



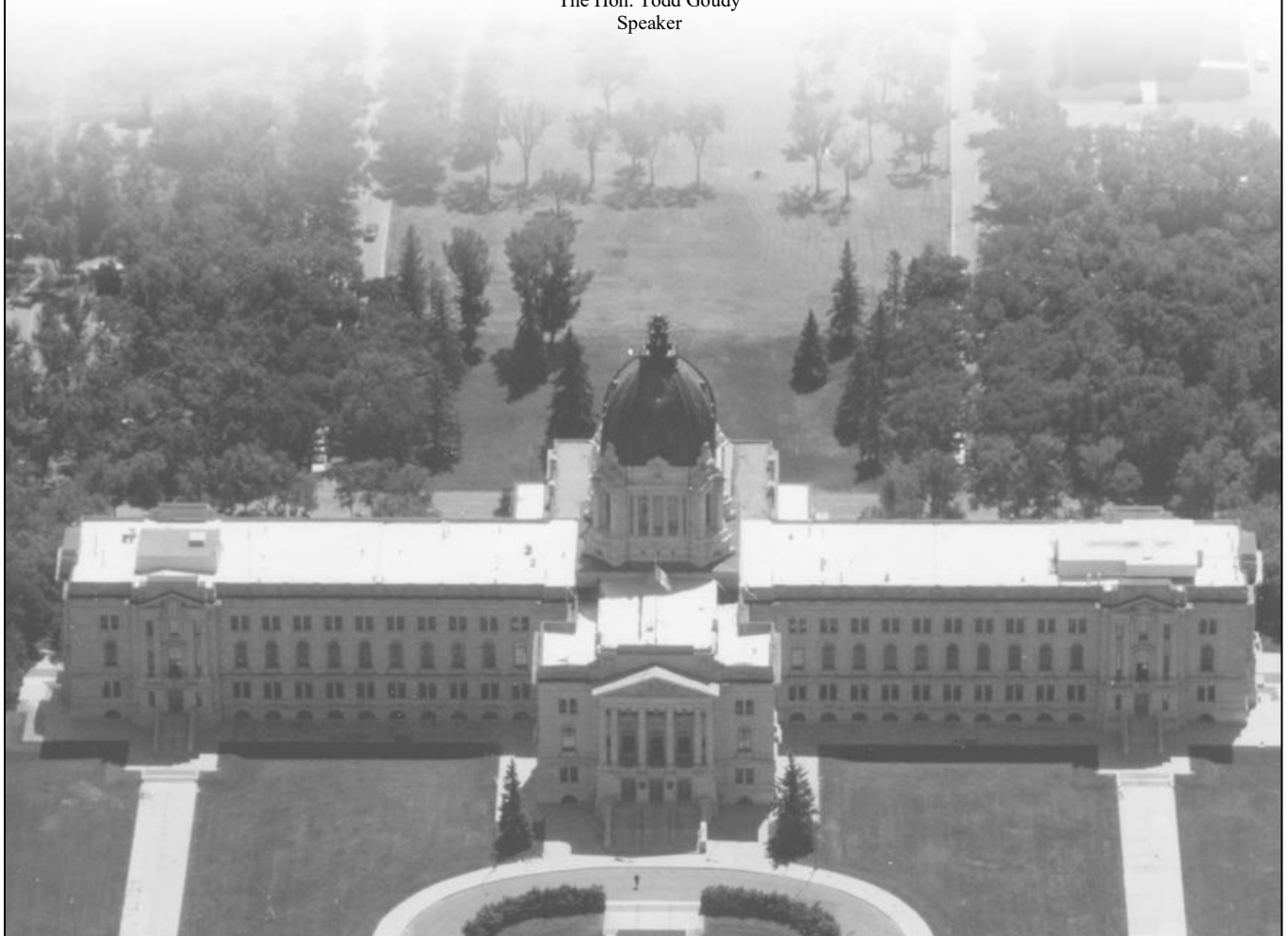
SECOND SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

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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Kasun, Kevin — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)
Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)
Kropf, Barret — Dakota-Arm River (SP)
Laliberte, Leroy — Athabasca (NDP)

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Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
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Schmalz, Hon. Eric — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)
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Weger, Hon. Michael — Weyburn-Bengough (SP)
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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Michael Weger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my pleasure to introduce Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote seated up in the west gallery. Barb is co-founder of Black Fox Farm & Distillery with her husband, John, Mr. Speaker. Last night I had the pleasure of having Barb out to Weyburn for the Weyburn Chamber of Commerce President's Dinner, and she did an amazing presentation for a packed room, Mr. Speaker.

This is an international success story, and it's a Saskatchewan distillery. And recently, Mr. Speaker, their whisky product has been offered in Air Canada lounges and, most recently, in the prestigious Whisky Shop in the UK [United Kingdom]. We've had a great discussion today about how important it is to build personal relationships and the importance of our trade offices all across the world, Mr. Speaker.

I'm really looking forward to attending Black Fox on July 30th when I believe the symphony will be there, Mr. Speaker. And if I've learned one important phrase today from Barb, it is that no doesn't mean never; it means not now. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask us all to join in and welcome Barb to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a tremendous honour to join with the minister, the member from Weyburn, to welcome Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote to her Assembly and to celebrate Black Fox Farm & Distillery.

This is really something that all of Saskatchewan can be really proud of. They are able to bring together, with incredible skill, some of the things that we're most proud of in this province, and they put a product out there to the world and to the people of our province that's just second to none. I know Stephanie, my wife, she's a big fan of their just beautiful gins that they put together.

And they've really put a lot of work into that farm and into that distillery. And it's a very fine example of a business that makes this province so proud while it also contributes in such a meaningful way to the local economy and to our province. So I welcome Barb here, and I celebrate Black Fox Farm & Distillery.

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

Hon. Warren Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join with the minister, member from Weyburn-Bengough, the member opposite to welcome Barb. Barb is a childhood friend of ours, a huge supporter of 4-H, and that's actually where

we first got to meet each other. She's a world adventurer. Certainly need to ask her about her travels around the world. She is also, like us, a Canadian Outstanding Young Farmer in 2001 with her husband, John.

You know, there's going to be case studies; there's going to be business classes taught about the marketing skills and abilities of Black Fox distillery. They're definitely, as you heard before, a very huge friend of trade and export development in our ministry. So again I'd like to ask all members to welcome Barb to her Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a great pleasure for me to welcome back to this Assembly a very dear friend and the best-dressed MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] in the history of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, Dana Skoropad, our dear friend and former colleague. This is the man who put the "D" in armed river, Mr. Speaker.

Joining Mr. Skoropad is the principal of Vanier Collegiate in Moose Jaw, Kelvin Turberfield. And we also have joining us 15 grade 12 students and 14 grade 10 students from Vanier Collegiate. So thank you very much for bringing these young folks to the Assembly. I look forward to an opportunity to chat later. And I would ask all members to please join me in welcoming these fine folks from Moose Jaw to this, their Legislative Assembly.

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

Matt Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take a minute to join the member opposite in welcoming Dana Skoropad back to his Assembly. Yeah, his suits are legendary in this Chamber. And I think I on many occasions made comments to my seatmate about what I think I affectionately called GQ corner, which was opposite over there. I thought it was a good joke. I hope it still works today. I'd just like to welcome Dana and all of his students and thank him for his work in education.

And while I'm on my feet, I'll take a minute to note that I'm again joined by my son Tom, who's with us again today for the second day in a row. Emma and the kids decided to stay last night due to some freezing rain on the highway, so I got to spend an extra night in Regina with my family last night. And I don't know. I guess he saw something that he enjoyed here yesterday, and he decided to come back for another day to join Dad at work. So I'd invite all members to join me in welcoming Tom back to his Assembly today.

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

Barret Kropf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to join my colleagues in welcoming Mr. Dana Skoropad back to his Legislative Building. As you know, I have the opportunity to walk in his footsteps and be the MLA for Dakota-Arm River now. But Dana, you're a great leader. And I know that as you led in this side of the House, you're going to continue to do great work back in the school there at Vanier and across all of

education.

And I really appreciate the fact that you've got a green suit on today. It's very fitting and representative. And I know that as we try to match up, as other colleagues are trying to add some colour — and this is about as bright as I'm going to get — I really do appreciate that you do not have an orange suit in your repertoire and you never will. So welcome to your legislative, and look forward to hanging out with you afterwards.

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

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet to recognize some individuals in the east gallery. I'm going to start with the youngest constituents of Saskatoon Stonebridge in the gallery today: Harper and Rowan Josdal. Harper's five and she goes to Chief Whitecap School, and her teacher is Mrs. McDonald. And Rowan is three and travels around with her mom day to day as she kind of provides her own child care while she's at work.

And while I'm on my feet, I'll also recognize their grandparents, Velma Harasen — Velma Harasen used to work in the Roughrider office; she's been recognized as a Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal recipient in 2021 — and no stranger to this Assembly, Mr. Lorne Harasen, arguably the voice of Saskatchewan before the voice of Saskatchewan.

Lorne had a half century of journalism on the radio here in our province. If you go back into *Hansard* you'll see many mentions of people saying, "I was listening to *The Harasen Line* this morning," or "on *The Harasen Line*" all throughout. Your impact in this province, your ability to be cordial and respectful to your guests but also firm and tough with your lines of questioning, it's so admirable and something that everyone on both sides here tries to follow as we go through our day-to-day business. So with all that being said, Mr. Speaker, I'd like the Chamber to welcome these fine folks to this, their Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, we are also joined by a very special guest. Her name is Shannon Josdal. Shannon is the executive director for Sask Jazz Festival and a constituent of mine. Her whole family is incredibly talented, and she's definitely of that same line. She's an incredible vocalist. My colleague beside me actually was her vocal teacher growing up in the city of Regina.

So I hope everyone gets a chance to meet Shannon after question period today. I hope everyone gets a chance to support Sask Jazz Fest in July. She's been working so hard to keep it the cornerstone of music festivals in our province and arguably in our country. So with that, I will also be bringing a member's statement forward regarding Shannon shortly. But please join me in welcoming Shannon Josdal to this, her Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Alana Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow the member opposite and also like to welcome Shannon to her Legislative Assembly today and thank her for the important work that she does in our cultural part of our province and with the music.

I actually had the opportunity to attend the jazz festival here — I'll try to get to Saskatoon's this year — and found out it's a wonderful experience to go. And I found out I actually like jazz music. So I didn't know that before. But thank you, Shannon, for everything that you do. And I ask all members to please join me in welcoming and thanking Shannon today.

Speaker Goudy: — I wanted to welcome . . . In the Speaker's gallery we have Eftakhar Alam Bhuiya. And he is a co-op student with the Office of the Clerk working in policy coordination, and is also completing his master's in leadership studies here in Regina at the U of R [University of Regina]. And so welcome to your legislature. And please join with me in welcoming Eftakhar to his Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Tajinder Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to build a school in Brighton, Saskatoon. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that the community of Brighton and the surrounding communities in Saskatoon have seen a sharp increase in population in recent years; that many schools in the city of Saskatoon are at or over capacity; that the community of Brighton was promised a new K to 8 [kindergarten to grade 8] school but have seen no clear timeline on its construction; and that its new school is needed to fulfill the educational needs of the thousands of new families that are moving to Brighton and its surrounding communities.

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

Respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately prioritize the building of the Brighton school, with definite plans to open doors by the 2028 school year.

The petition has been signed by the residents of Brighton, Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Vicki Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to increase the number of highway pullouts in Saskatchewan.

These citizens wish to bring to our attention that highway pullouts are critical for allowing driver safety — for drivers to stop safely for inspection, switching loads, or addressing emergencies without obstructing traffic flow. And under the

National Safety Code standard 10, drivers must inspect their loads every 240 kilometres or three hours to prevent cargo from shifting or spilling.

Without these safe pullouts, these required checks put both drivers and other road users at risk. Previous commitments made by the Government of Saskatchewan to build more pullouts have not been fulfilled.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately increase the number of pullouts in the province so that operators can meet safety requirements.

This is signed today by citizens from Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan on service disruption maps.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that Saskatchewan hospitals are experiencing hundreds of service disruptions affecting patient care and putting lives of people at risk; that the residents of Saskatchewan deserve to know what care is available and when it is available in their communities in real time; and that municipalities should not be responsible for maintaining provincial responsibilities; and that the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] maintains a service disruption map, a website, and a comprehensive list of services but does not allow the public to access this website.

