



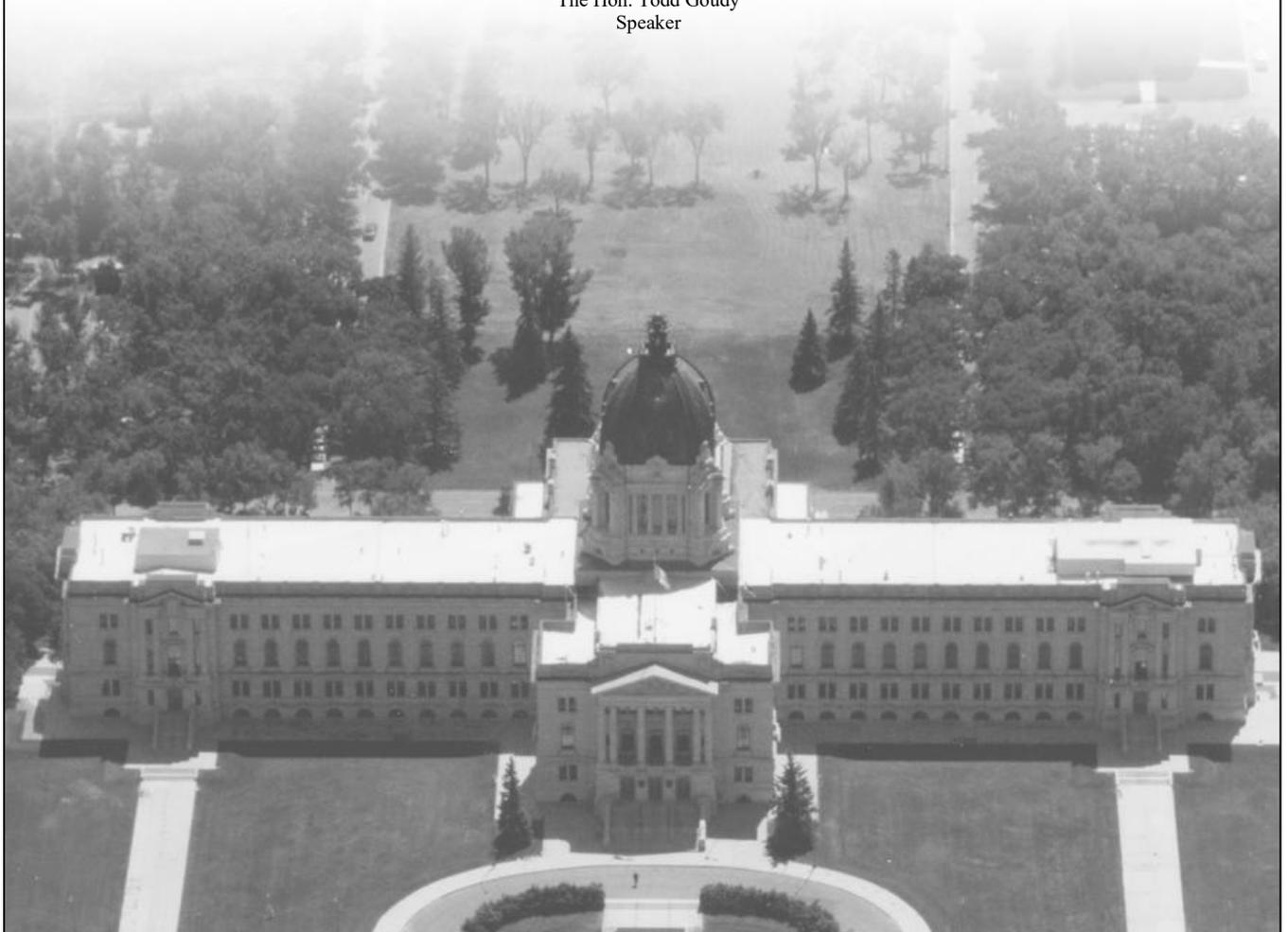
SECOND SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

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

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Laliberte , Leroy — Athabasca (NDP)	

Standings

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

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Government House Whip.

Brad Crassweller: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my distinct honour and privilege to introduce to you a number of guests seated in the west gallery. And today we have a number of students from Edenwold Elementary School. We have 15 students from kindergarten to grade 3, and we also have 14 grade 4 to grade 6 students. And so we want to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

They're also accompanied today by their teachers, Laurie Colhoun, Ang Cockle, Mackenzie Stamm, Michael Dumais, Robin Mathewson, and of course the bus driver, Rod Beckett. We greatly appreciate all of you for coming here today.

We had a great time. We had some ice cream. Just got to make sure — yeah, we talked about that — make sure we keep the member from Lumsden-Morse happy. But we enjoyed some ice cream and some great questions. And I just ask all members to help me welcoming these young people to their Legislative Assembly from Edenwold Elementary.

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, it's my honour to introduce a number of SEIU-West [Service Employees International Union-West] members in your gallery today.

I'm pleased to welcome Jason Monteith, the vice-president of SEIU-West. He is joined by Angie Kells, who is a digital organizer with SEIU-West. And they're also joined by Angela Caragata, who works as a CCA [continuing care assistant], and as well, the unit Chair at Pioneer Lodge where she works. And I've been told this is Angela's first time in the Legislative Assembly, so we invited her to see the proceedings, but SEIU-West members and their leadership are no strangers to this Assembly.

Of course we were able to sit down, myself and the shadow minister of Finance, ahead of the budget, as we all know that health care workers have gone nearly four years without a raise, in some cases three years without collective bargaining agreements. So we had a really good conversation about the needs of their workers ahead of the federal budget . . . or sorry, our provincial budget, Mr. Speaker. I'm thinking on another level.

But you know that SEIU-West represents health care workers, education workers, CBO [community-based organizations] workers, so many workers in this province. They do such a fantastic job. I'd like to ask all members to help me welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming the members from SEIU-West to their Legislative Assembly. It's always a pleasure to have them in the legislature.

I had a chance to meet with Lisa Zunti and others shortly after my appointment as Minister of Labour, and also an opportunity to welcome any members when we did the opening of the new entrance at St. Paul's Hospital. They represent many health care workers around the province, and I want to thank them for the work that they do and look forward to working with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I want to introduce some honoured guests that are with us here today on the floor of the legislature, seated in your gallery, and as well seated in the west gallery here today. These are hon. members who served this Assembly and their communities and worked to make this province a better place. And each had really awesome contributions to their communities and to this province.

I'll start up in the west gallery. I want to welcome Alex Taylor, who served as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], who's clergy as well, was born in Glasgow, Scotland. A real awesome guy. He's here today, they're all here today for the CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] gathering that's here today. He was elected in Kindersley, Mr. Speaker.

Seated beside him, or just over from him, is Ron Wormsbecker from Weyburn, a lawyer and a leader and the MLA from Weyburn. And it's a pleasure to have him here as well.

Seated in your gallery is no stranger to this Assembly. He used to be seated in your Chair, Mr. Speaker, served as the Speaker of this Assembly and served as the MLA for Biggar for many years in a real honourable way as well. And continues to give back to democracy and to this province in meaningful ways as well, Mr. Speaker.

And seated behind me are two real awesome guys, one that I got to serve with for quite a few years. They call him the Velvet Revolver. This guy had a heart of gold. He was tough as nails; a lot of people didn't always see that. But David Forbes served as an MLA. He was a minister. He's a bird lover. He's a nature guy. He was a teacher. It's real nice to have you here, David, on the floor of your Assembly.

And then there's a hockey player who is seated beside him by the name of Maynard Sonntag. A young guy, comes by way of Meadow Lake. Served as an MLA and a minister, of course. He had worked through the credit union movement. He had worked, after his service in here as an MLA and a minister, leading a housing co-operative corporation within the community, and as a realtor as well. And he's still looking like he's in fighting form. He just got off the ice this morning, Mr. Speaker. He was over at

the Co-operators this morning playing some hockey. It's a pleasure to have you here as well, Maynard.

I ask all members to join with me in welcoming these individuals, these leaders to our province and to their respective communities, back to their legislature.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan].

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my friend opposite in welcoming all of the former members here to the Assembly today. I know CPA is on, and I want to welcome all of them.

I want to specifically welcome though, two who were the last two introduced by that member, but two members who really did live out the title of hon. members.

And I got to serve with David Forbes for a number of years across the floor. David popularized the phrase "cold comfort," I would note for the record. Used that like no one else. But also David had served on the Board of Internal Economy for many, many years and had been the opposition caucus Chair. And we worked together on many, many different things. So welcome to David.

And I want to really sincerely welcome Maynard Sonntag to the Assembly as well, a gentleman who did diligent and integrity service for the people of Meadow Lake for many, many years. We've actually only had three MLAs for Meadow Lake in about the last 50 years, if you can believe that, and I think Maynard and I take up about 40 of those years.

So I want to really sincerely welcome Maynard. We've become friends over the years. And I just say thanks for your service, Maynard, and thanks, David, for your service as well.

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

Aleana Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and, to and through you, welcome to this Assembly Michael Stevenson, a fourth-year student of economics at the U of R [University of Regina], also currently serving as the president of RWDSU [Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union] 539 representing Sherwood Co-op employees.

I've gotten to know Michael over the past couple years through his keen interest in politics. He's helped me out an astonishing amount through volunteering at my annual fundraisers and occasionally has hit the doors with me in the great state of Regina South Albert to talk to some of the best constituents in the province of Saskatchewan.

Michael is, as I said, a student at the U of R. When he's not, you know, up to his eyeballs in homework in his fourth year, he's an avid basketball player, routinely practising at his local YWCA. And he's just one of those wonderful young people, Mr. Speaker, with a deep interest in what happens in and outside of this place and believes fundamentally in the difference that politics can make in improving this province and the lives of those who live here.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Michael to this, his legislature, for his first question period.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Community Safety.

