impossible system. A tax cut won't pay for therapy, it won't replace lost income, and it won't set their

children up for success.

This government talks about safety, but what about the safety of somebody cared for by an overworked, underpaid support worker? What about the safety of a person with a disability who is hospitalized and met by staff that are untrained in their care needs? What about the safety of someone who loses their housing because their benefits weren't properly managed? This government has created a houselessness crisis, and instead of preventative action, they simply react to their own mistakes.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — It being 5 o'clock, this Assembly now stands recessed until 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

CORRIGENDUM

On page 1079 of *Hansard* No. 2A, Thursday, October 23, 2025, the beginning of MLA McBean's remarks should read:

Don McBean: — You make me go after you?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The online transcript for October 23, 2025 has been corrected.

We apologize for the error.

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

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
Minister of Education

Hon. Terry Jenson
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Warren Kaeding
Minister of Trade and Export Development
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Travis Keisig
Minister of Environment

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Highways
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement
Minister Responsible for the
Global Transportation Hub Authority

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
Deputy Premier
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