[10:15]

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately make public a full list or map of existing service disruptions.

The individuals who have signed this petition reside in Regina and Sedley. I do so present, Mr. Speaker.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Arcola Curling Club's Bonspiel Celebrates 125th Anniversary

Daryl Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Arcola Curling Club is preparing for its 125th anniversary. They plan to celebrate this milestone with a five-day bonspiel this month. 125 years operating a community club — what a great accomplishment. Some quick math takes the club's origins back to the early 1900s. That's a lot of curling over the decades.

A quick history lesson on curling taught me that the first curling

game on record in Saskatchewan happened in Prince Albert in 1882. So a fully formed club in Arcola 125 years ago is impressive to say the least.

To mark this celebration, Mr. Speaker, the club will be featuring curling but will come together as a community and add in a banquet and entertainment as well. In addition to the anniversary, the Arcola Curling Club plans to honour the late Cody Grimes by naming the event the Cody Grimes Memorial 64-Rink Bonspiel. Cody was a dedicated curler and active member of the Arcola community.

With excitement building, organizers say this bonspiel will be one to remember. People will be coming together from many communities within my constituency for the love of the sport, the love of the community, and a little friendly competition. I wish the Arcola Curling Club great success with their event. And my most sincere congratulations on this terrific milestone anniversary, 125 years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Musician Promotes Arts and Culture

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan is full of amazing musicians, artists, and advocates for the arts, and Shannon Josdal of Saskatoon Stonebridge adds her own incredible counter melody to that harmonic group. Shannon was born and raised here in Regina, Saskatchewan. At a young age she was immediately drawn to singing, piano, flute, and more. She performed in multiple bands, choirs, and orchestras throughout grade school, and eventually graduated with a vocal performance degree from the University of Western Ontario.

Proving herself as a performer with further studies and opportunities in New York city through musical theatre, Shannon returned to Saskatchewan in 2012 and shifted towards not only teaching music privately but managing talent at venues, including Creative City Centre, the Bassment, and hundreds and hundreds of shows for all of the SIGA [Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Inc.] casino properties.

In 2021 Shannon Josdal became the executive director for Saskatchewan Jazz Fest, one of North America's most successful, widely recognized, and beloved musical celebrations. She has navigated the festival through challenging post-COVID times, moving the festival from Bess Gardens to Victoria Park. And just yesterday she announced their new title sponsor for the festival, TD Bank [Toronto-Dominion Bank].

She has admirably brought such acclaimed Canadian and international acts to Saskatoon, so it's time for folks to get their tickets for 2026. We can't wait to rock out to Yukon Blonde, Noah Cyrus, Modest Mouse, and Bruce Cockburn this year. And thank you, Shannon, for promoting arts and culture in our province.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Air Ambulance Provides Care for 80 Years

Travis Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month our province celebrated an incredible milestone in public safety and health care. The Saskatchewan air ambulance has served eight decades of providing critical care transport in Saskatchewan.

SAA [Saskatchewan air ambulance] operates four medically equipped airplanes with services available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, completing about 1,500 patient transfers annually. Flights are staffed by specially trained air medical crews that include critical care flight nurses and critical care paramedics. This makes air ambulance the oldest formally recognized non-military medical transport program in North America.

Eighty years and 78,500 patients later and the service is still going strong. One of those patients, Mr. Speaker, was my daughter, two days old, being rushed from Shaunavon to Royal University Hospital NICU [neonatal intensive care unit] in Saskatoon. Everything worked out well, but only due to the team at Saskatchewan air ambulance providing that critical service across the province.

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and my family, thank you to the pilots, medical professionals, engineers, and more who keep this absolutely vital air ambulance service operating for 80 years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Students Learn about a Member's Role in the Legislative Assembly

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in February I had the privilege of speaking with grade 7 students at Caroline Robins School in my constituency. Their teacher Ms. Thornhill invited me to visit her classroom and talk to the students about my role as the MLA for Saskatoon Westview. I cannot emphasize enough how delighted I was to be in the classroom again, interacting with students and observing their learning over the course of the lesson.

As a former educator, I made sure to consult the *Saskatchewan Curriculum* to understand the outcomes and indicators for the theme of power and authority in grade 7 social studies. Our outcome for the lesson was, “to investigate the structures and processes of democratic government in Canada.” And the indicator was to describe the roles of elected representatives.

With those in mind, I summarized the various duties of an MLA, conveying to the students our roles in the Legislative Assembly as well as within our portfolios and within the constituency. The students were very engaged and asked excellent questions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my thanks to these very special students and to their teacher, Ms. Thornhill, for giving me the opportunity to visit their classroom. These students are our future leaders, and it is wonderful to see them embracing their educational opportunities and thinking critically about government. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw

Wakamow.

Historic Milestone Will Change Epilepsy Care

Megan Patterson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to mark World Epilepsy Day, a day to raise awareness and show support for the 12,000 Saskatchewan residents living with epilepsy.

Today also marks a historic milestone for health care in our province. Saskatchewan's first stereotactic robotic epilepsy surgery has been successfully completed at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon. This new technology is changing epilepsy care in our province, bringing advanced diagnostic and treatment options closer to home. It means patients can now access highly specialized care without needing to travel out of province, staying near their families and support system.

Mr. Speaker, this achievement was made possible through the generosity of donors across our province, led by a major gift from Merlis Belsher and family, and the leadership of the Royal University Hospital Foundation. This technology is a key component in comprehensive epilepsy care. It enables more precise diagnoses, efficient procedures, and ultimately improves quality of life.

Through our government's patients-first plan, we will continue our commitment to put patients first, ensuring the right care is available at the right time in the right place. I ask all members to join me in thanking the generous donors who made this advancement possible.

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

Constituent Is Named Saskatoon Citizen of the Year

Erika Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mildred Kerr, a constituent of mine who many of you may know, a fierce advocate, and an inspiration to us all. I am honoured to congratulate Mildred on being named CTV Saskatoon's Citizen of the Year for 2025.

In 1996 she was among the first recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal. She is a founding member of Equal Justice for All, the Saskatoon Food Bank, and the Poverty Action Coalition, and has volunteered for the Saskatoon Open Door Society and Saskatoon Interval House. She is also a proudly card-carrying member of the Raging Grannies and the Canadian Federation of University Women, where she volunteers her time alongside my mother, Eleanor Ritchie. All while devoting her early career as a social worker at the Saskatoon Community Clinic.

I'll leave you with Mildred's own words:

Each of us has been given a different set of skills. It may not be advocacy; it might be cooking. But do use what skills you've been given to make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, we are fortunate to have Mildred Kerr in Saskatoon Nutana and in our province. She keeps us humble. She keeps us honest. And she reminds us why we are here standing up for the people of Saskatchewan. Please join me in thanking Mildred

Kerr.

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

Remembering Derek Meyers

Hon. Michael Weger: — Mr. Speaker, Saturday, March 28th marks three years since Derek Meyers lost his battle with cancer at the age of 45. And as I now stand here at the age of 45 myself, I can only hope that I can accomplish half of what Derek would've accomplished had he remained healthy.

Mr. Speaker, last night I watched Derek's budget reply from 2022. In reply to a previous comment from the member from Regina Rosemont, Derek offered for the member opposite to join him as his seatmate so that member could see what a government MLA in the back row was capable of.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Derek accomplished plenty from the back row. He helped bring fibre internet to the people of Walsh Acres. He was a strong advocate for mental health supports. And he played an important role in the parkade project at the Regina General Hospital. Derek also inspired me to become an MLA, and he continues to inspire me to be in my seat every day. Despite his failing health, Derek showed up. Two weeks before he passed away, he was in his seat, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Derek's legacy is proof that a member in the back row on this side will always be capable of way more than sitting in the front row on that side. So, Mr. Speaker, on Saturday I encourage you to watch the Oilers game and cheer for the Oilers or just sit and listen to some Guns N' Roses, but remember our friend Derek Meyers, the best MLA to ever serve Regina Walsh Acres. We miss you, Duke.

QUESTION PERIOD

Affordability and Provincial Budget

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, for the first time in a generation, Saskatchewan's population is declining. People here in this province are struggling to pay their bills more than anywhere else in the country, and our health care system is on its knees. The Sask Party's bad-news budget, well there's nothing to address any of this, Mr. Speaker. And that is why it's time for change.

Later today in this Assembly, there's going to be a vote. How can the Premier continue to defend this bad-news budget that fails to address the issues that are facing Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan communities?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, this is precisely why no one in this province can take the NDP [New Democratic Party] seriously, Mr. Speaker. What we saw introduced on the floor of this Assembly — and rightfully we're going to have the opportunity to vote on later today — is the best budget in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

It is a budget that is truly protecting what matters in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Protecting our health care system.

Funding a patients-first initiative that's going to offer the right care in the right place at the right time, Mr. Speaker. Improving health care outcomes for Saskatchewan families across this province.

It's a budget that is investing in education, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that our K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] students, our educators across this province are supported, Mr. Speaker, with the expansion of specialized support classrooms.

It's a budget that certainly is going to protect the very strong nation-leading economy that we have in this province, Mr. Speaker, the nation-leading economy that Saskatchewan people have built, with 60 projects now over \$62 billion of investment in this province growing our jobs, growing our opportunity for today's residents and the next generation, Mr. Speaker.

This is certainly the best budget in the nation of Canada. We are going to have an opportunity to vote on it in just a few moments, Mr. Speaker. And it's a good-news budget for the people of Saskatchewan, and it's a bad-news budget for the NDP.

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

Carla Beck: — Well let's recap, Mr. Speaker. People in this province are struggling to pay their bills more than anywhere else in the country. But, boy, you wouldn't know it listening to that Premier and all of his bluster. As far as he's concerned, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province, they just don't know how good they have it under his government.

Here's a funny thing. Actually, Mr. Speaker, it's not funny at all. Moose Jaw food bank is now limiting visits to just one visit per month because they can't keep up with demand, Mr. Speaker. His bad-news budget was actually cutting funding for food banks in this province, Mr. Speaker.

[10:30]

This out-of-touch Premier, this out-of-touch minister yesterday revealed with his comments that he simply does not have a clue about what is going on in his own portfolio and how bad it is for people in this province right now.

So I'm going to ask him this, and I'm not going to ask for sometime in the future. Will the Premier, will the minister go to the Moose Jaw food bank today? And maybe then it will get through to them just how much people in this province are struggling. And maybe, just maybe, Mr. Speaker, are they going to do something about it?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — The minister, on the floor of this Assembly, has spoken at great length to the supports that are in place in this province, Mr. Speaker, for people in communities right across Saskatchewan.

In an unprecedented way, when we saw in this nation inflationary challenges of 5, 6, 7, 8 per cent, Mr. Speaker, this government stepped forward, as I say, in an unprecedented way and provided \$2 million over two years to all of the food banks across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget, which we are going to vote on very shortly, certainly continues to provide those supports for the entirety of Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Speaker. And we are going to see quite precisely in a few minutes whether the NDP opposition actually support the half billion dollars of affordability measures, adding to the \$2 billion annually in the budget already, a total of two and a half billion dollars of affordability measures, Mr. Speaker, cutting the costs and making Saskatchewan more affordable for virtually everyone across the province of Saskatchewan.

We are going to see very shortly whether the NDP opposition support those . . .

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

SaskPower Rates and Affordability

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, whether the Premier understands us or not, their decisions are driving up costs for people in this province. We see that at the food banks. We see that on our power bills.

And I'm going to read from the submission from SaskPower that they made to the rate review board. And I'm going to quote: "The decision to extend the life of existing coal-fired generation assets was not driven by a determination that coal-life extension represents the lowest cost generation option."

So in their own words the Premier chose an . . . Well the minister's pretty excited to get up, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, people would like to hear some answers from him.

But let's recap for the Premier. He chose an option that he knew was going to make people's lives more expensive in this province, make things more expensive for industry in this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, my question is simply this, and it's to the Premier: was he informed by the eager beaver over there, the Minister for CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan], of the plan . . .

Speaker Goudy: — Comments like "eager beaver," that's certainly not parliamentary comments towards an hon. member.

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, was he informed by that minister that the plan that he brought for SaskPower was not the least expensive option?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — I understand that, I believe a beaver is actually Canada's national animal. It's on many of our emblems, Mr. Speaker, and a very hard-working animal as well I'd say. Which is maybe somewhat relative to the effort and hard work that the members of the Government of Saskatchewan take on behalf of their constituents each and every day, Mr. Speaker.