Hon. Michael Weger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to rise and just welcome Ron Wormsbecker back to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Ron Wormsbecker, not only a resident of Weyburn, but he was also my principal when I was a young articling student at what was then Nimegeers, Schuck, Wormsbecker & Bobbitt law firm. And so Mr. Wormsbecker passed on a lot of knowledge to me over the years, and I'm so grateful for the relationship we've had and everything he taught me. And I just thank you, Ron, and welcome you back to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet today to join with the member from White City-Qu'Appelle in welcoming the group from Edenwold School.

But I want to say a special shout-out to Ms. Mackenzie Stamm for all of the work that she puts into her job every single day. She is someone who has played a huge part in my family's story as a teacher at Edenwold School. And I know she just puts everything into it. It's a small school. Two classrooms in this school: typically a kindergarten to grade 2 or grade 3, and then a grade 4 to 6 classroom.

And so to the rest of the staff, thank you for what you do on a day-to-day basis. It is not an easy task, running a school of that size with so few staff. You are asked to do a lot of things and make a lot of things work for those students, and I know the great job that goes on in that school. But I just wanted to say thanks to Ms. Stamm for all she's done for my family.

So with that, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Ms. Stamm to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Carla Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the members who have spoken already in welcoming all of the guests that have joined us here today, especially the former legislators who have joined us: former Speaker Weekes; both Alex and Ruth Taylor, who've joined us in the east gallery. Former MLA Ron Wormsbecker, wonderful to see you here, as well as Maynard Sonntag and former colleague David Forbes. It's really delightful to get the chance to see you here today.

I'm also going to briefly introduce a couple of folks who have surprised me here in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. No strangers, but I'm going to give them a brief introduction: my mom, Judy; and my oldest daughter, Hannah, who've joined us here today. I wasn't sure . . . I thought last I heard Mom might be stuck in Carnduff last night. They had a southern final, the U15 C south final, that went to game 3 and was closed by a heck of a slapshot from almost centre ice actually. So they braved the highways

obviously and got back home.

And my daughter Hannah, who we are thrilled has started her career here in Regina. It's great to have her at home and have her over for Sunday suppers, Mr. Speaker.

I'll just note, I'm not sure what all is on Mom's list these days, but she is working towards the Lang 120th homecoming. I'm sure that they're busy getting the ball diamonds ready and all sorts of wonderful things like that. I invite Ruth and Alex as well, who were our ministers in Lang, to check that event out, Mr. Speaker. It'll be a great time.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join all of the members and welcome these guests to this, their Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — And I would like to also comment on the past members that are here with us today. We're honoured to have you here. And you know, Commonwealth Day, it's a big deal and making a sacrifice to come back to spend some time with us. We're going to have the Lieutenant Governor come, and we're going to have some time discussing a lot of the history in this place. And I appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedules to come back and join with us.

You know what it's like to sit in these seats and the sacrifice that's made by each one of these members, so thank you for joining us today and celebrating Commonwealth Day together with us. So welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

And we'll move on to presenting petitions.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

[13:45]

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that current SAID rates mean that individuals who rely on the program live in what is referred to as deep poverty, defined as less than 75 per cent of the poverty line; that the Saskatchewan government engages in clawback policies that have been found to be discriminatory and further disadvantage people living with disabilities; that Saskatchewan people with disabilities are struggling to make ends meet under historical inflationary pressures.

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 immediately increase SAID rates to account for inflation and cost of living; respect the constitutional rights of persons with disabilities in Saskatchewan by halting discriminatory practices and aligning policies with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; index the SAID basic amount to inflation going forward;

and provide targeted relief to those in deepest poverty, such as individuals paying market rent.

The undersigned residents reside in Moose Jaw. I do so present.

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

Nicole Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to reverse the ban on third-party educators from publicly funded schools.

Those who've signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: that on August 22nd, 2023 the Saskatchewan government banned all third-party educators from publicly funded schools. Those educators included organizations like the Regina Sexual Assault Centre, the North East Outreach and Support Services, Partners Family Services, and the Prince Albert Sexual Assault Centre, along with many others. The topics that these organizations teach include consent, healthy relationships, and child sexual abuse prevention.

Mr. Speaker, with Saskatchewan's worst-in-the-nation rates in intimate partner violence and sexual abuse, the government should be doing everything possible to reduce these rates, including prevention education. And the decision to ban these educators would make Saskatchewan's rates of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and sexual abuse worse, not better.

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Those who signed this petition today come from Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Noor Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that Saskatchewan tenants are currently experiencing the highest level of rent increases in the country; that rent in Saskatchewan has risen by 4 per cent in the last year alone, far outpacing wage growth and putting more pressure on families, seniors, students, and low-income residents; that without rent control landlords can implement unchecked rent hikes, making housing increasingly unaffordable and unstable; that with rent control residents can budget more effectively, potentially putting them in a position to save for a down payment on their first home; that other provinces such as British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island have already implemented rent control measures to protect tenants and maintain housing affordability.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to call on the Government of Saskatchewan to adopt fair and effective

rent control legislations that limit annual rent increases.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Mois de la Francophonie Month of La Francophonie

Jacqueline Roy: — Monsieur le Président, en ce Mois de la Francophonie, il y a une prise de conscience grandissante de l'importance de protéger et de renforcer notre belle communauté fransaskoise.

Malgré que c'est un pas dans la bonne direction, il reste énormément de travail à faire. Nous devons sécuriser des fonds fédéraux destinés à la santé, à l'éducation, à la culture, aux garderies, à la justice, au postsecondaire. Nous ne pouvons pas laisser des millions et des millions de dollars du gouvernement fédéral sur la table alors que des communautés peinent à accéder à des services de qualité en français.

Nos écoles francophones sont devant les tribunaux encore une fois. Nos toits de nos écoles s'effondrent littéralement. Nos enfants et nos familles méritent mieux.

Partout dans nos plus petites villes et municipalités, les gens commencent à prendre la parole. Ils demandent fièrement d'être reconnus. Et moi je dis, « bravo, continuez ». Nous avons la responsabilité ici dans la Chambre de les écouter.

Au fond on sait très bien-là que le Mois de la Francophonie ce n'est pas seulement pour célébrer; c'est un appel à avancer. J'espère que mes collègues des deux côtés de la Chambre vont faire passer la loi 607, et cela sans délai, s'ils comprennent l'ampleur de la situation. Merci.

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, in this Month of La Francophonie, there is a growing awareness of the importance of protecting and reinforcing our beautiful Fransaskois community.

Although this is a step in the right direction, there is an enormous amount of work still to be done. We must secure federal funding for health, education, culture, daycares, justice, post-secondary education. We cannot leave millions and millions of federal government dollars on the table while communities are struggling to access quality services in French.

Our francophone schools are once again before the courts. Our schools' roofs are literally collapsing. Our children and our families deserve better.

Everywhere in our smallest cities and municipalities people are starting to speak out. They are proudly demanding to be recognized. And I say, "Bravo, keep going." We have the responsibility here in this Chamber to listen to them.

Deep down we know very well that the Month of La Francophonie is not only for celebrating; it is a call to move

forward. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the Chamber will help pass Bill 607, and do so without delay, if they understand the magnitude of the situation. Thank you.]

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

Remembering John Coffin

Brad Crassweller: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the life and legacy of John Coffin, a deeply respected member of Saskatchewan's disability services community. John passed away on January 20th, 2026 with his wife, Joanne, and daughter Caitlin by his side.

John dedicated his career to strengthening supports for persons with disabilities and to advancing inclusive, person-centred services across our province. From his work with Inclusion Saskatchewan and the Regina Association for Community Living to his service on numerous committees, John was a strong advocate for people with intellectual disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, in 2016 John received the Community Award from Inclusion Regina and the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service for his role on the Ministry of Social Services' self-directed funding committee. These prestigious and worthy honours reflect John's professionalism and his commitment to helping empower individuals and families with greater choice, independence, and dignity.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, John will be remembered for his kindness, his dedication, and his unwavering belief in the potential of every person. His work has left a meaningful legacy that continues to shape disability services in our province to this day.

On behalf of this Assembly I extend my sincere condolences to John's entire family, especially his wife, Joanne, and daughter Caitlin; his many friends and colleagues; all of those whose lives he touched. His contributions will not be forgotten. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Harbour Landing Village Holds Fifth Annual Country Jamboree

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On August 27th I was honoured to be invited to the fifth annual Harbour Landing Village Country Jamboree. This was a fantastic event that brought together residents, families, and neighbours across Harbour Landing.

For the country jamboree they transformed the grounds around Harbour Landing Village into a country fairground, inspired by events like Country Thunder and Canadian Western Agribition. They had live music, barbeque, a petting zoo, horse-drawn carriage rides, mechanical bull rides, and bouncy castles. There was certainly something for everyone to enjoy.

Harbour Landing Village, located in Regina Pasqua, is a senior living community with a child care centre. What makes them

stand out is their commitment to bringing people together through their community events. In addition to the country jamboree Harbour Landing Village also hosts an annual Cultural Mosaic Expo, which allows residents to get to sample the many different cultures without having to leave their homes.

I ask that all members of this Legislative Assembly join me in congratulating CEO [chief executive officer] Janson Anderson and the entire Harbour Landing Village team for a successful country jamboree. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Think Indigenous International Education Conference

Kevin Weedmark: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week I had the privilege of attending the Think Indigenous conference here in Regina. It was an inspiring event that brought together more than 1,200 educators, leaders, and community members from across North America to focus on advancing Indigenous education.

I was pleased to attend the conference at the invitation of Chief Evan Taypotat of Kahkewistahaw First Nation, which hosted the event. I want to thank Chief Taypotat, Dr. Chris Scribe, and everyone involved in organizing the conference for their leadership and for creating such an impactful gathering.

As Chief Taypotat put it in his opening remarks, the future is built on what we choose to invest in today. This gathering is an investment into our children, our youth, and future generations, who will one day look back at what we did when we had the chance.

