



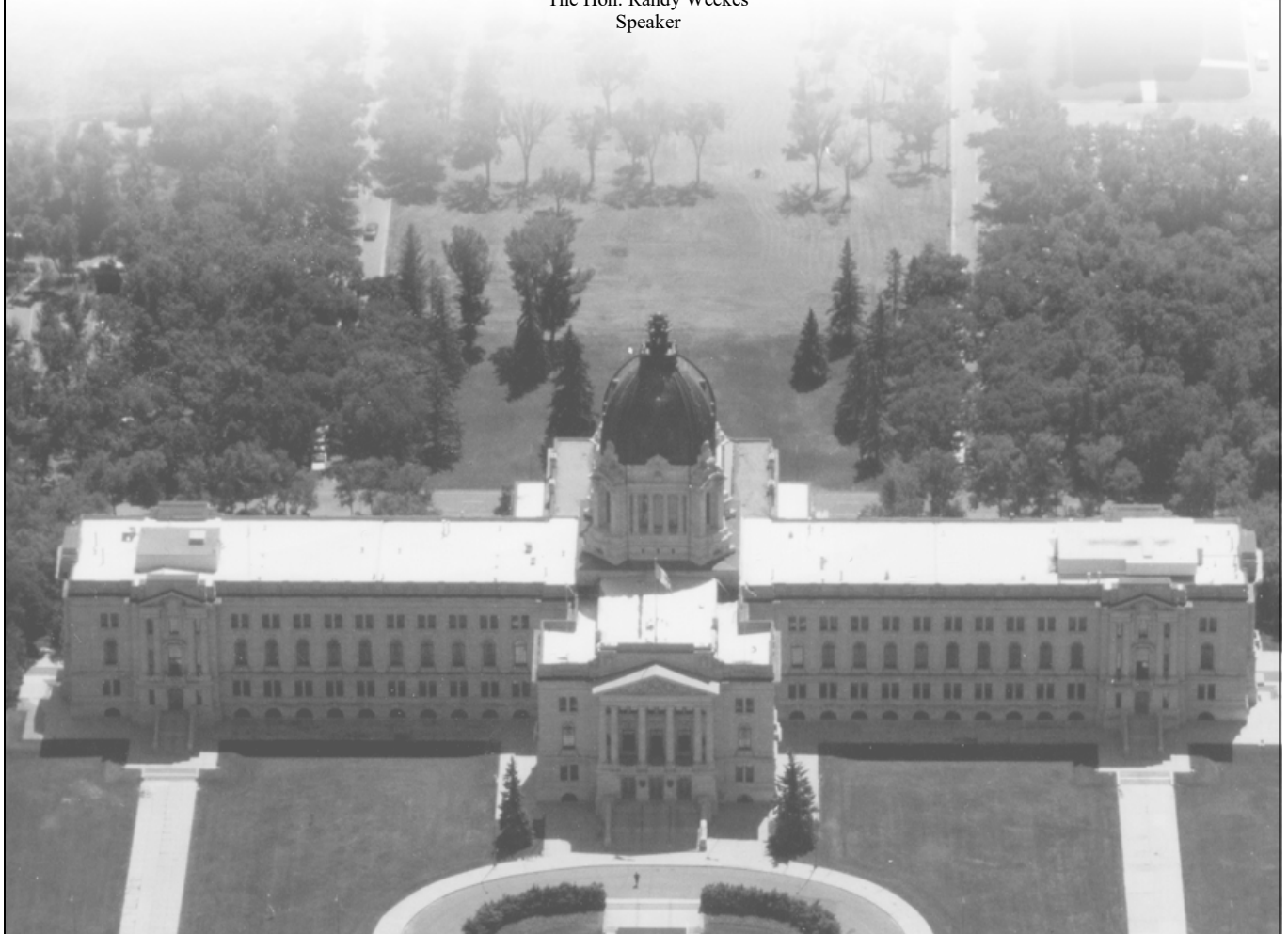
FIRST SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
1st Session — 29th Legislature

Lieutenant Governor — His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, S.O.M., M.S.M.

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)
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Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)	Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
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Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13

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Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyak

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — Yesterday, April 12th, 2021, the Opposition House Leader raised a point of order asserting that during presenting petitions, the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety orally presented a petition on the same subject as a petition presented by the member for Regina Rosemont. The Government House Leader responded in part to ask the Speaker if the intention of the rule was to prevent the government and opposition from presenting the same petition. I took the matter under advisement.