That's very much shown in this particular budget with the initiatives that are coming forward, Mr. Speaker, being delivered on in this budget, lowering taxes for everyone across the province of Saskatchewan regardless of where you live, regardless of what

you do, Mr. Speaker.

And we are going to see the differences between the opposition and the government party in this vote, Mr. Speaker. The largest investment protecting Saskatchewan health care, the largest investment in long-term care is happening right here in Regina. It's funded in this budget. We're going to see if the members opposite, including the Leader of the Opposition, vote against that investment, Mr. Speaker. An urgent care centre in the city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, funded in this budget. We're going to ask and see if the members of the opposition support the city of Saskatoon in that construction of that important piece of health care infrastructure, Mr. Speaker.

We most certainly believe that this is the best budget in Canada. It delivers for the people of Saskatchewan regardless of where you live, Mr. Speaker. It's a good-news budget, Mr. Speaker. It's bad news for the NDP.

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

Carla Beck: — The only truly frightening thing is, Mr. Speaker, I think he actually believes it. But here's my question. Can the Premier — simple question, and to the Premier — can he inform this Assembly how much his plan to extend coal is going to cost people in this province?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, this province has the second-lowest utility bundle of any province in the nation in Canada, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that is committed . . .

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — I'll mention a few seats here: Regina Elphinstone-Centre, Regina South Albert. Just a comment there to Regina Wascana Plains. If you want to be speaking out loud, certainly from your desk. No, no, no, just from your desk if you're going to be speaking out loud.

I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, this province has the second-lowest utility bundle of any province in the nation of Canada. It's a big reason, a large part of the reason why Saskatchewan remains the most affordable province in the nation of Canada. Mr. Speaker, this government certainly has made and taken initiatives to ensure that our entire utility bundle, including the rates that we pay for power, Mr. Speaker, continues to be affordable.

And that is why we are seeing record investments, Mr. Speaker. Over \$62 billion, 60 projects total that are investing in this province because of the stable power supply that we have. The most notable and recent is the data centre right here in the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker. But with respect to policy, Mr. Speaker, may I add there's no carbon tax on any of that power that is being provided, making Saskatchewan the only carbon tax-free province in the nation.

But may I ask the Leader of the Opposition if she agrees with her critic? When we lowered power rates 10 per cent after the 2020

election, delivering on a campaign commitment in that particular budget, the critic for SaskPower had said that giving a 10 per cent power rebate to large donors is certainly not good policy. Mr. Speaker, does the Leader of the Opposition agree and stand behind her critic?

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

Aleana Young: — Wow. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's clear the Premier has no idea what's going on over there. His minister, Mr. Speaker, just to bring him up to speed, the Minister of CIC told *The Globe and Mail* that the coal refurbishment project was going to cost the people of the province \$1.9 billion. And yet, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower says it's going to cost the province \$2.6 billion.

Now I know math is a struggle for some members over there, but that is \$700 million more than what that minister told *The Globe and Mail*. And SaskPower, they admitted — I'll remind this House — the decision to extend the life of existing coal-fired generation assets was not driven by a determination that coal-life extension represents the lowest cost generation option.

So, Mr. Speaker, why is that Premier proceeding with an option that we know is going to double power bills for people in this province?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of CIC.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well where to start, Mr. Speaker? This is Exhibit A why nobody in this province takes that critic or the NDP seriously on any of these questions, Mr. Speaker.

SaskPower put the number exactly into the rate review panel submission on the savings of using life-extending coal versus the NDP option. That number, Mr. Speaker, \$21 billion that are going to be saved by proceeding on the path of life-extending our thermal generation assets and moving straight to nuclear versus their option of putting the carbon tax back on SaskPower, shutting down 1500 megawatts, putting 1,400 people out of work, Mr. Speaker, devastating two communities in the process of doing so, and destroying the reliability of our power grid while doubling rates in five years. That's their plan, Mr. Speaker.

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

Aleana Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. People, families, farms, small businesses, the biggest industries across the province — they know that's not true, Mr. Speaker. But let's give the Premier perhaps some more news that he can use because, I guess, \$700 million, it just doesn't matter, Mr. Speaker. We also learned from SaskPower that, under this minister, SaskPower's debt ratio will exceed 80 per cent this year.

SaskPower confirmed, Mr. Speaker, that even before that minister's \$136 million power bill hike, more and more and more people are struggling to pay their bills. The Sask Party's plan for electricity is already \$700 million more expensive than the minister told *The Globe and Mail* and possibly, Mr. Speaker, the Premier. And that was before this \$136 million rate hike. We

know it's going to double people's power bills. This plan is a disaster, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister, will he listen to families, SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan], the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business], chambers, and now SIECA [Saskatchewan Industrial Energy Consumer Association] and scrap this terrible plan and his rate hike?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of CIC.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well thank you. Thank you very much. We see every day demonstrated from across the way, Mr. Speaker, why nobody takes that critic seriously and why nobody takes the NDP seriously. Because their plan, Mr. Speaker, is a catastrophe. Their plan is putting the carbon tax back on SaskPower bills, Mr. Speaker. And in fact they were very upset when we took the carbon tax off of SaskPower bills.

They were also enraged, that member was enraged on a 10 per cent cut, Mr. Speaker, for industrial power users. So we took that off, Mr. Speaker. We took the carbon tax off, Mr. Speaker. We are saving the ratepayers . . .

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — Some comments along the way, but it's so loud I can't even . . . I'm not sure if you're able to hear but, Minister, continue, please.

Let's have decorum in the Chamber.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well once again, Mr. Speaker, this is why nobody takes that critic and the NDP seriously. Our path going forward was put in the rate review panel submission by SaskPower of saving ratepayers \$21 billion, Mr. Speaker. That's SaskPower's number of what we are saving versus their approach, which would double power rates in the next five years, destroy the reliability of our power grid, and not allow major investments like \$12 billion from Bell Canada to go forward, Mr. Speaker.

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

Construction and Maintenance of Schools

Matt Love: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the SaskPower minister are contradicting each other on the plan for SaskPower. And the Premier and the Education minister aren't on the same page when it comes to delays for school capital projects being delayed because of this bad-news budget.

Now the minister told the media that he could get them a list of school capital projects being delayed in this budget. But the Premier said the opposite, said that no list exists. Lucky for us, they sit next to each other in the Assembly. So could the two of them have a quick conversation and decide which one of them is going to stand up, tell this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan who's got it right and who's got it wrong?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, there's about three rows over there of completely wrong individuals when it comes to anything in this province, Mr. Speaker. Speaking of which, Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of what's being done when it comes to capital projects in this budget, Mr. Speaker. And the member for Walsh Acres . . .

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of projects that are under . . .

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, I'm going to ask for the rest of this question period that you keep your comments to yourself . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'm going to ask that you keep your comments to yourself for the rest of the question period, please.

Minister.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to provide some clarification on a list that the members opposite were referring to, earlier this week, in the budget about a number of projects that they are saying that are not moving forward and they need dollars allocated to them. Mr. Speaker, there have been, just as an example, in La Loche. That was one of the communities that they listed on their list, Mr. Speaker. La Loche had a brand new school that we just opened this past fall. Myself, the Premier, several cabinet ministers were up there. As a matter of fact, I think the member for Athabasca was present for that particular day as well.

In addition to that, in 2019 significant renovations in capital invested into the other school in La Loche, the high school, Mr. Speaker. That is just one of the many investments that this government has made into school capital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Matt Love: — Mr. Speaker, budgets are about choices, and choices have consequences. Now it's a shame that students in Carlyle, Campbell Collegiate, and east-end students here in Regina have to suffer those consequences. People are worried that their new school or their needed renovations will be delayed or cancelled by this bad-news budget.

[10:45]

And they have a good reason to be worried, Mr. Speaker. This year's budget cut school capital funding by 35 per cent. Now that minister knows exactly which projects are being delayed or cancelled by his budget. He knows. He is the one who said that a list of delayed projects exists. So the question today, will he release that list today?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, there are no projects being cancelled, Mr. Speaker, despite what the member opposite thinks or what he says in this House or elsewhere. No projects are being cancelled in this province, Mr. Speaker.

I had an opportunity to talk to a number of community leaders, school board Chairs around this province about the status of their projects. In the case of Carlyle, had a very good meeting the other day, Mr. Speaker, with the mayor, the board Chair, and the trustee for that area just to provide an update on that project and how it's moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

When we speak of lists, by the way, and I mentioned yesterday that there was a mention about the list, a mention of the community of Grayson where the member from Regina Rochdale had said that that is on a list. And an individual had commented and said, actually, please take it off the list because they have a new playground, a new daycare, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Regina Rochdale has doubled down, Mr. Speaker, and has said that actually that school should be on the list. And, Mr. Speaker, the individual, the member from Regina Rochdale said, "Quit. Stop. Quoting trolls in the House is risky business." Mr. Speaker, that's what the member of Regina Rochdale referred to that member on Facebook, who by the way is a . . .

[Interjections]

Speaker Goudy: — Okay, before . . . Please sit down. Thank you. Member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, I don't . . . I would like to make a comment. We could stop the clock.

Why is . . . Okay, please stop the clock. I really don't want to revoke access to conversations. I don't want to name people. Yesterday I said I was going to be firmer. I'm trying to be firm, and it doesn't come natural. But I asked nicely to keep your comments to yourself.

And like I . . . This is a special day. I don't want anybody outside of the Chamber. I don't want people not to be able to speak up because it's nice to be able to, you know, make comments. It's important work. But I don't want to . . . So please could . . . This is not the right way to lead by allowing a second chance, but can I give you a second chance and have you keep your comments to yourself? Yes or no?

That's a serious question. It needs a serious answer. Are you able to keep your comments to yourself?

Meara Conway: — I'll do my best, Mr. Speaker. A lot of people talking in here today. I don't know why you're addressing me specifically.

Speaker Goudy: — Well from my seat, I can hear all the voices in the place. There are a few that are outspoken. And I know there's different character qualities and strengths and weaknesses in all of us, but there are a few that seem to be more outspoken than others and you are one of those. And so I asked for you to keep your comments to yourself.

If there's any problems with me pausing the things, I'm sorry, but it is important that we have decorum in the Chamber. This is a special day. We're going to hear from the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier, their comments, the Finance minister. I'm going to ask a last time. If not, I'm going to have to remove you, which I do not want to do.

Who is answering? Where are we at? Question? Whose question? We have a question from Saskatoon Nutana.

Supports for Vulnerable People

Erika Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, this is a bad-news budget that is not protecting the most vulnerable people in our province. And the underfunding by the Sask Party government is just the tip of the iceberg.

We hear daily from income support recipients that they can't get a hold of this government to get information on critical programs. This can be the difference between eating or starving, between sleeping with a roof over your head or sleeping on the street. It can mean the difference between life and death.

The people who can't reach this government are turning to us, in my office, for help. And even government-side offices are sending their constituents to my office. What does the Premier think I should tell them?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know what? This is a government that believes in helping the most vulnerable in our society, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program in this '26-27 budget that we're going to be voting on very shortly, our investment in the SAID is going to increase to \$322 million, Mr. Speaker. These are investments that are designed to protect the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

This is the government that introduced SAID in 2009, and we will certainly not be taking any advice from the members opposite on that. Maybe the member from Saskatoon Nutana wants to spin around in her chair and direct her feigned outrage to the member from Southeast who said, and I quote . . .

Speaker Goudy: — Okay. Minister, I'm going to ask that you would withdraw that — "her feigned outrage." Please, that's not the right kind of comments to be coming from a minister.

Hon. Terry Jenson: — I withdraw and apologize, Mr. Speaker. But that member from Saskatoon Southeast, and I quote:

I've talked to a lot of folks, and . . . [everyone] has very positive things to say about the Ministry of Social Services. You know, as I said, they speak so highly that in comparison to other ministries they rank it the best to deal with.

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

Erika Ritchie: — Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, that response from the minister does not reflect reality. It is just one failure after another from that side of the House. Cruel and callous cuts and policy changes in the Premier's bad-news budget are causing so much harm to Saskatchewan's most vulnerable. Funding for social services has increased a pathetic 0.4 per cent in this budget. And this morning we're standing with people relying on income support who say their monthly support doesn't even cover the cost of rent, let alone food, clothing, and other necessities.