The event was also a celebration of Indigenous culture, incorporating the northern plains jingle dance championship. Events like this are important because they create space for learning, dialogue, and for collaboration. By bringing people together from across North America, the Think Indigenous conference helps people build stronger relationships and encourages innovative approaches to education.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Kahkewistahaw First Nation and all of the organizers for hosting such a meaningful conference. Their leadership and vision are helping move important conversations forward and making a positive difference for Indigenous education in our province and across North America. Thank you.

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

Hit TV Series Shows that Representation Matters

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In romance storytelling the first meeting between two characters is often called the meet-cute. And recently the city of Regina guest-starred as the location for one of the most talked-about meet-cutes in pop culture in the hit Canadian TV series, *Heated Rivalry*.

In the opening scene, fictional queer hockey players Ilya

Rozanov and Shane Hollander meet for the first time in Regina. It's easy to imagine the moment unfolding outside the Brandt Centre, a place synonymous with hockey and community.

What makes this story resonate isn't just the romance. It's that being queer in sport is still treated as exceptional rather than ordinary. For many 2SLGBTQ [two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning] athletes, the hyper-masculinization of rinks and locker rooms means that they remain spaces where silence feels safer than honesty, and where being out can still risk contracts, endorsement deals, or personal safety. Shane and Ilya navigate those realities through the TV series, unable to live fully as their authentic selves.

I was proud to see Saskatchewan woven into this very Canadian story. The response to *Heated Rivalry* shows how deeply representation matters. But the show also reminds us of still how far we have to go. As we embrace the craze, let's do more than celebrate fiction. Let's confront the barriers that queer athletes still face and commit to building sporting spaces where the next generation won't need a television script to imagine belonging. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Sask Rivers.

University of Saskatchewan Huskies Dominate the National Scene

Barret Kropf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations to the University of Saskatchewan Huskies. On Sunday the women's track and field team sprinted themselves to the second-place finish at the national championships in Manitoba. Anchored by the 4 x 200 metre relay, their team broke the national record with Hailee Woodhouse, Emma Egert, Selena Keyowski, and Grace Igbiki. Other gold medal national championship performances came from Nicole Ostertag in hurdles and Olamide Olaloku in triple jump.

On Saturday the men's hockey team repeated as Canada West champions as they skated away with the hardware against Mount Royal University in a sweep over their rivals in Calgary. Good luck to them next week at nationals in Halifax.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Bronze Baby is headed back to Saskatoon. For the second year in a row the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] Huskies women's basketball team has captured the national championship. They did so on the back of an undefeated regular season. And then on championship weekend they sealed the school's fourth Bronze Baby by defeating University of New Brunswick by a score of 77 to 68. Gage Grassick was named First Canadian All Star, Head Coach Lisa Thomaidis was named Coach of the Year, and Ella Murphy Wiebe was named MVP [most valuable player] of the tournament.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, Saskatchewan has what the world needs, including world-class student athletes, coaches, and staff who build cultures of excellence and championship teams that dominate the national scene. Congratulations to the Huskies on a fantastic season.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Industry Partner Receives Approval to Build Uranium Mine

Colleen Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's another great day in Saskatchewan. I am happy to inform this Chamber that just last week one of our great industry partners, NexGen Energy, has received approval from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to build the Rook I uranium mine.

This approval comes 14 business days after the final two-part commission hearing process, which was concluded February 12th, 2026. The approval of this mine will fortify Saskatchewan's uranium production to provide the world with the ever-growing demand for this essential critical mineral. We are encouraged to see the federal government grant approval in a timely manner, but this is no surprise to our government as we have been cultivating a regulatory environment in Saskatchewan to allow projects like this to prosper.

Don't just take our word for it though. The Fraser Institute, in their most recent 2025 survey, ranked Saskatchewan as the third most attractive region in the world for mining investment attractiveness.

[14:00]

It is also important to note that we are only half a point behind Ontario, in second place. With this announcement it will bring community investment, strong jobs, and further royalties to the people of Saskatchewan. These royalties will fund our schools, hospitals, and infrastructure.

Saskatchewan does have the food, fuel, and fertilizer the world needs. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

SaskPower Rates

Carla Beck: — Six times, Mr. Speaker, six times last week we asked the Premier's SaskPower minister about the \$136 million rate hike that's hitting Saskatchewan families and farms and small businesses. Specifically we asked when he knew that that rate hike was coming. Well, Mr. Speaker, he ducked and he dodged and he weaved, but we didn't get an answer.

So maybe today we can get a straight answer from the Premier. On what day did the Premier decide to impose his rate hike on the farms, families, and small businesses in Saskatchewan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, in this province we take the costs of our utilities very seriously. And that's why, through our SaskPower, SaskEnergy, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] as well as SaskTel, we have, I believe it's the second-lowest utility bundle across the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Good work certainly by all of the employees of each of those Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. And I would say some reasonable policy work as well by the heads of those agencies as

well as the Government of Saskatchewan to keep those prices low, to keep the utilities rate in this province affordable, Mr. Speaker.

And I would point out, one of the points that ensures the affordability of our utilities, in particular that of SaskPower, moving forward: today Saskatchewan is the only carbon tax-free area in the nation of Canada.

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

Carla Beck: — I'm just going to recap the timeline, and maybe people can see why I'm a bit cynical. The SaskPower board met in November of 2025. The Premier stood in this very Chamber in December, and he denied that any rate hike was even being considered. But then in January — surprise, surprise — the rate hike was announced. And by February, well that rate hike had already been applied to SaskPower bills for families, for farms, and for small businesses in this province.

Mr. Speaker, people simply can't afford this. And the Premier won't say why or when he knew that this rate hike was coming.

It's a simple question, Mr. Speaker. Why won't the Premier answer?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't know the dates that were cited exactly, Mr. Speaker, but I trust that the Leader of the Opposition is correct in all of the dates that she mentioned.

However at the point of affordability of our utilities in this province, Mr. Speaker, we in Saskatchewan — whether it be the utilities that we have, or the cost of living that we have as families across this province, or businesses and industries that are operating and employing here — we are very much feeling the inflationary pressures, Mr. Speaker, like we are seeing across Canada and many other areas of the world.

That's why we are working hard, Mr. Speaker, to keep the utility rates low in this province, working hard to deliver on our campaign commitments to ensure that Saskatchewan remains the most affordable place in the nation to live. That's the commitment we made in the last election. That's a commitment that we take very seriously and one that I would say that the Finance minister most certainly delivered on in last year's budget. And I think you will have more to see here in just a couple of weeks in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker.

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

Affordability

Carla Beck: — A \$136 million hike to power bills isn't helping. And people in this province simply can't afford more Sask Party tax hikes, rate hikes, and fee hikes. And further evidence to this is found in the latest MNP consumer debt index. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the highest rate of people who are behind on their mortgage payments. We have the highest number of people who are in mortgage arrears.

Does the Premier understand that while Saskatchewan people are working harder and harder, they're falling further and further behind because of his failure to make life more affordable in this province?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, admittedly I just said that here in Saskatchewan families are feeling the inflationary pressures like families across Canada are. However the fact is that Saskatchewan does remain the most affordable province in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker. That is a fact, Mr. Speaker, whether it's the rental rates, whether it's the utility costs that we have, or the general cost of living.

What is somewhat different in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in a world that is very, very uncertain at the moment globally is, you see Saskatchewan industries taking advantage of that uncertainty and developing the natural resources, developing the ag ingredient products that we have, and making them available to the world, Mr. Speaker.

Most recently I was in a couple of countries around the world, Mr. Speaker, and I can say this: very much do people want to do business not only with Canada, but they want to do business in Saskatchewan. That's why we're seeing investment come into this province. That's why we're seeing careers and jobs created from corner to corner in this province, Mr. Speaker.

All the while the government is going to continue to protect the ability that we have to remain the most affordable province in the nation of Canada. All the while making those investments, protecting our health care system, protecting the very communities where we live. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carla Beck: — Well, Mr. Speaker, on one hand the Premier stands up and he says he understands how hard it is for people. The very next question he stands up and tells people in this province how good they've got it. And all the while they refuse to lift a finger to offer relief to people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, in this province we also have the highest number of people who are worried about their ability to repay their debt. Still he piles on taxes and rate hikes. Food prices have gone through the roof. Still he adds tax to groceries. And rent in this province has risen for 43 straight months, Mr. Speaker — 49 per cent increase since that Premier has been in office, since he first took that office. Still they refuse to bring in rent control, and they refuse to do anything to keep those corporate landlords from buying up properties and jacking up rents in this province.

When will this Premier wake up to the reality that people in this province are facing and start to make life more affordable?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the most recent election was run largely on the affordability of our communities across the province, Mr. Speaker, where this government had put forward a suite of affordability measures, which added to the \$2 billion that we had in each and every budget. Now that number is two and a

half billion dollars a year in each and every budget for affordability measures to ensure that Saskatchewan remains the most affordable place in Canada to live.

Where do you think those affordability measures would be, Mr. Speaker, if we had included the \$3 billion that was unaccounted in the NDP [New Democratic Party] platform in that very election, Mr. Speaker? Or added to that, the \$1.1 billion that they've asked for since that election, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, time and time again we see the NDP saying one thing and a month later saying something else. And that's precisely why, Mr. Speaker, nobody in this province takes the NDP opposition seriously.

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

Provision of Health Care

Meara Conway: — Ah yes, the most affordable in Canada. I want the Premier to tell the one in three Saskatchewan kids under six living in poverty that, because something doesn't add up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the last time this Sask Party government announced a so-called patient-first health plan was in 2012 — 2009 actually, but they updated it in 2012. And at that time they promised all people will have access "to a specialist and diagnostics within a week." They promised that everyone would have access to a family doctor and access to surgery within three months, Mr. Speaker. And my favourite, they promised that people won't wait in emergency rooms.

Now 13 years later, Mr. Speaker, if you need a mammogram, you have to go to Alberta, and the number of doctors in this province is actually dropping.

Why didn't this government keep its 2012 health care promises to the people of Saskatchewan? And why should people believe that this time it's going to be any different?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government has a track record of improving health care, Mr. Speaker, right across the province, whether that be the surgical initiative many years ago to bring down surgical wait-lists . . .

Speaker Goudy: — Sorry . . . Why do I say sorry? I'm sorry for saying sorry. But enough breaking the rules. Like, let's hear the questions; let's hear the answers.

Minister.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know I was missed last week and people are happy to see me back. But, Mr. Speaker, we're excited today to talk about the patients-first plan that the Premier and I and several colleagues released this morning in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

This should be taken seriously because this is feedback coming directly from patients, Mr. Speaker. Ensuring a larger role for

nurse practitioners in our system. Ensuring that everybody has access to a primary care provider. Expanding virtual care options, Mr. Speaker, something that that member opposite actually introduced a motion last year to ban virtual care in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that side talks about ideas. This side actually comes up with ideas and executes.

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

Meara Conway: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll have more to say about that later. Interesting words from the Premier's Health minister. This morning he also said, "I want to say this very clearly to families and patients: we've heard you, and standing still is no longer an option."

Mr. Speaker, right now people are being treated in hallways, in waiting rooms, beside registration desks. Rural emergency rooms are closing without warning. Urgent care centres are struggling to maintain bank hours. And fewer and fewer people in Saskatchewan have access to primary care.

How long would the Premier's Health minister say exactly we've been standing still?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, we've been hearing from that side and those members opposite about big, bold change coming, Mr. Speaker. But then change comes, and they don't like it because it's not their idea.

But yet, Mr. Speaker, what's in the patients-first plan released today, Mr. Speaker, this is directly from providers. This is directly from patients.

I'll take nurse practitioners again, for example, Mr. Speaker. We haven't been standing still on that subject, Mr. Speaker. We've introduced the independent contract model to increase primary care access right across the province. What this plan does, Mr. Speaker, is accelerate that change, expand that opportunity for NPs [nurse practitioner] to hire additional allied professions, taking the limit off contracts, Mr. Speaker, and as well as providing a financial incentive to encourage more registered nurses to become nurse practitioners.

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

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier said "we're listening" about 20 times in this morning's press conference, but saying it doesn't make it true.

Let's keep going on this morning's announcement. The Premier called it "the start of a conversation." His own words. He's been Premier for eight years. They've been in charge of health care for 18 years, Mr. Speaker.

The minister is standing still. The Premier now wants to start a conversation. What exactly have these guys been doing for these 8 and 18 years while health care collapses around them?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Again, Mr. Speaker, we hear from the members opposite about this big, bold change coming. And then change comes that's bold, Mr. Speaker, and they don't like it. We have motions from members opposite to ban virtual care. Yet, Mr. Speaker, when we leave this building and actually talk to real Saskatchewan residents, they want more access to virtual care.

That is what is in the patients-first health care plan, Mr. Speaker. We are going to be rolling out virtual care to unattached patients, Mr. Speaker, very soon. We look forward to that because that's exactly what Saskatchewan patients are asking for. And that is what we're going to deliver on.

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

Child Care Agreement with Federal Government

Matt Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're joined here again today by child care operators, and they're here today to call on this minister to fix the mess that he has created. This minister has failed to deliver the child care deal that he promised. Now parents are being hit with higher and unexpected fees, ranging in increase anywhere from \$10 a day to 30 to \$85 a day of an increase. In response the minister shrugged his shoulders and said, this is what we were able to get.

Why did the minister break his promise to parents and to the child care providers who are here in the Assembly today?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We canvassed this issue last week, and for the member's benefit we'll chat about it again here today, Mr. Speaker. This government reached a \$10-a-day child care agreement on April 1st, 2023 — three years ahead of schedule, Mr. Speaker — bringing early financial relief to families and benefiting families across this province as quickly as possible.

[14:15]

We also strongly advocated for a new agreement, a better agreement for Saskatchewan families, for Saskatchewan child care providers across this province — one that was not being advocated for by the members opposite. We know full well, Mr. Speaker, what they were advocating for. This is a better child care agreement for families right across Saskatchewan, one that this government is proud to have negotiated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Matt Love: — Mr. Speaker, this minister's words are cold comfort to all those families whose six-year-olds celebrate a birthday before April 1st. This isn't the deal that that minister promised to those parents. He then told child care operators, those who joined us here today, that they have to do the work of going out and telling families that their fees are increasing. This minister can't deliver the deal as advertised, he can't break the

bad news to parents, and he said last week that he can't fix this for families.

What does the minister say to the operators, who again are here today in the galleries, about his failures and his promise that he's breaking to those families?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a better agreement than the existing agreement that we currently have right now, which expires on March 31st at the end of this month, Mr. Speaker.

And the new agreement that will take effect on April the 1st will provide for some additional coverage for children who are in kindergarten who have turned the age of six, and provide that coverage after April 1st. That's when the new agreement, again, takes effect and will benefit those families, and again families for years to come, as this is part of the new program that was negotiated by this government, Mr. Speaker.

These are changes that were advocated for by the sector, one that our team worked hard to get into the agreement for Saskatchewan, for this province. And this is a benefit for families and for child care operators across Saskatchewan, one that is better than the current agreement that we currently have in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Addressing Intimate Partner Violence

Nicole Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan leads the nation in intimate partner violence at nearly double the national average. There were 737 victims of intimate partner violence per 100,000 population in Saskatchewan last year compared to the national average of just 349. Each of these numbers represents a person traumatized, hurt, or sadly, killed.

To end intimate partner violence, we need to recognize this crisis for what it is — an epidemic. Will the Minister of Justice declare that intimate partner violence is an epidemic in Saskatchewan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of the Status of Women.

Hon. Alana Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We recognize interpersonal violence is an issue in our society, and that's why we invest \$72 million annually across government and why we work with and coordinate with our community partners, who are experts in this area. We provide programming under the three pillars of the provincial strategy of prevention, intervention, and accountability.

Mr. Speaker, our government remains committed to building a strong, safe, and secure Saskatchewan where all people are free from violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Nicole Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, intimate partner violence is more than just an issue; it's an epidemic. This is what the experts are saying, and this is what the experts are calling for.

Brenda Ottenbreit, a survivor of domestic violence and advocate, told the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] that declaring an epidemic in the province would draw more attention to shortfalls in the legal system and could lead to life-saving changes. BC [British Columbia] and Ontario have both recognized intimate partner violence as an epidemic.

As legislators, Mr. Speaker, we should take every opportunity to act to protect lives. So will the Minister of Justice listen to the advocates, the survivors, and other provinces and recognize that intimate partner violence is an epidemic in Saskatchewan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of the Status of Women.

Hon. Alana Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know interpersonal violence is a deeply rooted societal problem that has devastating impacts on individuals and requires a multi-faceted approach with commitment, Mr. Speaker, which is what we are doing under our provincial interpersonal violence strategy.

You know, we are making investments. We are working with our community partners. As recently as in February we funded 10 of our partner organizations to help address interpersonal violence, including a rehabilitative camp in Buffalo Narrows for men who have caused harm, counselling services in North Battleford, enhanced 211 services, and providing a safe place for pets in the event people are afraid to leave because they're afraid to leave their pets.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to building a strong, safe, and secure Saskatchewan. Thank you.

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

Community Safety and Library Worker Concerns

Vicki Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday I asked the Minister of Social Services if he would be willing to work a shift at the Frances Morrison Library to understand the concerns that workers are facing in our public libraries. The Minister of Rural and Remote Health answered for him and said that he would be prepared to work this shift. She told this House, "I know that my colleague would be more than happy to do that, and he has confirmed with me that he would."

So knowing that library workers are eager to welcome the minister, when will he be working this shift?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Mr. Speaker, all of this stems from some of the issues that we're having in downtown Saskatoon when it comes to individuals who may find themselves in a very difficult state, Mr. Speaker. This is why we funded our provincial approach to homelessness — \$40.2 million in 2023 in foundational funding. Mr. Speaker, in November we increased

that by another \$20 million.

This is a very, very serious issue, one that we are working with our community municipal partners. We're also working with our Indigenous partners, Mr. Speaker. And it's a meeting that I'm going to be having with the library, and it's coming very soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Vicki Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, simple question; looking for a simple answer. When will he be working the shift at the library?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And you know, to respond to the member, that work is under way in terms of, you know, scheduling a meeting with the management of the Saskatoon library.

What I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, is the good work being done by our outreach teams. We have sawëyihotân in Saskatoon. These are individuals that are downtown in different areas of the city, making contact with individuals that have no place to go, trying to connect them with services, Mr. Speaker. This is a program that's operated by Saskatoon Tribal Council. I had a great conversation this morning with Tribal Chief Arcand, and we're really looking forward to keeping that work going and providing those supports and those services to the individuals who really, really badly need it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Cost of Rental Housing

April ChiefCalf: — Mr. Speaker, in February rents in Saskatchewan jumped yet another 6.5 per cent. In Regina and Saskatoon rent went up by 8.2 per cent for apartments. This was the highest increase in the country. British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec have all seen rent decreases.

On Friday I stood with Siobhán, a Saskatoon renter who works multiple jobs, lives with three roommates, and still struggles to afford both rent and groceries. Is this really what the Sask Party government wants for the people of Saskatchewan, or will they stand up for people like Siobhán and pass *The Rent Control Act*?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we've debated this on the floor of this Assembly many times over the last number of months. We recognize that we are not immune to inflationary pressures around the country. But, Mr. Speaker, it is important to remember we are the most affordable province in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I would correct the record on some of the numbers that the members opposite have been using. Actually rent over the last decade, over 10 years in Saskatchewan, has grown by 31 per cent. That's compared to 58 per cent nationally. Mr. Speaker, we still feel that that's high, but again rents are the most

affordable in Saskatchewan compared to the other provinces in the country.