Why has this Premier turned his back on the people of Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And this is a government that works hard to ensure that we're protecting the most vulnerable, the most vulnerable in our society, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that's going to be increasing SAID benefits for the fourth year in a row, Mr. Speaker, in this budget that we're going to vote on today. Over the next three years, SAID residential supports are going to be increasing by 30 per cent over the next three years. Mr. Speaker, we also have exempted a number of other benefits, including the Canada groceries and essentials benefit, the Canada disability benefit, the Canada child benefit.

There's GST [goods and services tax] credits, and there's a lot of other initiatives that are built in that we are providing to these clients, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that, like I said, we will be there to protect them. And that is work that we will continue to do.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provision of Health Care

Keith Jorgenson: — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, people from all across this province are being left in the dark by this government. Patients never know if their local rural hospital is going to be open or closed, but this minister, this Premier, they know. Unlike the public website, which largely misses dozens of closures and tells people largely what hospitals were closed yesterday, the SHA and this government actually have a website that tells people in real time about service disruptions at their local hospital. But they keep it private. We're talking about emergency medicine here, Mr. Speaker. Life and death matters.

Will this minister, will this Premier, make this website and this map public today and save people's lives?

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And to address my honourable friend from Saskatoon's question, you know, we've heard time and time again the innovations that are happening in patients-first and what's going to be addressed. And I remind the members opposite, in a very few minutes — and especially the members from Saskatoon, I think there's 11 of them over there — in a few minutes you're going to have an opportunity to vote on a budget that brings \$72 million to your city through municipal revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker.

In the area of health care 100 acute care beds, Mr. Speaker, they are coming to your city. You have an opportunity to vote on that very . . . An urgent care centre coming to Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, absolutely. New schools. Brighton — the largest, most innovative school in Western Canada is coming to Brighton, Saskatchewan, Canada, Mr. Speaker. And wherever you live . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 54 — *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2026*

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

Hon. Michael Weger: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 54, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2026* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Community Safety that Bill No. 54, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2026* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

Hon. Michael Weger: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

MOTIONS

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

Second Reading of Bill No. 612

Aleana Young: — Why thank you so 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: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — Leave is not granted.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

BUDGET DEBATE

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Jim Reiter that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed

amendment to the main motion moved by Trent Wotherspoon.]

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. David Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting the budget put forward by the Finance minister, seconded by my colleague from Carrot River Valley, and I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carla Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to take a minute to say just how much of an honour it really is to stand here in this Assembly and to be able to enter some remarks on the record with regard to this year's budget.

It's almost been 10 years since I was first elected, I think April the 4th. The member for Douglas Park and I and some members on the other side, all elected in the same year. And I remember the first time walking down that hallway, that sound of your shoes on the marble, and reminding myself to never forget what an honour it is, what a privilege it is to stand and represent the people of this beautiful province, Mr. Speaker. So I'm going to centre myself on that as I enter some remarks into the record.

Ten years — in some ways it seems like a long time ago, sometimes it seems like just yesterday. But I've seen the photos of when I first came and some of the photos now, Mr. Speaker. I think it's aged all of us a bit.

I do want to start by saying a sincere and heartfelt thank you to the Clerk and the Clerks' Table; everyone in the building and outside the building; all of the LAS [Legislative Assembly Service] staff; those in *Hansard*; those in broadcast services; the commissionaires; the folks who are in library services; Lyall and his staff, the Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. Speaker; Dani and her staff; just everyone in the building.

[11:00]

And you know, sometimes you can get pretty wrapped up in what's going on in here. And you see it just from a slightly different angle, you can realize how self-absorbed sometimes we can all be. I want all of those folks to know that even if we don't know exactly what it is that they do in a day, we all know — I certainly know — that we could not do what we do without them. And I'm just reminding myself to be grateful for that and all of their work.

And the Pages as well. Reminded yesterday, one of the Pages I saw leaving and obviously going to a second job. Thank you to all of you for what you do for us here in this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, it's a good reminder — my grandma used to get up every morning and do her devotionals — to centre ourselves in that gratitude. So I'm doing my best.

I want to say thank you to all of the staff that support us in the work that we do. Speaking of hard-working folks who I don't always know exactly all that they do, but I do know that they keep incredibly goofy hours and work all the time, and I want to thank each and every one of them.

Jeremy and all of the staff in the caucus office, all of our

directors, all of the fantastic staff that we have there. The folks that work in our constituency offices, Mr. Speaker, work in the party office, especially my own CAs [constituency assistant] — Michael Bell, as well as Donna and Ensa — who do a lot while I'm away and around the province. And to all of the volunteers, all of the people that support us, all of the people that support this fantastic team each and every day, I'm grateful for all of them.

I'm not going to spend a lot of time here because we all get a chance, and it's important, to talk about my family. Of course I think we all know that none of us serve alone, and we all serve with both the support but also the sacrifice of our families. Guy and I have been married now for almost 30 years. We've raised — and boy, they're all adults now which is something — three pretty great kids. And you know, I'll say it here, but hopefully they know every day how much they are loved and how much that love for them and their future, how much that played in the decision to do what I'm doing right now.

But not just them, Mr. Speaker, all of the kids in this province. And that really is also where I'd like to centre the work I'm doing.

Okay, to my team. They always say they don't want thanks but I want to thank them anyway — the Deputy Leader, our House team, our House Leader. I'm getting a look now, stop thanking people and get on to the remarks. Mr. Speaker, they're great, this whole team. This is a team that shows up, works hard every day because they love this province like so many, so many folks, Mr. Speaker. They want good things not just for themselves, but they want good things for all people in this province, including those who haven't been born yet, not just for today but into the future for a continued good life here in Saskatchewan.

And you know, there are so many ways that we are blessed in this province with abundance, with a proud history. I have been lucky enough to work with a lot of teams, a lot of really good teams in my life. I've even led some great teams before politics. This is a special team. And I know how lucky I am to get to work with them, let alone lead them. And it's not just me who thinks this, Mr. Speaker, because I hear it every day out there. They're special. They work hard. They're funny. Even sometimes some are not as funny as they think they are but they're still pretty funny. But mostly they are focused and they are driven to do good things for this province, Mr. Speaker.

But I'm going to say something. We talk too much about ourselves in this Assembly. And it can feel like this is the whole world sometimes in here. It's a lot of inside baseball. And honestly I do like to hear, you know, not only the babies born on this side, how the calving is going, I like to hear how the hockey playoffs are going, all of those things, Mr. Speaker, because it can take the edge off of the tension that we feel in here, to feel human, to feel connected. That's important. And I understand that urge. But this is not about us, and it should not be about us in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

We are here to talk about the budget. Not just this 70-plus-page document and the supporting documents, but budgets are and always have been about values — what governments choose to focus on or ignore. The bills that are contained in this budget, they tell you a lot about that government. And the decisions made in these budgets have real and lasting implications not only for

today but into the future.

And, Mr. Speaker, after 20 years those decisions pile up. They're cumulative. And for governments that have been in power for 20 years, the choices that are made pile up — the consequences, Mr. Speaker. And frankly, try as they might, this government after 20 years has itself to blame for the situation that we see in this province right now, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I see a government that is ready when there is a ribbon cutting, an announcement, when they want to wave a shiny new plan around. But when the consequences, when the accountability comes, Mr. Speaker, I see excuses. I see blame. I see pointing back, Mr. Speaker. That's the other side of responsibility and power is that accountability, and these guys are trying to hide behind a pretty small fig leaf right now in this province.

What also says a lot about a budget is how well it reflects the reality of the people that we all serve. And, Mr. Speaker, how this government can continue to try to evade responsibility and reality with this budget is honestly no small thing. As I said, that fig leaf is pretty small to hide a deficit, to hide a debt as much as that government is carrying right now. I was thinking of this budget and, you know, how full-throatedly the members opposite seem to be able to stand up in their place and pretend what's happening isn't happening out there.

And you know, as I mentioned my kids are bigger now, but when they were little they'd play hide-and-seek. And when they're about three years old, they don't have object permanence. And you know, they can pull themselves behind a curtain even if their whole body is exposed and think that no one can see them, Mr. Speaker. People of this province can see you, I would say to this Premier and to this government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to talk a little bit about the budget. And it doesn't take very long before the questions, the contradictions, the realities start setting in. I'm going to suggest . . . well I was going to say page 4 but it's actually page 1, *Protecting Saskatchewan*. But we can get back to that, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to focus on page 4. So page 4 of this budget, Mr. Speaker, they list a number of things that this government is proud of, that they claim that they're protecting in this budget. Well first one is protecting economy and jobs.

There's a lot that I want to say to this, Mr. Speaker, but mostly I think this says a lot of it. A letter from SIECA that we talked about in this Assembly yesterday, Mr. Speaker, saying because of this government's reckless and wrong-headed decision making they are not only putting 20 of the largest employers in this province and their 60,000 employees in jeopardy — those jobs, Mr. Speaker — they are actually tarnishing and impacting the reputation of this province and our ability to attract further investment into the future, Mr. Speaker. And that's no small thing.

Protecting families by reducing taxes. Well, Mr. Speaker, let's just talk about power bills. Let's talk about increases to insurance. Let's talk about their inability to do anything, something, to reduce costs for families, whether that's — they

don't like my ideas, but I'm going to say them again, Mr. Speaker — taking the PST [provincial sales tax] off of groceries, off of kids' clothing, temporarily suspending the gas tax. Anything, Mr. Speaker, is better than nothing for families in this province who are struggling more than anywhere else in this whole country.

Protecting patients by improving access and putting patients first. Well I will give it to the minister. He can deliver those lines confidently, Mr. Speaker, even with those health care workers in the gallery who so obviously do not recognize anything that that minister is saying as connecting with the reality that health care workers in this province face day after day.

0.3 per cent lift in this budget over last year, Mr. Speaker, 0.3 over what this government already spent last year. And no one over there figured out that they might have to eventually pay for a fair deal for those health care workers who are keeping our health care system intact right now, Mr. Speaker, for a contract, a fair contract that they've been waiting for for almost four years. Not a penny for that, Mr. Speaker, in this budget.

Protecting SaskPower customers by keeping our province carbon tax free. Well, Mr. Speaker, not a carbon tax, but a plan that would double power rates for the people of this province. And there is a pretty sternly worded letter again from the folks at SIECA, Mr. Speaker.

Protecting communities is one of the things that they talk about, Mr. Speaker, on page 4. But let's look at that. And I think people can see with their own eyes what's going in our communities. Yet this government is spending three times what they're spending on front-line officers in this province, sending a cheque to bankers in Wall Street and Bay Street because they have screwed up the finances in this province so much that that's what we're paying on debt in this province right now, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know if I can get through this whole list. Protecting vulnerable individuals with mental health and addictions challenges. Well, Mr. Speaker, the amount of young people that we're losing in this province right now to overdose and suicide, that alone should clue them in that maybe their plan is not as great as they think it is.

But I'm going to mention what's going on . . . I was hoping the member for Saskatoon was going to be in here, because . . . what's going on at Evan Hardy in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. And I think people know what happened there — horrible, unthinkable violence, mental health struggles. You now see folks in the school system raising their own funds like a GoFundMe to crowdsource mental health supports in our high schools, Mr. Speaker. But these guys are telling us they're protecting vulnerable individuals with mental health and addictions challenges. It's just simply not credible.

Then we get to protecting communities from wildfires. Well at least, Mr. Speaker, last year we had the minister responsible stand up and confidently tell us in the spring that, oh, we were prepared, Mr. Speaker. This year what did we get? We didn't get any more funding, and we got a Finance minister who maybe was a little more forthcoming but certainly didn't instill confidence in the people of the North when he said, well we hope, you know, we're hoping that it's not as bad as last year, Mr. Speaker. Hope is not a plan.

Protecting our education system and students. Mr. Speaker, a \$33-per-student decrease in this budget. And I stepped out for a minute. We didn't get the list, I'm sure, of all of the schools that this government promised. But we're not sure how many are actually going to be built.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on and on. This government, you would ask, you know, if they're not protecting health care, if they're not protecting Saskatchewan people, if they're not dealing with the issues that are most important to Saskatchewan people, what are they protecting? Who is this protecting?

I see a budget that is protecting some very fragile egos over there, Mr. Speaker. It's protecting the illusion that you can fail to listen, you can fail to learn, and that you can shirk from responsibility year after year, and the consequences will never catch up to you. That's what they're protecting, protecting them from the reality and the consequences of their own mismanagement, their own waste, and protecting the illusion that somehow they can hide all of this from the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: people in this province can see you. 43.5 billion is a bit of a pile to try to sweep under the rug. And the \$1.22 billion going to those bankers down east, well, Mr. Speaker, people are going to notice.

This province is vast. It is beautiful. In some ways there's a lot of geography, but it's one big small town in a lot of other ways. So many connections across this province, Mr. Speaker, and word travels fast. People talk.

To the Premier, to the ministers, to the members opposite I would say, you're not hiding what you think you're hiding out there. They think they can hide behind this budget. You think it will protect you from the consequences and the reality that people are facing. Well people in this province, Mr. Speaker, they don't like to get their boots wet and have these ministers tell them that it's raining. They know what's going on out there.

And if they want to continue protecting themselves and their illusions, Mr. Speaker, fill your boots. It's not my job to protect you. I am the Leader of the Official Opposition in this province, Mr. Speaker. Our job is to hold you accountable on behalf of the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, and . . . You guys are doing a good job of that.

But it's also our job to propose, and you know what? We're doing a lot of that too. Whether that's Grid & Growth; whether that is Your Care, Your Say; Your Future, Your Say; Mr. Speaker, this is a team that is out there proposing solutions each and every day. Because Mr. Speaker, the people in this province desperately need a team focused on solutions.

So I'm going to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, sometimes I come into this room and I get angry. I certainly do. I get frustrated when I hear members opposite not seem to understand, let alone take any accountability for what they're doing in this province right now.

But the good thing is you don't have to get very far out of this Chamber to see hope, because it exists everywhere in this

province. And it has, it has since time immemorial in this province. And this budget, you know, the back-and-forth in here, this shouldn't be what it's about. It should be about the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, and that's where I get my hope.

Recently I was at one of my neighbours' homes, someone who'd recently passed away. And, Mr. Speaker, this is someone who had come to be known in our community as, you know, the place where if you had a missing cat or you had a kid who needed a snack, if you had a block party that needed organizing whether it was on our block or it was on someone else's block, she was the go-to house. Took in students, Mr. Speaker. Just one of those people that I think we all know in our communities — the go-to place when you need some kindness, when you need something done.

Edith Mountjoy, she was born in a displaced persons' camp in Denmark in 1945 and emigrated to Canada in 1954. She lost her mom at a very, very early age, Mr. Speaker. And a lot of times people, when they face adversity, Mr. Speaker, they can become hard, become callous. No, most people don't though. That's not what Edith came to be known by. She said in her own biography in *Briarpatch Magazine* that she was fortunate enough to be raised by an intrepid woman, her grandmother, who showed her how to love the natural world and to care about social justice.

And as kind as Edith was, Mr. Speaker, she cared a lot about social justice. And she was one of the nicest people that you could meet. But if she came across a bully or someone punching down or someone ignoring the reality, she could be pretty darn tough, Mr. Speaker.

And I think all of us have known an Edith in our lives. I think of how she took responsibility for making the world around her better, Mr. Speaker. And she certainly didn't have the tools of government to do all of that, but she did everything she had to make this world a better place. And we're all better for having known her, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many people that I think of that give me hope. Sometimes, as I said, you don't have to go very far. We were over at the Ag-West Bio lobby the other day and — you know, innovators, people that are creative and connected and doing wonderful things in this province — and I heard a story that I really like. And I think it's . . . You can all look up. It's not a partisan story. It's just a good-news story about Saskatchewan and how we're seen in the rest of the world.

But they were talking about this person who worked across the Prairie provinces and how they were talking to a CEO [chief executive officer] in Calgary. And they said, you know, send me all of the Saskatchewan kids that you can send me. We know Saskatchewan kids, Saskatchewan people. They work hard; they were smart — all of those things.

But the real secret sauce for this CEO was these were people that were working in his company who knew how to build community. Who if they came into the workplace, you know, not only did they do their job well, not only did they show up and work hard, they also organized the hockey team. They organized the social after work.

This is a province of people who work hard, who play hard, and

who care about the communities around us, Mr. Speaker. This is and has always been our superpower in this province regardless of who and where people have sat in these seats. Mr. Speaker, it is with the people of this province that I have placed my hope. And they deserve so much better than they're getting right now.

I said my job is to hold this government to account. This team, our job is to hold this government to account, and we have done that. Our job when looking at this budget is to see if it meets the needs that we see out there in the community, the needs of the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, on that measure this budget fails miserably.

But it is also our job, Mr. Speaker, to show that there is a choice in this province, that it does not have to be this way. And, Mr. Speaker, I guarantee through you to the people of this province that that is exactly what this team will continue to focus on up until the next election. People in this province deserve accountability from this government. They deserve a budget that reflects reality, Mr. Speaker.

It is my privilege to stand here in this space today, deliver remarks on behalf of the official opposition. It is my absolute honour to be able to lead this team, Mr. Speaker. And it is, I think, for all of us a privilege to represent people in a province with such a storied history and such a bright future as we see here in Saskatchewan.

I will not be voting for the budget. I will be voting for the amendment. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And let me just start, as customary, with a number of thank yous. And let me just start with this, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to you and every other elected member on the floor of this Assembly for their service to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

This is a place for debate, to debate policies on behalf of the people that we serve, Mr. Speaker, and it is always about the people that we serve, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to offer my thanks to everyone that has put their name forward, been successful in an election regardless of the side of the Assembly that you sit. But thank you for your service here.

We know it takes much time away from family, in particular for those that live outside of our capital city, Mr. Speaker. And I think it is incumbent on myself, through each member in this Assembly, to not only thank them for their service but to just say a very big thank you to their family, their friends, and everyone that supports them in this service, Mr. Speaker. It is an honourable place to serve. It certainly is, Mr. Speaker.

I also, in doing so, want to thank my family: my wife, our children, Mr. Speaker, our family as it grows. I'm a very proud member of that family, Mr. Speaker, because my wife allows me to continue to be a member of that family, Mr. Speaker, and very much supports myself despite some of the ideas that I have, Mr. Speaker, or have had over the last number of years, like running for politics, like running for this position, Mr. Speaker. But it has been at times some of the most challenging work that I've experienced in my life. But let me say, to serve the people of this

province in this position as an MLA for the constituency of Rosthern-Shellbrook has been the most rewarding career that I have ever had in my entire life, Mr. Speaker.

Through members as well I want to say a thank you to everyone in your ministry offices, caucus offices on both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker, all of the public servants across the province, whether they be in the Crowns, the Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, all of the other ministries and agencies that we have. We are very well served, Mr. Speaker, by not just the elected members that serve the people of Saskatchewan, but we're very well served by the entirety of the public service.

And I have the opportunity to get across Canada and talk to, you know, other folks in leadership positions in various governments, Mr. Speaker, and I am always thankful to come home. And it is always because of the people, Mr. Speaker — the people in our communities, the people in our public service, and the people that are ensuring that Saskatchewan is not only a great place to be today but it's going to continue to be a great place into the future. And for that we are very blessed, Mr. Speaker. We are very blessed.

Mr. Speaker, more personally to the work that I do, I want to thank Sally back in our constituency office, who unfortunately doesn't get to see her . . . maybe fortunately in her mind, doesn't get to see her MLA as much as we did years ago, Mr. Speaker. We have Rhonda, Launa, and everyone in the Premier's office here in Regina as well. And just let me say, between the three of them, whether I'm in Shellbrook at our constituency office or here in the Premier's office, it is a true joy to come in in the morning because there is always a smile to greet you.

And in this day and age — and I want to speak a little bit to what's happening globally, Mr. Speaker — there are many divisions, and there is much going on in the world, Mr. Speaker, to the point that some mornings I'm a little nervous about turning the news on because I'm just not sure what the day is going to bring from a global perspective. But is it ever reassuring in this province, Mr. Speaker, and in this government to walk into your office in the morning and to be greeted with a smile, a warm, friendly smile, Mr. Speaker, by confident people and I would say competent people that do their job very well. And so I say thank you to each of them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, may I just make a comment on those uncertain times. And I'll come back to it in a bit as well. But those uncertain times have . . . you know, we see wars that are being waged — the Russian invasion of Ukraine, what's happening in the Middle East, Mr. Speaker. We see the consequences of all of this. We see a tariff-riddled conversation that's having impact, impacting our province and our nation both directly and indirectly, Mr. Speaker.

[11:30]

And we're seeing the consequences of that in this very budget that we've tabled on the floor of this Assembly. Comparative to other budgets across the nation, stacks up I would say very well. That's why I say it is the best budget in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker. And we'll continue to have confidence as we find our way through the years in protecting what is important to

Saskatchewan people.

And I want to talk just a little bit about, you know, my experience with Saskatchewan communities and Saskatchewan people. And they have an innate sense of understanding right from wrong, Mr. Speaker. They have an innate sense of understanding where they are going in their community, Mr. Speaker, where we are going as a province, what they are going to support with respect to that direction. And as well I would say as proud Canadians, Saskatchewan people have a very strong sense of where they would like to see their nation going, Mr. Speaker.

And in here are some of the policy disagreements that we have seen over the course of the last decade, some of them voiced by myself and our provincial government. But we must always remember, Mr. Speaker, that what we do in these positions is we represent those hard-working, innovative, very resilient Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. We represent them in this building. We represent them within the nation of Canada, and I would say often we represent them in other nations around the world, Mr. Speaker, in the various interactions that we have on their behalf.

And I heard a little bit about accountability, Mr. Speaker. And I want to talk and get a few facts, historical facts, on the record with respect to doing the right thing in the past. Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago, just over 20 years ago there was an election in this province. It was 2003. The NDP Party of the day circulated a cartoon that portrayed at the time the Saskatchewan Party leader as a Nazi. Mr. Speaker, that was a dark day in our province. Then NDP premier — not just the leader of the party, but he was the premier of the province — he took accountability for that action. He apologized and he fired the person that was responsible.

A little bit later during the 2016 election campaign there was another NDP candidate who said that, and I quote from an article, that "Brad Wall's mother should have taken the abortion pill." Mr. Speaker, the NDP leader of the day, Cam Broten, did the right thing. He apologized and he fired that candidate — four of them actually — and he fired the campaign manager.

Now I think the Saskatchewan people, and myself would be among them, would agree that these are pretty ugly things to do and they don't pass the test of what we want to see in our communities, our society, or our provincial politics.

But to Premier Calvert's credit and Cam Broten, the leader of the opposition's credit, they acknowledged that. They took accountability. They said, this is unacceptable, has no place in our party or in our province. And they removed the people that were responsible.

Now we've discussed this, Mr. Speaker, more recently. The Leader of the Opposition appointed a new campaign director. And he sends out a fundraising email telling people to think of the faces of the member from Moose Jaw North, member from Meadow Lake, the member from North Battleford. Think of their faces and hate them.

And what do we see done since then, Mr. Speaker? Yeah. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. We saw two predecessors who had done the right thing when faced with a similar challenging

situation. They took accountability. They said, it's unacceptable; it has no place in our party and no place in our province. They apologized and they dismissed the people that were responsible.

And today we see none of that. In fact we see it defended. We can only assume that the NDP Party of today and their leader see this as acceptable. It does have a place in the NDP Party.

We see the person responsible who not only continues to be the campaign director but continues to be funded and paid by the people of Saskatchewan as chief of staff. This was not who the NDP were under Premier Calvert. This is not who the NDP were under the leadership of Cam Broten. But unfortunately — and I say truly, from the bottom of my heart — unfortunately this is what we see today.

I don't think it's working for the NDP Party. I don't think people want to hear about how terrible our province is, day in, day out. In fact what we see here is . . . And I don't think the members opposite actually totally agree with this as well. They have an imported chief of staff, campaign director from the province of Alberta who seems to think that his job is to convince these members to run down our province in every way and every day, Mr. Speaker.

And I think, unlike the NDP, there certainly is something to be proud of, living in Saskatchewan. I feel that Saskatchewan people, as Saskatchewan people do, that people should go into health care, unlike the member opposite, Mr. Speaker. I think that we should not hate the people that we disagree with. I think we should respect those differences, Mr. Speaker.

This, Mr. Speaker, is not working for the members opposite. And I don't think it's working for the people of Saskatchewan as well, as they look at what is happening, Mr. Speaker, in the NDP Party of today.