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

Status of Women in Saskatchewan

Jacqueline Roy: — Now, Mr. Speaker, yesterday was International Women's Day, a day to formally acknowledge women's struggles to take their equal place in society and to commit to actually doing more. And there's a lot more to be done in Saskatchewan. We are one of the worst provinces in Canada for domestic violence, yet that government won't call it an epidemic. Sexual assault, one of the worst provinces. Female homicide, teen pregnancy, child care deserts, the gender pay gap, and women in non-traditional fields.

So this question is to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, and I'll thank her male colleagues not to intervene. Does she acknowledge that her government is failing women in all of the areas that I just addressed?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of the Status of Women.

Hon. Alana Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't help but notice one of the indicators that the member opposite indicated was employment for women. We had a wonderful event in the House yesterday where we celebrated 70 leaders in Saskatchewan's industry. It is opportunities like this, Mr. Speaker, that will help move forward in our battle with interpersonal violence. And we are proud of the initiatives that women are taking and the educational opportunities being provided so that they have the ability to do this, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Government of Saskatchewan Introduces the Patients-First Health Care Plan

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I had the privilege of joining the Premier and several of my colleagues at the construction site at Saskatoon's first urgent care centre, Mr. Speaker, to announce the next steps our government is taking to put patients first in this province by improving access to health care for all Saskatchewan families. And I make note that it's Saskatoon's first urgent care centre, Mr. Speaker, because there will be a second urgent care centre, Mr. Speaker, to follow very soon in the city of Saskatoon.

As was discussed in question period, Mr. Speaker, we have introduced the patients-first health care plan which is a comprehensive provincial strategy to improve access to care and ensure everyone in Saskatchewan receives the right care in the right place at the right time.

You know, across Canada, Mr. Speaker, I think we're all aware that health care is facing increasing pressure. There's rising demand for services, an aging population, and workforce

shortages in every single province.

Mr. Speaker, members on this side of the House have been listening to Saskatchewan people. And with respect to health care, we've clearly heard that families want two things: access to a primary care provider and timelier access to diagnostics and surgeries. The patients-first health care plan accelerates work that's already under way to improve access to health services by increasing the number of health care providers and giving patients more health care options.

Mr. Speaker, there are 50 next steps outlined in the plan which centre around the following key actions: increasing the number and expanding the scope of practice for all health care professionals; expanding access to virtual care; increasing the number of and access to urgent care centres throughout the province; continuing to recruit, train, and increase the number of doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, and all allied health care staff; and expansion of diagnostic services like MRI [magnetic resonance imaging], CT [computerized tomography], and PET/CT [positron emission tomography/computerized tomography] scans.

We will strengthen and grow our health care workforce by adding 20 more medical school seats and 10 more residency seats prioritizing Saskatchewan students, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note when this party had the honour of forming government in 2007, there were 60 College of Medicine undergraduate seats. Today, Mr. Speaker, there's 108, and in September there will be 128 undergraduate College of Medicine seats in this province, Mr. Speaker. But more importantly, but more importantly, not only for members of this House, but for all Saskatchewan residents, we are asking the College of Medicine to set a new higher target, a more ambitious target, Mr. Speaker, of 95 per cent of those 128 seats being given to Saskatchewan students, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, we're continuing to develop training pathways for high school students to bridge into careers in the health care sector, adding 26 new nurse practitioner training seats across the province which increases the nurse practitioner training capacity in the province by 45 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, the number of seats, that's only half the battle, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure that those seats are filled, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we are adding a financial incentive to support registered nurses who want to progress their career with nurse practitioner training, Mr. Speaker — a \$78,000 financial incentive, Mr. Speaker. It will come with a return-of-service contract to make sure that those NPs are working in our province, Mr. Speaker. But we're very excited about that.

Mr. Speaker, we're also going to be expanding access through the use of virtual care tools, as outlined in question period earlier today, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, to support faster access and improve outcomes for critically ill patients, we're going to complete and staff the additional 69 out of 109 beds at Saskatoon City Hospital, Mr. Speaker. Forty of those 109, Mr. Speaker, are already open, already staffed, already seeing patients in them, Mr. Speaker.

We're opening 24 acute care beds and 4 ICU [intensive care unit] beds at St. Paul's Hospital; 6 pediatric beds at Jim Pattison Children's Hospital; adding 36 acute care beds at Royal University Hospital, Mr. Speaker. And I think especially important for the pediatric patients in southern Saskatchewan, we're going to be adding three neonatal intensive care unit beds here at Regina General Hospital, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that families in the southern half of the province can stay as close to home to receive very intensive care, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are many more actions being taken to put patients first under the plan that I didn't have time to go through today. But I hope that all members will have an opportunity to read the plan and share in the House over the coming weeks.

I encourage all members to take an opportunity to read the plan and understand the important work that's being done to put patients first in this province. I believe we all share the desire in Saskatchewan for families to receive the best care in the country, Mr. Speaker, and this plan will help us get there. Thank you.

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

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to first thank the minister for providing me with a copy of his remarks in advance. Interesting announcement followed closely by myself this morning, Mr. Speaker. And when I saw this patients-first health care plan, which I've had a little bit of time to review, but I will have more to say certainly in the days to come.

I'll hearken back to the first Patient First Review we saw from this government; I believe it was in 2009. I've got the OG here with me. And then we saw a Patient First Review update in 2012, Mr. Speaker. And then today we have a patients-first health care plan.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the themes remain the same. These reports talk about surgeries. They talk about diagnostics. They talk about team-based primary care. They talk about expanding the scope of practice as a solution to the crisis in our health care system.

I'll take, for example, the 2015 update where this government says that in order to address some of the issues they're seeing, they'll, "Expand scope of practice by removing restrictions so professionals can work to full capacity of their training." That's page 1 in 5 of this 2015 patient-first report.

And then in the 2026 patient-first report we see, "A commitment to expanding scope of practice so providers work to the top of their scope." That's on page 18 of this so-called patient-first 2026 report.

One thing that troubles me about the difference of all these patient-first reports, Mr. Speaker, is that back in 2009 and back in even 2015, Mr. Speaker, you saw a real commitment from this government to committing to reducing, for example, wait times, putting real-time metrics on some of these commitments.

Now all you see them talk about is expanding capacity. Because they like to talk about volume, because they know that despite all of their schemes and diagnostics and surgeries and in the MRI,

CT scan initiatives, Mr. Speaker, we actually don't see wait times reducing. We have some of the longest wait times for knee and hip surgery continuously in this province, Mr. Speaker.

So they've completely, in this new and improved, I guess, patient-first report, they've actually completely abandoned any commitment to reducing wait times. And that should be a huge red flag. This government loves to talk about volume and capacity. They no longer make commitments around wait times because they know what they are doing is not working, Mr. Speaker.

And when we talk about recruitment and retention, Mr. Speaker — you know, I had a little bit of time to review this — it talks about streamlining their current approaches, expanding some of the approaches they currently have to a couple more communities. But their approaches are not working, Mr. Speaker. They are not working. So I'm afraid that we will continue to see more of the same, and it's very troubling to see this government propose this as big, bold change.

You know, we see them talking about team-based health care. Well I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. In 2009, and I will again quote from that first patient-first health care report, they talk about how health care is piecemeal and, "Team-based, interdisciplinary care remains the exception rather than the rule. Saskatchewan is yet to realize the full benefits of team-based care." That is over a decade and a half ago, Mr. Speaker, so forgive me.

There is a renewed commitment to using nurse practitioners by this government in the last year, and I have given them credit for that. But frankly it's a bit of a slow clap because we've had the evidence on the benefit of nurse practitioners to a team-based care setting since the 1970s, Mr. Speaker.

So again and again what we see from this government is too little, too late. So, Mr. Speaker, I will have more to say about this patient-first health care plan in the days to come. And with that I will take my place in the House. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — Why is the member on her feet?

MOTIONS

Second Reading of Bill No. 612

Aleana Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Notwithstanding the government's agenda and what's published in Orders of the Day today, I request leave to move the following motion:

That the Assembly immediately consider second reading of Bill No. 612, *The Lower Power Bills and Car Insurance Act*.

Speaker Goudy: — Will the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion . . . [inaudible].

Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Some Hon. Members: — Yes.

Speaker Goudy: — Leave is not granted.

And I have a letter from the King. It's not a text, but it's a letter.

MESSAGE FROM HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III

Speaker Goudy: — Would you all please rise.

We join together on this Commonwealth Day at a time of great challenge and great possibility. Across our world, communities and nations face increasing pressures of conflict, climate change and rapid transformation. Yet it is often in such testing moments that the enduring spirit of the Commonwealth is most clearly revealed.

Ours is a remarkable association that spans every ocean and continent. Embracing an extraordinary diversity of culture, language and faith, our Commonwealth family is united by shared values of justice, democracy, opportunity, compassion and mutual respect. In a world that can feel increasingly fragmented, this voluntary union of free association remains rare and precious — a forum for open and honest discussion and debate to help improve the lives of the nearly three billion people who call our Member States home.

Our Commonwealth of Nations holds untapped potential for prosperous trade between trusting partners. With nearly two-thirds of our population under the age of thirty, we are a family defined by youth and possibility. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that they inherit not only our hope and ambition, but also a world in which they can flourish.

That inheritance depends upon the health of our planet and on the restoration of the natural world on which we depend. Across so many parts of our Commonwealth climate change is not an abstract or a distant threat, but a lived reality. The stewardship of Nature, the protection of oceans and forests, and the pursuit of prosperity secured in harmony with the natural world are duties we owe not only to one another, but to generations yet unborn.