The people of Saskatchewan that I know, Mr. Speaker . . . And I will go back even further now as to how our Saskatchewan communities were built. It's people from all over the world coming together, Mr. Speaker, and they had differences, let me tell you. They had differences of opinion. They had differences in their values, Mr. Speaker, coming from cultures around the world. However they realized and they knew that if they were able to respect one another's differences, come together, Mr. Speaker, to build stronger communities time after time after time across this province of Saskatchewan, that they could make for a stronger community by focusing on the strengths that they have, the points of agreement that they have.

And we saw that, Mr. Speaker, by people coming together to build community halls, building hockey arenas in those communities. And you can drive through any one, Mr. Speaker, including yours. People come together to build the strength from their community, Mr. Speaker. And I would suggest that people today can come together by focusing on the points where we agree, Mr. Speaker, respecting that we have differences, but come together and continue to build our Saskatchewan communities, our Saskatchewan economy, the investments in the services that Saskatchewan people expect, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and that is the Saskatchewan that I know.

A short story about my . . . In the early '70s, Mr. Speaker, our

hockey arena that we had had, it was too small, it was old, and it needed replacement. Mr. Speaker, the people that lived in that community, they were led by folks like John Groenen, Mr. Speaker, George Kendall, and many others. And they were like, how are we going to be able to afford to build a hockey arena here? And they started fundraising, Mr. Speaker.

But they needed more than funds. And so fall came and one of them had a saw mill, Mr. Speaker. A few others had chainsaws. Off to the bush they go in the winter, Mr. Speaker. They start cutting down trees and they start sawing lumber. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I think it's 1,000 or 1,500 pounds of nails in each rafter, Mr. Speaker, that they built, Mr. Speaker. They went to the bush. They brought the lumber in. They sawed the wood, Mr. Speaker, and it's in our hockey arena there yet today. And two years later it opened, Mr. Speaker. It opened, and our community had a hockey arena.

I don't for a moment think that all of the folks involved in building that particular arena agreed on everything. But they agreed on the fact that they believed in their community, and they were going to come together to build that arena because they knew that it would not only serve them . . . In fact it didn't serve them very much. They were, you know, the age I am now, Mr. Speaker. And sadly, and much to the problem for the Edmonton Oilers, I'm probably past my prime when it comes to my hockey career. But they knew it would benefit their children and their grandchildren and generations to come.

That's what Saskatchewan's about. That is what our Saskatchewan communities are about. And you can see that infrastructure. You can see the results of people coming together, community after community after community. And I see it every week when I travel down the road.

Now let me suggest that is what this budget is about, Mr. Speaker, is protecting the very fabric of what Saskatchewan people have built. Today, Mr. Speaker, we want to protect the services that we have. We want to protect the economy that we have. We want to protect the fact that we are the most affordable province in the nation of Canada to live, Mr. Speaker.

And that's precisely what this budget does, is it protects the very fabric of Saskatchewan communities, our province more generally, and most importantly the families that we represent from the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding some very difficult decisions that had to be made in this budget and will continue to have to be made throughout the course of the year, partially due to the global unrest that we see. And we are a global player in our province, Mr. Speaker, with the economy that we have.

However in amidst those challenges are opportunities, Mr. Speaker, opportunities that we certainly are capitalizing on in this province. We're protecting our communities where everyone lives — including myself and everyone on the floor of this Assembly and the people we represent — with a record amount of municipal revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker.

In a very difficult year we had a difficult decision, Mr. Speaker. Are we going to continue with the formula for municipal revenue sharing, understanding our communities are having equal financial challenges with inflationary creep that we see in this

province and across Canada?

And we made that difficult decision, Mr. Speaker. It's part of our deficit, is that we ensured that we are supporting and are in partnership with that municipal revenue-sharing program with our communities. Over \$5 billion over the course of that program has been transferred to communities across this province. And we thank so many municipalities, municipal leaders, and our community leaders for the leadership that they provide, have provided today, and will provide into the future, Mr. Speaker.

We are further supporting our communities with infrastructure investments, whether it be health care, whether it be schools, whether it be the service of working through our transitional housing investments and the steps that individuals can take to make a better life, Mr. Speaker. Whether it be for those unfortunately that are challenged with — and this has impacted each and every family in this province, dare I say — but mental health challenges that we're seeing in today's day and age and all too often resulting in addictions.

Mr. Speaker, we are supporting through this budget not only the 300-plus beds that are up and operating, the recovery beds that we have committed to and are funding, but this budget funds the other 200 beds, Mr. Speaker, to get us to our commitment of 500 beds in this province, providing everyone, everyone, an opportunity for a recovery lifestyle.

That's the goal of the government, Mr. Speaker. That is what the Saskatchewan Health Authority and the entirety of the government is working towards, Mr. Speaker. Because Saskatchewan people who unfortunately may have a mental health challenge and unfortunately are living a life with addictions, we want to be a government that invests in their opportunity for a recovery. And that's going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Second to that, Mr. Speaker, and this second portion of ensuring that our communities are safe — funded recovery opportunities for individuals — but ensuring our communities are safe is the investments that we have made in law enforcement. 180 additional RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], the Saskatchewan Marshals Service, and most notably, I would say, the 100 municipal officers that are entirely provincially funded.

Never happened to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, prior. A hundred provincially funded municipal officers, increasing the number of officers in our major urban centres, keeping families safe so that they are able to go to the park with their family in the evening without feeling in any way fear for their safety, Mr. Speaker. That's at the very core: protecting Saskatchewan communities and families.

Mr. Speaker, this budget also protects . . . And this is much talked about, and I think members on both sides of the House would agree with this. This budget certainly protects the rate of investment and the rate of innovation that's coming into our health care system. And it's protecting the opportunity that we have to improve the outcomes in our health care system for Saskatchewan families.

We talk about the patients-first initiative that came out a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker. It's funded in this budget. The

patients-first initiative's goal is to offer that right care at the right place at the right time, Mr. Speaker. And again that focus is . . . the entirety of government focus on ensuring that is the case, Mr. Speaker. That patients-first initiative is very much, I would say, the focus of this government, not just through this spring, but it's also an ongoing conversation on how can we bring today's innovation, today's tools in to support our health care workers, to improve those outcomes and have a system that is entirely focused on those patient outcomes, Mr. Speaker.

And I would just hearken back to the Speech from the Throne after the election. And we talk in question period about the affordability measures that we had campaigned on in that election and were honoured to once again form and serve as government in this province. But there was two initiatives in that Speech from the Throne that we heard loud and clear through that campaign and I have heard since then that Saskatchewan people want to see, and they both have to do with health care.

[11:45]

First is the timely access to surgery and a diagnostic. And second is they want to have access to a primary health care provider. And when you look at the patients-first health care plan, Mr. Speaker, it very much is focused on those two initiatives.

So when it comes to accessing a timely surgery, the first thing we need as a government is a target. That was set just over a year ago: 450,000 surgeries over the course of the next four years. That would mean a record number of surgeries each year, Mr. Speaker. 100,000 surgeries last year. We are on track to achieve that, Mr. Speaker, but it is going to take commitment. It's going to take effort. And it's going to take investment, which is provided in this budget, protecting that ability to access those surgeries for Saskatchewan families.

We further committed, in this patients-first initiative . . . And I want to talk a fair amount about health care because it is a significantly important topic regardless of where people live in this province. But we had increased some of our targets or added targets in this patients-first initiative, Mr. Speaker, to have, by 2028, a three-month wait time for surgery. That is achieving a timely surgery for the people of Saskatchewan. That isn't going to be easy, and again it's going to take investments that are present in this budget and future investments as well.

We also want to . . . And one of the challenges in getting a timely surgery is having a timely diagnostic, Mr. Speaker. And so we want to have 90 per cent of those that are in need of a diagnostic being able to access that diagnostic in 60 days or less. In addition to that — and this is what this budget is talking about — is hiring surgeons and hiring nurses and hiring the support staff, Mr. Speaker.

Increasing our acute bed capacity is part of this initiative as well, not only to ensure that we have beds for people that might be in the emergency room — and I'll get to the urgent care centres in a moment — but increasing that acute care bed capacity so that it is not in any way a hindrance for the surgical flow that we have.

And so there's a number of moving parts, Mr. Speaker. They're laid out with 50 action items in that patients-first initiative, Mr. Speaker. And increasing over the last number of years our acute

care beds by in excess of 100. 120 I believe is the increase that's coming this year. All told over the last few years and in the next two, we'll be adding 400 acute care beds in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's a significant increase in our health care capacity for what has been a growing population across this province. And it is going to improve the health care outcomes, and it's going to support a more timely surgery wherever you live in Saskatchewan.

We are looking at . . . And this is an initiative where there's a policy differential across the floor of this legislature. But we are looking at, do we have opportunities to expand some of the publicly funded, privately delivered surgeries that we have in Saskatchewan. About 17,000 of them a year are being performed now, close to 200,000 since the inception of that program. Are there opportunities for us to expand that in areas where there's a high volume of surgeries and it's a low complexity of surgeries? Can we look to a third-party provider and enhance our surgical numbers as a whole?

And this is a sign of a government that is willing to look at and utilize any of the tools that make sense in increasing families' and individuals' and patients' access to a surgery in a more timely manner. And we are going to continue to look outside of the box of what traditionally maybe has been available inside our health care delivery system, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we are improving the outcomes in our health care system on behalf of the people that we represent.

As you know, I talked about a diagnostic, a timely diagnostic being important in accessing a timely surgery. In order to get a timely diagnostic or a timely surgery, you need a timely referral from your primary health care provider. So at the very core of the patients-first plan is that access to a primary health care provider for each and every person across the province of Saskatchewan.

And we are looking at what can we do to ensure that that is the case. We see the expansion of scope, Mr. Speaker, which I think is a significant step in this space, allowing health care professionals to work at the full scope of what they were trained to work at. And then aligning, Mr. Speaker, not only across the province, but aligning the scope of practice that we have in each discipline with what is the national best standards. Or what are nurse practitioners and RNs [registered nurse], LPNs [licensed practical nurse] doing in other areas of Canada. And if they're trained to do that here, can we allow that to happen here to give them the tools to provide that patients-first level of care that we know they always strive to provide.

The urgent care centres, I spoke of that earlier, Mr. Speaker. 65,000 patients have been through the urgent care centre in here in Regina. Very shortly we're going to vote on an investment in the urgent care centre in Saskatoon, the first of two that'll open in that community. We'll get another one open here in Regina, Mr. Speaker. Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, and North Battleford forthcoming as well.

Urgent care is different than emergency care, Mr. Speaker, and it is an opportunity for individuals that may have an illness that is more urgent than waiting seven or nine days to see a primary health care provider. They may have challenges seeing a primary

health care provider and their only option is the emergency room.

The urgent care centre is an opportunity for them to access that health care, that health care provider, in a timely fashion, Mr. Speaker. And we're very proud of that investment, and we're very proud to grow that investment in this budget, Mr. Speaker, to the community of Saskatoon and in future years certainly beyond that.

So we have expansions in acute care, Mr. Speaker. There's investments in emergency rooms. Mental health and addictions investments certainly are there. But we need qualified health care professionals to go into the urgent care centres to staff those 400 additional acute care beds. And that's why you see — as the Minister of Health often says and I may have uttered a time or two on the floor of this Assembly — the most ambitious health human resource plan in the nation.

We see further increases in that plan, Mr. Speaker, in the training at the College of Medicine of our physicians, increasing 20 more seats, Mr. Speaker. That was 60, that was 60 in 2007. We're up to I believe 128 seats training at the College of Medicine. 160 residency seats in the province today — also was 60 in 2007. Significant expansion.

And providing and focusing these 20 seats and all of the seats at the College of Medicine on opportunities for our Saskatchewan children to take their medical training, their physician training, right here in Saskatchewan, and very much — and I'm going to get to recruitment and the Saskatchewan health recruitment agency in a moment — encourage them to stay and offer those services in the very community where they were raised or another Saskatchewan community. That hasn't always been the opportunity regardless of the profession in this province.

Mr. Speaker, a 45 per cent increase in nurse practitioners, nurse practitioners' expansion of scope. The opportunity, the expansion of hiring, and the new remuneration model, allowing nurse practitioners to actually set up their own primary care clinics, Mr. Speaker. To have other professionals that are going to help them in delivering that patients-first level of care, I think is using today's innovation and tools to ensure that we are improving the outcomes in our health care system.