As we look ahead to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda later this year, we are reminded that the great gatherings of our nations are strengthened by the daily endeavours of their people. What distinguishes the Commonwealth is not only what our governments resolve together, but what our people do each day in countless acts of service, enterprise and creativity. When leaders meet, they do so on behalf of millions whose quiet determination, resilience and generosity give true meaning to our shared endeavour.

Working together we can ensure that the Commonwealth continues to stand as a force for good — grounded in community, committed to the kind of restorative sustainability that has a return on investment, enriched by culture, steadfast in its care for our planet, and united in friendship and in the service of its people.

Charles R

Thank you. Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 24

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Warren Kaeding that **Bill No. 24 — *The Saskatchewan Internal Trade Promotion Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to enter in with respect to Bill No. 24, *The Saskatchewan Internal Trade Promotion Act*, Mr. Speaker. Now I know we've also had a bill brought forward on this front by the member for Riversdale, brought forward private member's legislation on this front.

The impetus here seems to be an awakening from the threats that we've received with our long-standing partner to the south, the president of the United States. Those include economic threats of course and an awakening that we need to control what we can control, do what we can deliver on. And that includes addressing some of the unreasonable interprovincial trade barriers that exist.

That also highlights the importance of making sure that we're able to expand those trade markets around this world and able to get our products to market. So then leaning into the kind of trade-supporting infrastructure — transportation infrastructure that's critical to this province and to this country, including of course pipelines and pipeline capacity, Mr. Speaker — but reforms as well, to make sure that our rails perform for shippers and exporters and producers from this province, to make sure that our ports have the capacity that they simply don't right now, Mr. Speaker.

So although we would never invite the kinds of behaviour and threats that we've received from the current American president, the impetus that it's caused for us to look at controlling what we can control is an important one. These are things we could have been acting on many years ago, urgings that we've brought forward as an official opposition. But it's critical that we act around addressing unreasonable trade barriers within our country. And then very importantly, making sure that we build and diversify trade markets around the world and that we build that trade-supporting transportation infrastructure — pipelines, rails, and ports — to get our products to market, Mr. Speaker.

I know that in consulting with our lead on this side with respect to trade, the member for Riversdale who brought forward a piece of legislation on this front, she's identified very clearly that the piece of legislation she brought forward does a much better job of protecting the occupational health and safety rights of workers. Certainly that's critical, Mr. Speaker. So I'd urge the attention of this Assembly to that matter, and we'd invite the public to engage on this as well, Mr. Speaker.

And again as I'd say, Mr. Speaker, we need to expand trade markets. We need to be able to build a transportation system that allows our producers and exporters and shippers to get those products to market. And then we need a government that's going to act and lead on those fronts, Mr. Speaker. For far too long, when I think of our province and this provincial government, they've been far too complacent on this front. And the outcomes just haven't been what they need to be, Mr. Speaker.

And we need to build trade for this province and in our country. For far too long, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that hasn't stepped up to the plate on that front, and all too often has shipped our dollars and our jobs outside of Saskatchewan all the way to the United States and countries around the world as opposed to focusing on the best interests of this province and this country and the workers and businesses within it, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

With that being said, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 24.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 31

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 31 — *The Defamation Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet to enter into adjourned debate on Bill No. 31, *The Defamation Act*. And as I was looking through some of the comments left by my colleagues and the comments from the minister when the bill was introduced as well as some of the news that was put out around the legislation, it's interesting to see this piece hit the floor. And one of the things I noted very early on is that it is a piece of legislation that works to replace an almost 100-year-old piece of legislation from 1909, *The Libel and Slander Act*, Mr. Speaker.

And so important updates that we're seeing here in this space, Mr. Speaker. What we see from this is that it looks like we're looking to modernize the way that folks can . . . that the Act in itself refers to defamation or slander or libel. You know, in 1909, at the time, it referred specifically just to newspapers, and we know that in 100 years media has changed quite drastically. And so what we're seeing is a law now that applies to all publications, including digital and online media, you know, not just the traditional print outlets.

Mr. Speaker, we see the legislation authorizing the courts to make takedown or re-indexing orders against third parties when harmful content continues to circulate after the publication and

establishes a single cause of action for publication and any later republications of that same information, Mr. Speaker.

You know, again, very welcome modernization in the space as it seems that this has come from a consultation and work that was done in the legal community, Mr. Speaker. The Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan had released its final report calling on the reform and modernization of that libel and slander Act, and they are commenting on how the Act does get it right. Outdated distinction between libel and slander refers instead to defamation now, which encompasses both written and spoken statements. And so they took that information. We're happy to see that come through.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing an age where almost anyone can go online under their own name or under a pseudonym and make all sorts of statements on the internet. And you know, I think that it is important that this legislation first and foremost looks at combatting misinformation, the ability to get misinformation down. What we've seen is big tech giants have left the space of monitoring their creations, and so we're seeing those entities no longer policing or patrolling or doing the work to ensure that information is solid on their platforms. And so hopefully something like this will also continue to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our shadow minister of Justice will continue to do this work. We had some questions about the bill that I know that she will aptly take care of. But you know, in the old libel and slander Act, the definition of "malicious intent" that strips privilege is vague, and so again there's a lot of concern.

There is the concern around parliamentary privilege, the things that we are allowed to say here on this floor. We have a certain amount of privilege in that those statements are protected so that we can have fulsome debate on topics. You know, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a lot of debate around representing facts in this House, Mr. Speaker. And so I think that there is a real need to ensure that we're being as precise as possible with the legislation so that, you know, places like this legislature aren't pulled into . . . or the things that are said on this floor are respected under that parliamentary privilege, Mr. Speaker.

And so, happy to be on my feet to talk to this bill, happy to see this modernization. And at this time I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 31.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 32

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 32** — *The Defamation Consequential Amendments Act, 2025/Loi de 2025 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Defamation Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Happy to be on my feet again speaking to the consequential amendments Act portion of *The Defamation Act*, Bill No. 32. Left some comments on the record here as far as Bill 31 is respected. I will ask folks to look to those remarks as far as the feelings that I have placed on the record as far as *The Defamation Act*.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at this time I'm happy to adjourn debate on Bill No. 32, *The Defamation Consequential Amendments Act, 2025*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 33

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 33** — *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2025* be now read a second time.]

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

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to enter into debate today on Bill 33, *An Act to amend The Credit Union Act*. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my understanding is that this bill is meant to update *The Credit Union Act* of 1988, and these updates will apply to termination of memberships, how to deal with the funds of terminated members, thresholds for passing regulations, and abilities of employees for accessing member lists.

On our side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we wish to consult with stakeholders to ensure that these amendments proposed in Bill 33 will benefit credit unions and their members and enhance the efficiency of their operations.

Now we understand that credit unions have a long history in our province, having been established to assist people in the 1930s during the Great Depression, and they're part of a larger movement of co-operative organizations and philosophies that are very much a foundation of our province.

In my family, we have always relied on credit unions as primary financial institutions. And I just wanted to mention that my daughter, when she graduated from high school and she was 17 years old, she got her first real job working as a customer service representative at the credit union in La Ronge.

And we were very proud of her, but we were a little concerned because you know how when you have kids, you ask them when they're around age eight what they want to be when they grow up, and her response is, I want to be one of those shopping girls that I see on TV. So like at that point we were really worried. But she got this job at the credit union and she just blossomed. She learned so much during her time there that she felt extremely comfortable giving me and my husband a great deal of financial advice.

And I just wanted to note too that credit unions have been foundational as well in serving smaller communities. So a lot of people don't know that in northern Saskatchewan, there's actually only two communities in all of northern Saskatchewan that have financial institutions, and that's Buffalo Narrows and La Ronge. And those financial institutions are of course credit unions.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say also that we're very proud of our credit unions and how they keep our Saskatchewan money in the province and support our communities in many ways.

And I would now like to adjourn debate on Bill 33. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 35

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Colleen Young that **Bill No. 35 — *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act, 2025*** be now read a second time.]

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

Sally Houser: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Delighted to get a chance to rise today to speak on Bill No. 35, *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act*. This is a bill that really is meant to streamline and enhance the mineral exploration process here in Saskatchewan. It establishes rules for designated subsurface development areas, or DSDAs, that maximizes mineral exploration and extraction.

This is something that in speaking and consulting with a lot of stakeholders, a lot of folks in the mining industry here, very much supportive. This is essentially to allow exploration in areas where the owner of the land cannot necessarily be determined. You have to try to find that person for a period of five years. If you can't, you are able to explore. And if even after five years, an ownership of that land is determined, then any kind of a resource or wealth extracted from that area will be held in trust for that individual at a later date.

So this is not a scenario where anybody is losing out. This simply allows mining exploration to go ahead and not be impeded because somebody can't find the ownership for one specific plot of land.

As I said, I've spoken with numerous people in the mining industry on this bill. We're very supportive in theory. Obviously we want to keep consulting with stakeholders and hope that the government will keep consulting with stakeholders as well on this issue, particularly when it comes to First Nations in this province.

Ultimately it's a really exciting time for mining and exploration in the province of Saskatchewan, not only with our world-class potash and uranium industries, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but also with new developments or new discoveries around aluminum and of course in our rare earth and critical minerals.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to allow this bill, or I'm happy to allow Bill No. 35, *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act* to move to the committee. Thank you.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Okay. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried. To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Tim McLeod: — To the Standing Committee on the Economy, Mr. Speaker.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 36

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jeremy Cockrill that **Bill No. 36 — *The Change of Name Amendment Act, 2025/Loi modificative de 2025 sur le changement de nom*** be now read a second time.]

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

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, before this, my colleague from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood had participated on this bill. And in continuation to that, I am honoured to enter into debate and provide some comments for Bill No. 36, *The Change of Name Amendment Act, 2025*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to see the amendments to modernize this legislation to address a barrier that a number of Saskatchewan residents face when requesting a name change. This amendment would allow for people to register a single name and more than two surnames. In southern cultures people don't write their last name, so they face difficulty when requesting a licence here in Saskatchewan. So this change is a necessity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have personal experience with this changing of names. One of my relatives experienced difficulty when he came to Canada in October 2015. His name is Gurjit Singh. Singh is a middle name in India, and we rarely use our last name there, like how my last name is Brar and my relative's last name is Gill. He had issues getting his licence from India recognized by SGI because his licence from India was Gurjit Singh, but his passport had his last name Gill. Ultimately with the help of a lawyer, he was able to get the professional licence.

[15:00]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to note that for the section on notifying police of any name change, we will certainly need to

consult with stakeholders to ensure that notification of police is done safely and responsibly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with that I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 36. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 37

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jeremy Cockrill that **Bill No. 37 — *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2025/Loi modificative de 2025 sur les services de l'état civil*** be now read a second time.]

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

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to be on my feet again to discuss Bill No. 37, *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act*. Once again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, ensuring that we are modernizing naming regulation in this province is a necessity to remove barriers for so many in Saskatchewan.

I already discussed some personal experiences a relative of mine had with registering their name when immigrating to Canada. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is encouraging to see that the government is ensuring more protections for vulnerable people. This is especially important as Saskatchewan has the worst record in Canada for intimate partner violence.

With that I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 37. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 38

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Everett Hindley that **Bill No. 38 — *The Building Schools Faster Act*** be now read a second time.]

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to enter into debate on Bill No. 38, *The Building Schools Faster Act, 2025*. So let's chat about this Act for a few minutes here.

You know, the government's looking to build schools faster. So

I think this bill speaks to the failure of this government in terms of planning for the population growth that they have been working for for a long time. So over the last 10 years this government has made it its core priority to grow Saskatchewan's population, an admirable goal. Nothing wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. However what we have seen is lacking is the plan to ensure that the growth is supported by the necessary infrastructure in this province.

So the fact that we have a bill before us saying we need to build schools faster suggests that they have not planned adequately for the population growth that Saskatchewan has seen. If we had, there would be schools being built as neighbourhoods are being built, as people are moving into communities. And we wouldn't be in this situation where Saskatchewan schools are bursting at the seams, where students are packed into the libraries, packed into staff rooms to learn and to get their education here in Saskatchewan.

So I am glad to see that the government is recognizing that it has not kept up with what is needed in terms of the education needs of students in this province. But this is a bigger piece in terms of education in Saskatchewan. We have seen funding declines in this province when other provinces have increased their funding year after year. We are going in the wrong direction.

And you know who is hurt by this, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's Saskatchewan students, Saskatchewan youth, and ultimately Saskatchewan. I mean when I think about the innovation, the creativity that we have in this province, those come from people who have had good quality education. And when we are not supporting students in the best way that this province can — we are not providing those students with opportunities to be creative, to learn, to think critically, to all of the skills that they need to be innovators, to be entrepreneurs, to be whatever jobs are there in the future in this province — those kids aren't going to have necessarily the skills.

And so we need to be funding education properly in this province. Let's look at educational assistants just in this last year. We see that there are fewer EAs [educational assistant] in Saskatchewan schools this year compared to last year. That is a failure. I can speak, you know, personally as a former teacher. I've only been out of the classroom for about two and a half years now. But when I was in the classroom, EAs at that point, we were at such a strain already that EAs were really focused on managing behavioural issues with many students. Not much of their time was actually used to support students academically and ensuring that those students were getting the support academically to succeed.

That's just one small piece of this puzzle, Mr. Speaker, but I think it speaks to the larger need and the larger failures that are happening from this government when it comes to education in the province.

But if we look at this bill in particular, you know, this bill only applies to new schools. And I think that is problematic because there are a lot of schools in Saskatchewan that are crumbling, that need infrastructure capital investment to make sure that they are in a condition that is beneficial for student learning.

One example I'll give is, I think about both of the schools that I

taught at in Regina here, old schools built in the '20s, I think, and built in the '70s. Neither of them had air conditioning, and on days in May and June and September the schools can be . . . In some of those rooms it would be 34 degrees. I mean if this was another workplace in Saskatchewan, occupational health and safety would say that is not a safe working environment. And yet this is what's happening in schools, and these are conditions that are happening in many, many schools across this province.

So yes, we do need to build schools faster, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We needed to build schools faster 5, 10 years ago when we were seeing populations growing in this province. But we also need to be funding those existing schools. And we need to be ensuring the education system in this province is fully funded so that Saskatchewan students get the best education that they can, and then Saskatchewan as a province and as an economy prospers in the future. With that, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 38. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 39

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Everett Hindley that **Bill No. 39 — *The Building Schools Faster Consequential Amendment Act, 2025/Loi de 2025 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Building Schools Faster Act*** be now read a second time.]

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again good to be on my feet to enter into Bill No. 39, *The Building Schools Faster Consequential Amendment Act, 2025*. I think my comments from Bill 38 made the points I wanted to make, so I will move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 40

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Daryl Harrison that **Bill No. 40 — *The Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2025*** be now read a second time.]

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

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Before my

colleague from Saskatoon Fairview debated for this bill, and today I rise again on my feet in the Assembly to enter into debate for Bill No. 40, *The Animal Protection Act, 2025*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, every person is a social animal, and every species on this planet has the right to live with dignity. And that is the only way that we can be in balance with nature. Well due to changes in the weather, a lot of things are happening in the world. Some of the species are eliminated due to changes in the environment. So it becomes our foremost duty to ensure that every person and animal should be protected.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important to the people of Saskatchewan that all animals are taken good care of, so it is good to see more transparency and accountability around animal welfare. Well I know that our team is connecting with stakeholders, especially those in the livestock industry, to ensure that they have no concerns with this bill.

So it is the necessity of the hour that the bill should be passed. To protect the animals, I support this bill. And with this, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 40. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 41

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Alana Ross that **Bill No. 41 — *The Heritage Recognition (From Many Peoples, Strength) Act/Loi sur la reconnaissance du patrimoine (Nos origines multiples, notre force)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Honoured to be on my feet again to enter into adjourned debate on Bill No. 41, *The Heritage Recognition (From Many Peoples, Strength) Act*.

Earlier or perhaps it was last session, we saw a piece of private member's legislation — and for those watching from home, one of the rare moments a piece of private member's legislation made it to the floor of our Chamber. But we saw a piece of private member's legislation around recognizing Sikh Heritage Month, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you know, as a House we united and we passed that private member's bill, enshrining Sikh Heritage Month in the proclamations that we see from the provincial government.

And following shortly from that moment of allowing that piece of legislation to move to the floor to debate, we saw the heritage recognition bill, "from many peoples, strength" Act, introduced.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will hold a lot of my thoughts on the fact

that not many private members' bills do make it to the floor. We have a number on our side of the House right now that I would love to see fulsomely debated. Well I guess it would be nice to see our official opposition speak to those bills, as many of the government members never do really speak to adjourned debates.

Although it's that point in the session where I would challenge my colleagues opposite to join in and come and . . . Welcome to the adjourned debate process. We would love to hear from you and have fulsome debates on these bills, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I will digress. My challenge and my call to government members usually falls on deaf ears and we never really get to see the government members stand up and speak to adjourned debates. But again I will digress.

The heritage recognition, in the way that the legislation is worked here, we're seeing an amendment to the legislation moving a lot of the proclamations from the physical text of the legislation to regulations. And so a little bit of inside baseball for the legislature is that, you know, a physical text of that legislation can only be changed when it comes before the House, is moved through all the processes, and gets Royal Assent and becomes law.

But what we're seeing here is that when you move some of the pieces from that legislation into a document called the regulations, which allows and gives the ministry more ability to make amendments, changes, fine tune smaller pieces of information, that makes sure that the Act continues to work going forward.

And so in this case we're happy to see, you know, that none of the previous recognitions are being changed, but instead being moved into regulation which gives the minister and the ministry more ability to make new proclamations. And what we're seeing is that, you know, those heritage events or proclamations, you know, we're going to see those. If they're moved into regulations, they will continue to maintain an annual status. There is opportunity again in those regulations that if something is coming about that we can, you know, change that so it's not annual; maybe it's a one-time thing, celebration.

And so it's quite nice to see. You know, in some cases I think in legislation regulations are helpful. I think there's some debate around the merit sometimes as moving a lot of meat and potatoes into regulations means taking it out of law. In this case I think it's a really good plan.

[15:15]

You know, I do miss being the Parks, Culture and Sport critic, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think the ministry and the work of the minister is so important and, you know, you get to see so many aspects of our province. And you get to go in every direction really. Like the opportunities are endless really. I'm sure the invites to the minister come fast and furious for cultural events and activities, be it film festivals or those things. They just happen all over the province.

And every community, you know, has the ability to, you know, to continue to build culture in their corner of the province. And so, you know, it was with a heavy heart that I saw the Parks, Culture and Sport critic portfolio leave after the 2024 election. But it's been taken into some very capable hands.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, I welcome this piece of legislation. And you know, and as I mentioned in my member's statement earlier about the power of representation for communities, for cultural groups, seeing their cultural month proclaimed by the provincial government is so important and so valued within those cultural groups.

And so to see that the government is looking to make it easier to ensure that, you know, cultural groups who want to see their month proclaimed, that they are able to just reach out to the ministry, that they're able to get that proclamation made and we don't have to come to the legislature and pass individual Acts one after another to recognize their important months.

And so, you know, at this time, Mr. Speaker, I think I've left enough comments on the record as far as the heritage recognition Act goes. We're excited to see the continuation of heritage months and days, and special celebrations within cultural and community across the province.

And I know that our shadow minister for Parks, Culture and Sport and some of the folks on our team who represent communities and cultural groups in Saskatchewan will continue to engage with stakeholders and work closely with the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport so that we can continue to recognize the important tapestry that builds our province.

So, Mr. Deputy Minister, at this time I'm happy to adjourn debate on Bill No. 41, the heritage recognition Act.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Agreed.