That's what Saskatchewan people expect us to do as a government, is to ask those questions, Mr. Speaker, and put in place those initiatives that are using today's innovation. Virtual care would be another one, Mr. Speaker. Wasn't really available I think even 8, 10 years ago; certainly is today. And when you think about your visit with a health care provider, whoever that might be — not necessarily a physician — you think of your visit with a health care provider, not all, but there's some of those that could be done virtually, at times maybe much more conveniently than actually going into a primary health care provider's office.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a note on virtual care and another point of policy difference between the opposition party and the government. But a note of thanks to, you know, Dr. Mendez, Dakota Whitecap First Nation, Mr. Speaker, for their real piloting of a virtual care model and a virtual care hub out at Dakota Whitecap. I've been there a number of times, Mr. Speaker. They today are providing virtual care supports to 29 communities, some in the North, some in rural areas of the

province.

And we're going to build on that success, Mr. Speaker, by opening the doors on virtual care so it's accessible across this province, further optimizing the opportunity for every Saskatchewan individual, every Saskatchewan person to have access to a primary health care provider. And in doing so, it's going to help us, I say, as an entirety of this province in accessing those surgeries in a more timely manner, Mr. Speaker.

On the health human resource plan . . . And I want to quote, and I've said this before, but the Government of Canada, the Job Bank states this about our health human resource plan. And I quote:

Recent labour market highlights in this sector [the health care sector] include remarkable results from the province's health human resource action plan.

Mr. Speaker, very much a positive for the delivery of health care in this province. But there's more work to do and we understand that, Mr. Speaker. And that's why you see us protecting that patients-first level of health care with the investments that are in this budget.

Infrastructure investments, yes. There's a hospital being built in Prince Albert, significant expansion of the services in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, starting to look at lining up 500 health care workers to expand those services. We see the largest and the most significant long-term care investment this province has ever seen right here in our capital city of Regina. There was expansion of acute care beds, the urgent care centre that's being built in Saskatoon.

The infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, is unlike, I think, anything we've seen for quite some time in this province, and it's necessary. And this budget, despite the difficult decisions, keeps us on a trajectory of not only continuing to build that infrastructure but continuing to fund and support that health human resource action plan, the expansion of the training seats, the recruitment, Mr. Speaker. Ensuring that we are going to be able to have the appropriate complement of health care workers to deliver that patients-first level of care, Mr. Speaker.

And that brings me to the recruitment piece. And prior to being elected in 2011, I was involved with the recruitment in my home community, Mr. Speaker. Back then it was physicians. So that has morphed, I think, into the entirety of health care professionals in communities right across this province, that we see local recruitment committees working towards — raising money, looking at innovative ways to attract people to their communities, housing, things like that, Mr. Speaker.

What we have seen through the evolution of our provincial recruitment committee that started as the Physician Recruitment Agency of Saskatchewan back in the day, or PRAS, went on, morphed into an organization called saskdocs, Mr. Speaker. And today we see the SHRA [Saskatchewan Healthcare Recruitment Agency], the Saskatchewan health recruitment agency, Mr. Speaker. We are going to change how the Saskatchewan health recruitment agency . . . and we're going to expand their mandate, Mr. Speaker, and move the points on where they interact with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, which is the operational arm,

the delivery arm of health services in this province.

The Saskatchewan health recruitment agency, Mr. Speaker, is going to do all of the recruitment in our province. The Saskatchewan Health Authority is going to provide the job openings, the career openings that are available by community and by facility, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan health recruitment agency is going to work with those local agencies, Mr. Speaker, those local organizations that are again, in a very Saskatchewan way, coming together to improve their community.

We're going to work together, Mr. Speaker, to bring individuals, whether it's through training opportunities, whether it's through people that are trained already, right to the front door of the Saskatchewan Health Authority so that they are able . . . we're going to bring the staff to them together, Mr. Speaker.

It's going to be local organizations, community leaders. It's going to be the Saskatchewan health recruitment agency, the SHA, and it's all supported by the Government of Saskatchewan to ensure that we have the health care workers in our communities, in the facilities, Mr. Speaker, available to offer the health care services that we, as Saskatchewan residents, expect.

Mr. Speaker, this is a marked change, and this is actually putting, in many ways, the power back into our communities to work alongside, being supported by government, Mr. Speaker, being supported by the Saskatchewan health recruitment agency. And in turn it's providing the Saskatchewan Health Authority the opportunity to focus on what they do best, which is deliver health care in facility after facility after facility and community after community after community, Mr. Speaker.

That is a nutshell with respect to the 50 action items that the patients-first plan brings forward this spring. They're funded by that budget, Mr. Speaker. And I wanted to speak about health care because this is what we have heard from Saskatchewan people: we need access to surgery in a timely manner, and we need access to a primary health care provider.

This is not the end of the conversation, Mr. Speaker, but this is part of the conversation with those 50 action items and answering those questions, working alongside with our communities, empowering people that live in communities across this province to be very much a part of the success of the health care delivery in their community, Mr. Speaker, and more broadly when we work together across the province.

And I'm very proud. And I thank the ministers of Health and all of those that have been involved in putting this initiative together, because it truly is going to provide us with the opportunity, the opportunity to access the right care in the right place at the right time.

And you know, normally I'd get up here and talk about the economy and all that is happening in Saskatchewan, and I probably should be doing that today because of what is happening here in the province of Saskatchewan. So a couple of short words on that.

[12:00]

But I chose to speak about health care because of the conversations that I and many members on this side of the Assembly have had with constituents within our constituencies and in other constituencies. And you know, I heard a lot of how a few members over there are the MLA for everywhere. But it's important, I think, as well — and I say that tongue-in-cheek — it's important for us, I think on both sides of the Assembly, to talk to everyone across the province and to listen to the people from across the province. And certainly members on this side have been doing just that as well.

This budget does protect what's important and the very fabric of Saskatchewan people and what matters in our province. It's by no means a perfect budget, Mr. Speaker. I'd like the deficit to be zero. Therein lies the difficult choices that we had to make about municipal revenue sharing, for example, the investment in expanding the College of Medicine and the nurse practitioner training seats. Those are difficult decisions when you know that your number at the bottom line of the budget is not going to be zero.

I do commend the Finance minister actually for making sure, unlike the members opposite in the last election, that the revenue and expense lines were in the appropriate place, Mr. Speaker. In good fun, Mr. Speaker. But when you compare this particular budget to budgets across the nation of Canada that have been released thus far, it does stand up quite well. As I say, it's not perfect but it does stand up quite well.

When we talk about the per capita deficits that we're seeing — and I had made the comment in the lead up to this budget that we're probably going to see deficits in every provincial budget this year due to the global unrest that we're having — \$646 is the per capita deficit of this particular budget in Saskatchewan. That needs to be zero, and we're going to strive to ensure that it gets there.

We see in British Columbia that number is about quadruple that, \$2,340. In Alberta it's about triple our number. Alberta's, pardon me, is \$1,864. Those are three of what is essentially four, maybe five non-equalization provinces. And when we get to the equalization provinces, those numbers start to skyrocket to 5, 6, 8 times the deficit per capita of what see in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And so we made some difficult decisions, Mr. Speaker. We came out, I would say, so far leading on a per capita deficit. From a per capita deficit perspective, it's the smallest in the nation when you account for those provinces that are continuing to collect equalization payments, Mr. Speaker, which is a discussion for another day.

One of the reasons that we were able to make the decisions that we did in this budget to continue with the investment and the trajectory in health care, in community safety, municipal revenue sharing, and partnering with our communities financially, Mr. Speaker, was the faith that we had not just in the economy in the province but the people that are driving that economy, the people that live in community after community across this great place.

We're seeing the results of the work, the effort, the resilience of those very Saskatchewan people. And I talk about 60 projects worth over \$62 billion. It's actually 61 as we speak now, and

there's more coming in the days and weeks ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Just let's think about that for a moment: 60 projects, \$62 billion. That is unlike anything that has ever happened in this province's history. I would also venture that it is unlike anything that is happening in any other province across the nation today.

It's the faith, the effort, the work, the resilience, the innovation that Saskatchewan people bring to generate the wealth, attract the investment, Mr. Speaker, that gives this government the confidence — and I would say the responsibility — to make those difficult decisions on behalf of folks of this province and families across it.

To make those difficult decisions and continue to ensure that we are delivering the services that they very, very much expect, Mr. Speaker, and all of the while, all of the while continue to ensure that our province remains the most affordable in the nation of Canada. That's a commitment we made in the last election, and that is a commitment that we continue to live by.

Mr. Speaker, whether it be engaging in markets around the world . . . and I was in China and India earlier this year working alongside our federal government. That's new for me and shocking for some. However I'm very happy to work alongside the federal government when it means we're able to open up markets for our canola, for our pulses, for our Saskatchewan uranium, Mr. Speaker.

We have a great opportunity to expand the trade of the existing items that we have, and in those 60 projects worth over \$62 billion, we're going to have more of those products to market globally in the years ahead, Mr. Speaker. And that's why the investment in international relations that this government has made, not on our own behalf but in support of the industries that are employing Saskatchewan residents, Saskatchewan families, providing wealth in our communities so that we can continue to build those very hockey rinks that I spoke about earlier, Mr. Speaker.

And we're very proud of that investment, and that investment has been happening for over a decade and a half now. And I would say that it's been accelerated over the course of the last eight or so years. And I've had to answer questions on the floor of this Assembly and in the rotunda with respect to what that investment is, Mr. Speaker — another policy difference between the parties that are here today.

But most certainly I think in today's day and age and that very uncertain global environment that we see, people are looking to Saskatchewan for more of what we produce. And meanwhile we're diversifying the products that we have. A data centre is a new space for Saskatchewan, only possible because we have protected the ability to have a reliable power grid here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and have a plan on how that's going to remain reliable and more sustainable in the future. That's what Saskatchewan people certainly expect from their government in this province.

We see today in those 60 investments — two of the three largest investments in the nation of Canada — that's who Saskatchewan is. That's what Saskatchewan people are attracting. We see in this patients-first health initiative 50 concrete action items that

are going to improve the outcomes in our health care system, ensure that Saskatchewan people have access to that care at the right time, in the right place. That's what Saskatchewan people expect from their government.

We see a government that is committed to investing in our education system, whether it be post-secondary or K to 12, in this very budget, Mr. Speaker, protecting our target and protecting and advancing our initiative in the way of expanding our specialized support classrooms — 50 more specialized support classrooms coming across the province — to support not only our educators but I would say, Mr. Speaker, most importantly supporting our students who are our children and our grandchildren.

We see this budget supporting and ensuring that Saskatchewan today is the most affordable place in Canada to live, and it's going to continue to be the most affordable place in Canada to live into the future.

Mr. Speaker, this is what Saskatchewan is today. There's a lot of things — some have been discussed recently on the floor of this Assembly — that I would suggest are not what our communities are about, what our families are about, and what our province is about. I truly believe that everyone on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, knows exactly what is important to Saskatchewan people and will do so in representing those people in an honourable way.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to serve with each and every member on this side of the Assembly, and I'd say equally I'm proud to serve with the members opposite as well. I'm very proud to represent the constituents of Rosthern-Shellbrook and more broadly the people of this province.

I'm very proud that this budget is not only the best budget in the nation of Canada, but it's a budget that definitely addresses what we're seeing happening globally in protecting the very fabric of our province — our health care services — protecting our education system, Mr. Speaker, protecting the very safety and funding of our communities, and protecting our economy that only makes the rest of that possible, and protecting the ability for our province to remain the most affordable province in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

This budget is very much, very much indicative of where Saskatchewan people are today — taking care of ourself, controlling what we can control, and ensuring that our great province and every community within it is going to be better tomorrow than it is even today, Mr. Speaker. And I would just ask that God bless this great province and all of the residents in it.

I'll be supporting the budget that was put forward by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Carrot River Valley. And for every year in a row that I've had the honour to stand in this Assembly, I won't be supporting the members opposite amendment.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Finance minister. Now you got me in trouble, standing up.

It's my duty, pursuant to rule 31(7), to inform the Assembly that

the Minister of Finance is about to exercise his right to close the debate, and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. The minister has no more than 20 minutes to close the debate.