Bill No. 43

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Eric Schmalz that **Bill No. 43 — *The Municipalities Modernization and Red Tape Reduction Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Sally Houser: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm delighted to be able to rise today and enter into debate on Bill No. 43, *The Municipalities Modernization and Red Tape Reduction Act*, as a number of my colleagues have commented on this bill before me. It's one of the thicker ones we see before the legislature right now, so I will try to highlight just a couple of things from a few of the key areas of this Act.

We have this looking at streamlining some of the processes. And I'll speak a little more to it. We want to be able to have, you know, the most streamlined processes. And unfortunately sometimes when we talk about the reduction of red tape, you can get into throwing the baby out with the bathwater or frankly consolidating a lot of the services within the minister's office as opposed to actually helping municipalities streamline a process.

So there's a lot to unpack in this bill, and we will continue to be consulting with stakeholders and reviewing over the course of its bill cycle.

One thing in mind. My colleague from Saskatoon Meewasin had pointed this out, and I have looked a little more into this, is how you determine what is a hamlet, what is a village, what is a town, what is a city. That's going to streamline this process. So organized hamlets no longer have to prove that you have been an organized hamlet for three years before you have to apply to become a village. That seems to make an awful lot of sense to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This also provides some updating and changes to how dangerous animals are dealt with, whether in kind of in unprovoked attacks or if an owner is liable. It provides some opportunities for police to seize animals that they believe are dangerous and how to proceed from there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, one thing that I, you know, I think we can all on this side of the legislature agree on very broadly is an updating to *The Municipalities Act* on issues of ethics. Councils will now have to have a code of ethics, and you'll have to have orientation for all new municipal councillors and make sure that everybody is aware of the Sask employment Act's harassment policies. The changes to the ethics in this Act will also allow for councils to appoint an Indigenous advisor, and also that councils must publish documents and notices on their website.

Mr. Speaker, one thing that this changes as well is for bylaw fines. And of course bylaw fines — people shouldn't be breaking the bylaws, and you don't want to get fined — but they now can be added to your property taxes, which brings me to a point here. Obviously some of these changes make sense. Some of them are very much common sense. But again what looks like sometimes the red tape reduction can also, on the same size, look a lot like centralizing power in the minister's office, which I think we've seen a lot more of.

And if you really wanted to help municipalities in this respect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think most people at SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] — where I'm sure myself and a number of our colleagues as well as the members from the government at SARM or SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] were really talking with anybody in municipalities — they would say the best way to help municipalities is to stop downloading so many of the key roles of the provincial government onto municipalities.

Many of the municipalities have legislation which does not allow them to go into deficit and debt, which means that when the province just downloads a lot of these issues — particularly I'm thinking around having to deal with issues of houselessness and mental health and addictions in our urban cores — they have no appeal other than to raise their property taxes, which we've seen pretty extreme hikes certainly where I represent in Regina, and Saskatoon as well.

But as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an awful lot to unpack in this piece of legislation. And we will be reviewing it carefully, and naturally consulting a lot with our municipal counterparts across the province. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 43, *The Municipalities Modernization and*

Red Tape Reduction Act. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 44

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 44 — *The Co-operatives Act, 2025/Loi de 2025 sur les coopératives*** be now read a second time.]

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Brent Blakley: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. On my feet this afternoon to enter debate on Bill No. 44, *The Co-operatives Act, 2025*. This bill will meld *The Co-operatives Act* from 1996 and the new-generation co-operatives Act, which will modernize and align with other jurisdictions.

It also brings forth multi-stakeholder co-ops where member owners can be consumers, producers, or volunteers. Co-op shares can be more easily sold to non-members to raise capital, basically enhancing the avenues for growth and investment.

Co-ops have a long-standing history, a rich history in this province. They've been the backbone of many rural communities and in the past several years have an ever-growing presence in urban areas as well. As I mentioned before, my family comes from Bethune, Saskatchewan. Sitting in the middle of the town are the co-op grocery store, the co-op gas station, the co-op lumber yard, and just recently opened up a co-op cardlock facility just off the highway.

My grandmother worked at the grocery store as a cashier for many years. My great-grandfather, my grandfather, and my dad were all co-op members, and I've continued that tradition as a proud co-op member. And I'm sure there are countless instances where this is the case across every corner of small-town Saskatchewan as well. Co-ops are so important in keeping our dollars in the province and getting the community invested in an enterprise.

As I said at the outset, this bill amalgamates past and current Acts on the books, streamlining and modernizing membership and investment. It's quite an involved bill and will require some extensive consultation with stakeholders. My colleagues and the shadow minister will also enter the debate on this bill. For now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 44, *The Co-operatives Act, 2025*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 45

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 45** — *The Co-operatives Consequential Amendments Act, 2025* be now read a second time.]

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Brent Blakley: — Thank you again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. On my feet to enter debate on Bill No. 45, *The Co-operatives Consequential Amendments Act, 2025*. You may consider my remarks brought forth on the previous Bill No. 44 to also apply to this bill as they are so closely related. Nothing more to add at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 45, *The Co-operatives Consequential Amendments Act, 2025*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 47

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Tim McLeod that **Bill No. 47** — *The Response to Illicit Drugs Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again an honour to be on my feet here to enter into adjourned debate on Bill No. 47, *The Response to Illicit Drugs Act*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, no crisis I think is more important or pressing in our time right now than how governments and our cities and our, you know, all the CBOs that we deal with, how they are addressing this absolutely out-of-control moment that we're seeing of drugs entering our communities and harming our loved ones and capturing people in a life of addiction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a really, really important piece of legislation to be discussing and to be analyzing here on the floor. As I have reviewed through some of them, I'll thank the minister for his remarks and thank my colleagues for their remarks on the record. And reviewing through the news release and etc., it looks as though that this government is using all the tools in its tool box to align our legislation here in this province more closely in line with federal legislation and ensuring that the court system is able to address this illicit drug crisis that we're seeing.

And so, you know, someone I think with probably a little bit more legal background than me will probably understand it a little bit more than I will here or there. But you know, when diving into

the Act, some of the things that we're looking at are ensuring that there are rules and regulations that the courts can access, you know, when drug crimes are done, making it a tort or a civil crime to commit a drug-related crime that injures someone else.

You know, the Act looks at being able to allow the government to recoup costs from drug-crime-related injury or disease on behalf of victims. They need to identify, you know, individuals or prove that they are the cause of the injuries. And there is a basis in this Act that allow in cases of multiple defendants, you know, if it can't be proved which specific one caused the injury, the court can find them all guilty again.

[15:30]

And you know, I'm just going through some of the facets of this Act. You know, like as I said before, it is the challenge of every sitting government in our country right now as how we are addressing this very, very important issue.

There's probably not anybody in this room who hasn't been affected by that drug crisis. I know that my partner lost a cousin, a family member, to the illicit drug crisis. And you know, it's shocking when it happens to you and your family, and my heart goes out to anyone who's had a friend or family member, you know . . . But I think we're almost at this point of a little bit of numbness in realizing that this is happening so often. And like I said, now it's almost as though no one is unaffected by this drug crisis.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we think is really important on this side of the House is just to make sure that barriers for folks who want to access treatment for addictions get the treatment. You know, we were looking for that data, just how many people are on waiting lists across Saskatchewan for these beds, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, my colleague will speak to the compassionate care Act next, another important piece of legislation that we have to get right. But we're saying, you know, if someone . . . We need to get to a point when the person makes the decision to change their life, that they are able to access that care right away. I don't know if we're there yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think we have to continue to work towards that point.

You know, we have to continue to look at the causes of why, you know, this crime is being committed. You know, during our provincial election we spoke on doorsteps across this province about the need to get tough on crime. And you know what? This is part of that tough-on-crime agenda, but we can't forget that we have to also be tough on the causes of crime. We have to continue investing in supports, not cutting them, ensuring that folks who are looking for the support can get access to those supports right away.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I think, you know, for sure on this side of the House we will continue to support evidence-based treatment for addictions, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm happy to have been able to speak to this bill, to analyze it, to put some comments on the record. I think that, you know, for everyone in this province this is an important piece of legislation that we get right.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that my colleagues and the

shadow ministers will continue to engage with stakeholders and continue to see how we can make this piece of legislation better. Ask questions in committee. So at this time I'm happy to adjourn debate on Bill No. 47, *The Response to Illicit Drugs Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 48

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Lori Carr that **Bill No. 48** — *The Compassionate Intervention Act* be now read a second time.]

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Brent Blakley: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. On my feet this afternoon again speaking on Bill No 48, *The Compassionate Intervention Act*. Some of the points I'll be covering were the same, very similar to what my colleague just covered, so they will sound very familiar.

Mr. Speaker, I think both sides can agree that the illicit drug problem in this province is at a crisis level. We hear every day of the number of calls that our EMS [emergency medical services] are called out on to deal with overdose incidents. We absolutely realize this problem is out of control and more needs to be done to address this crisis and especially the root causes of the problem — things such as poverty, homelessness, mental illness.

We also have a system of drug treatment in this province that is not meeting the needs of people because of the lack of care beds or the lack of facilities or the lack of funding. And because of this, treatment is not available when people need it or when they're ready for it, as the member said. If more resources were put into these areas, perhaps we wouldn't be talking about compassionate intervention, but here we are having to introduce a punitive course of action rather than putting resources into proactively dealing with the root causes of the problem.

It's evident that something has to be done to change course to prevent the loss of so many to addiction, to overdose, and to drug poisoning. As this compassionate intervention Act gets rolled out, it's imperative for the government to get it right because there's so many things that can go wrong. Consultation with others in other agencies will be the key as the government moves forward.

And again, I trust my colleagues and the shadow ministers will have more to say as they enter the debate. Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 48, *The Compassionate Intervention Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Deputy Speaker B. McLeod: — Carried. The Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:36.]

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Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Chris Beaudry
Minister of Energy and Resources

Hon. Lori Carr
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