So now I recognize the Finance minister.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to stand and close debate on a budget that will protect Saskatchewan. As all members of the House on both sides have done, everybody takes a few minutes to thank people who are near and dear to them, people who have helped them along the way, Mr. Speaker. I'll be no different.

I will be brief, by the way, Mr. Speaker. You said I have no more than 20 minutes. I will not be using my 20 minutes. I had the opportunity and the privilege on behalf of the government, on behalf of my caucus colleagues, to deliver the budget speech last week, Mr. Speaker. And I had great opportunity for input and to speak to the matters that we believe are important to the people of Saskatchewan.

So first to the thank yous, Mr. Speaker: my wife, Bonnie, who is so supportive of my political career, who was here last week at the budget speech, who was accompanied by her sister, my sister-in-law Sharie Jensen from Mildred. It was great to have them here. I think it was Sharie's first time.

So I had the opportunity to introduce them, but I didn't have the opportunity to introduce a couple other people who were here as well, Mr. Speaker, good friends from Rosetown: Geoff Legge, my constituency president; Norm McIntyre, our vice-president. Mr. Speaker, they become like family. I call on those guys all the time for everything, and it was great to have them here.

Another good friend who wasn't able to come this year, was here last year for my first budget address, Dwayne Moore of Rosetown, Mr. Speaker, who's also constituency treasurer. Notice how I get my friends involved in the campaign side of things, Mr. Speaker? Dwayne was in a bit of a farm accident, wasn't able to come. But he's doing well. I talked to him earlier this week and he's doing fine.

Mr. Speaker, on the thank-you list, now on to the budget. I need to thank the members of treasury board. I think last year I forgot one of them, so I have a list, Mr. Speaker: the member from Cannington, the member from Lumsden-Morse, member from Carrot River Valley, the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford, the Minister of Highways, and the Minister of Education, who's also the Vice-Chair and who also says that he's awesome, Mr. Speaker.

Treasury board puts in a lot of hours, Mr. Speaker. And frankly the Finance minister gets too much credit for the budget. You get to Chair treasury board but for most of the work, all the treasury board members are there with you. And I just want to thank every member of the treasury board for all their hard work.

Now on to staff, Mr. Speaker: my constituency assistant Kathie Parry, who was also here last week for the budget. Tomorrow is her last day. She is going to be retiring, Mr. Speaker, after I think it's about 18 years that we've worked together. Aside from a few months at the beginning, she's been here for most of my political

career. A well-deserved retirement. Her and her partner, Don, are heading off on a big vacation next week. I hope they have an incredible time. And from the bottom of my heart I want to thank her for everything she's done.

And Mr. Speaker, I don't want to forget the professional civil service, Deputy Minister Max Hendricks and all the staff at the Ministry of Finance, who also put in a huge amount of time assisting treasury board in our deliberations. It's incredible the amount of work they put in starting in the fall. People always think about budget in March. But as everyone in this Assembly knows, the work goes on for many, many months. And I want to thank them as well.

[12:15]

Mr. Speaker, the MLAs on this side of the House, my colleagues, had an opportunity over the last many months to be around the province in their home constituencies, other constituencies, talking to people in this great province, to see what their priorities should be. And that formed the basis for this budget, Mr. Speaker. And they heard repeatedly two key areas. They heard health care and they heard affordability.

On health care, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Minister of Health a couple weeks ago delivered the patient-first initiative. I had an opportunity to go into great detail on that last week during the budget address, Mr. Speaker. Many members of this side have talked about it as well, including the Premier today. I'm not going to get into that. I'm mindful of the time, Mr. Speaker. Just to say this: health care is so important to this province. I believe we are on the right path and I commend both ministers, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Rural and Remote Health, for all the work they've done in this regard.

On affordability, Mr. Speaker, I will just take a minute to talk about that. It's been debated on the floor of this Assembly many times. I will remind the members opposite as often as they say it, there is no PST on groceries, Mr. Speaker. There is on prepared foods. There is on chips and pop, Mr. Speaker, and it's going to stay on chips and pop.

Mr. Speaker, on other affordability measures I would say this: two and a half billion dollars of every budget has been going towards affordability measures, Mr. Speaker. And we've taken the approach — we believe strongly on this side of the House — that who knows best on where their money should go are the people themselves, not the government, Mr. Speaker. The government as much as possible . . . We need revenue to run, to provide all the services like health care and education and social services. But, Mr. Speaker, as much as possible, we should allow people to have their own money, to keep it in their own pockets, and to make the spending decisions that work best for them.

That's why I think personally even though there's a huge suite of affordability measures, I think the most important ones are the ones dealing with income tax, Mr. Speaker. We've decreased the amount of income tax that we are charging people, Mr. Speaker. I think that's the true affordability measures, Mr. Speaker. Let people decide for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, part and parcel with that were the personal, spousal, equivalent-to-spouse, child tax exemptions on income tax; the

Saskatchewan low income tax credit increase; and the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. Affordability was a huge part of this budget to protect Saskatchewan.

Just a couple of other items, Mr. Speaker, that are important to me. Before politics, I came from the municipal sector. Very proud of that. Still have great friends that have been in that business for a long time — reeves, councillors, administrators, mayors across the province — that have been really the true champions for their communities, serving their citizens, Mr. Speaker. And I commend them for that. So you'll understand when it frustrates me at times when I hear members opposite use phrases like “province downloading to municipalities,” those sorts of phrases, Mr. Speaker, because nothing could be further from the truth.

I want to give you the perfect example, Mr. Speaker, of how things have changed since 2007 when we were given the privilege of forming government. Mr. Speaker, in 2007 municipal revenue sharing, which in my entire career had never been tied to a true formula . . . It had always been, all of us in the municipal sector waited anxiously all the time for budget day to see what information we could get, to find out what sort of dollars would flow to municipalities. And during tough budget years, it frankly was scaled way back. Even during good times we didn't get a whole lot of it, Mr. Speaker. It was difficult.

So I was very proud to be part of a government that put in place a formula: three-quarters of one point on the PST, Mr. Speaker. So when the economy does well, as it's doing now, so do municipalities. They get the assistance from the provincial government. They can use it for whatever they see fit, Mr. Speaker. There's no ties to it.

So I just don't want to throw too many numbers at everybody, but this is important, Mr. Speaker. In 2007 municipal revenue sharing — the last budget before we formed government — total municipal sharing for the entire province, \$127 million, Mr. Speaker. So let's be fair. A dollar went further back then than it does today, so let's adjust that for inflation. Mr. Speaker, if you adjust that for inflation, that would be \$191 million today. If we'd have just stayed with the status quo, adjusted for inflation, 191 million. What is municipal revenue sharing this year, Mr. Speaker? 392 million, almost \$400 million.

Mr. Speaker, I've had a number of messages, every time that comes up in question period or it comes up in a speech one of the members opposite gives, from friends of mine in the municipal sector around the province who suggest strongly I point that out to them. So, Mr. Speaker, I thought I would take the advantage, the opportunity today to point that out to them.

Mr. Speaker, I've been here five elections. The years are flying by quickly. And I have over those years many, many times heard members opposite talk about disliking, and they'll use the phrase or a similar phrase to American-style politics. Because as we know that style of politics, not typical in Saskatchewan, but can get pretty difficult, Mr. Speaker.

Now I'm not talking about robust debate. That is what should happen in this House, Mr. Speaker. That's what question period is for. That's how the British parliamentary system is structured, Mr. Speaker.

But I'm talking about debate over policies, over public policy, not personal attacks. That in my view just simply goes too far, Mr. Speaker. Not hate. That vitriol is what makes the public think less of all of us in this Assembly. It makes them think less of all politicians. It's what makes good people not want to run for politics.

So, Mr. Speaker, the members who were targeted in that email are strong people, but what about their families? What about their children, Mr. Speaker? I was hoping that the Leader of the Opposition would take some action, but it doesn't seem she has so far.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just say this: I decided what would be appropriate in this case then, Mr. Speaker. I'll make my own list. I don't hate any members opposite. I disagree with them at times on public policy. As I said, that's what this forum is for. But I don't hate them.

Mr. Speaker, back to the issue at hand, I would say this: I decided to make my own list. I've been blessed in my life. I have a long list of people that I very much like. So I decided I would randomly pick four people off that list of people I like very much.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health, I like him very much. Bright young guy, good on his feet. He just had a brand new baby, a little girl, and a little boy; he has both now. He's a great family man. And he really, Mr. Speaker, he really, really is dedicated to his province — not his birth province, but his chosen province — and is very dedicated to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation. Been friends for a long time. Got elected together. He's holding up well. He still looks young. Mr. Speaker, he wears his passion on his sleeve. He's intelligent. Nobody, I would suggest in this Assembly, knows more about the British parliamentary system than he does. Mr. Speaker, also dedicated to his province.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice, who I've gotten to know and hold in very high esteem, Mr. Speaker. Intelligent and all around nice guy. Had a chat with him this morning, Mr. Speaker, and you know what was front of mind for him this morning? He takes his job very serious, but front of mind this morning was going to his son's hockey game. You see a pattern here. Also very dedicated to his province, Mr. Speaker.

And our Premier. Intelligent, hard-working. Probably the best work ethic of anybody I've ever met, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, those of us who know him well see him with his family. And here is the other thing we know about him — great work ethic, huge heart.

Mr. Speaker, these four people, we should thank them. We should show appreciation, Mr. Speaker. We should not hate them.

Mr. Speaker, I was very proud to move the original motion. I will not be supporting the amendment.

Speaker Goudy: — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment moved by the member for Regina Mount Royal, and seconded by the member for Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood:

That all the words after "Assembly" be omitted and the following be inserted:

does not approve the budgetary policy of the government because it fails to invest in cost-of-living relief, health care, and public safety while pushing the provincial debt to unprecedented levels; and further,

That the Assembly has lost confidence in the government.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:26 until 12:30.]

Speaker Goudy: — All those in favour of the amendment please stand.

[Yeas — 18]

Beck	Burki	Nippi-Albright
Mowat	Wotherspoon	Love
Young, A.	Clarke	ChiefCalf
Sarauer	Blakley	Grewal
Jorgenson	Brar	Gordon
Warrington	Pratchler	McBean

Speaker Goudy: — All those opposed to the amendment, please stand.

[Nays — 33]

Moe	Gartner	Kaeding
Marit	Cockrill	Reiter
Hindley	Harrison, J.	Cheveldayoff
Schmalz	Jenson	Weger
Keisig	Martens	Wilson
Beaudry	Rowden	Ross
McLeod, T.	Carr	Crassweller
Steele	Young, C.	Harrison, D.
Weedmark	Kropf	McLeod, B.
Patterson	Bromm	Hilbert
Chan	Thorsteinson	Kasun

Clerk Assistant: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 18; those opposed to the amendment, 33.

Speaker Goudy: — I declare the amendment lost.

The question before the Assembly is the main motion moved by the Minister of Finance and seconded by the member from Carrot River Valley:

That the Assembly approves in general the budget policy of the government.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — Those in favour of the motion please say . . .
Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:33 until 12:34.]

Speaker Goudy: — All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 33]

Moe	Gartner	Kaeding
Marit	Cockrill	Reiter
Hindley	Harrison, J.	Cheveldayoff
Schmalz	Jenson	Weger
Keisig	Martens	Wilson
Beaudry	Rowden	Ross
McLeod, T.	Carr	Crassweller
Steele	Young, C.	Harrison, D.
Weedmark	Kropf	McLeod, B.
Patterson	Bromm	Hilbert
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Speaker Goudy: — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 18]

Beck	Burki	Nippi-Albright
Mowat	Wotherspoon	Love
Young, A.	Clarke	ChiefCalf
Sarauer	Blakley	Grewal
Jorgenson	Brar	Gordon
Warrington	Pratchler	McBean

Clerk Assistant: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 33; those opposed to the motion, 18.

Speaker Goudy: — I declare the motion carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until Monday, 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:37.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe
Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Chris Beaudry
Minister of Energy and Resources

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Advanced Education
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Health

Hon. Kim Gartner
Minister of Highways

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Crown Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation

Hon. Everett Hindley
Minister of Education

Hon. Terry Jenson
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Warren Kaeding
Minister of Trade and Export Development
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Tim McLeod
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

Hon. Jim Reiter
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

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

Hon. Darlene Rowden
Minister of Environment

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

Hon. Michael Weger
Minister of Community Safety
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency

Hon. Sean Wilson
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement
Minister Responsible for the
Global Transportation Hub Authority