Pursuant to rule 16(3)(d), no more than one petition on a subject matter may be presented during the period for presentation of petitions. This, and other limitations on the oral presentation of petitions, were agreed to by the Assembly on December 12th, 2007 when the recommendations of the first report of the Standing Committee on House Services were adopted. The report very specifically states, and I quote, “Limitations have been placed on the period designated for presenting petitions: one hour maximum, one petition per Member per day, only one petition permitted on a particular subject per day.”

The committee did not differentiate between government and opposition, although in that era petitions were generally addressed to the government and sponsored by members of the opposition. That was the rationale for another change, which permitted the government to formally respond to petitions. This was meant as a matter of balance.

While I have some sympathy for what the Government House Leader argued, the fact remains the report and rule are very precisely worded. This is the first time that a member of the opposition and a member of the government have orally presented a petition on the same subject since the rule was put in place in 2007. If the two caucuses are to continue a competition to present the same petition, it is my recommendation that the matter be taken up by the Standing Committee on House Services.

I also want to point out the restriction is applicable only to the oral presentation of petitions. More than one petition on the same subject may be filed with the Table at any time during the sitting. For this reason, both of the petitions in question were accepted into the record yesterday.

As the rule stands, it is my finding that the point of order is well taken. Going forward I ask members to be mindful of this rule, that there seems to be a competition to present the same petition during the period for presenting petitions.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Coronation Park.

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for your ruling. Nav Canada is currently reviewing the air traffic control tower at the Regina airport. Although it is a private company, the federal government has three elected members on the board of directors, and the Minister of Transport will have oversight to the fate of this tower. The aviation industry has been one of the hardest hit during COVID-19 but will still play a vital role in the economic recovery of the province.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the federal government to advise Nav Canada to reconsider its position on closing the airport traffic control tower at the Regina International Airport, and to halt any final decisions until the global pandemic has subsided.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Regina.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to present a petition once again today calling for pay equity legislation. Mr. Speaker, on average, women in Canada working full-time make just 75 cents for every dollar earned by men. The pay gap for some women in Canada is even more pronounced: newcomer women earn 71 cents to the dollar; racialized women, 67 cents; Indigenous women, 65 cents; and women with a disability, only 54 cents to the dollar.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is one of only four remaining provinces that has refused to implement pay equity legislation. This is sexist and it is unacceptable.

I'll now 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 introduce pay equity legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the petition presented today has been signed by people from Prince Albert. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Beginning of Ramadan

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Assalamu alaikum; peace be unto you. I rise today as Muslims worldwide prepare for the start of Ramadan, which began last night with the spotting of the moon and will continue until May 12th. For many in Saskatchewan and worldwide, this month is an opportunity to focus on reflection and spiritual growth, forgiveness, patience, and resilience, compassion for those less fortunate and unity

across communities. It is a time to practise self-discipline through a month of fasting, a practice that would be hard to fathom for those who are non-Muslim. Muslims fast as an act of worship, a chance to get closer to God, and a way to become more compassionate to those in need.

I want to take a moment to recognize the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan which is located in Saskatoon University, and to say Ramadan Mubarak to my friends there. While fasting during daylight, many Muslims in our province will continue to serve on the front lines of our fight against COVID-19.

I call on all members to join me in recognizing the start of Ramadan and to thank Muslim communities across Saskatchewan for all they contribute to our province. To those observing Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr: Ramadan mubarak and Eid mubarak.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to acknowledge an important time for those who are practising the Muslim faith. This week on April 12th, the holy month of Ramadan began. When the thin crescent moon appeared in the sky, Muslims began to practise Ramadan, as it marked the new month in the Islamic calendar. Muslims across the world will be fasting between sunrise and sunset. Mr. Speaker, this fast called sawm is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. This tradition renews the focus on spiritual life and its practical application in daily life.

Mr. Speaker, the first experience that I had with Ramadan was when I was a Christian missionary in Albania. In 1967 all religious practices were officially banned in Albania, and the constitution was changed to declare Albania the first atheist state in the world. Once communism fell, Muslims and Christians returned to Albania in order to help the people re-establish their faith, where I personally witnessed Muslims sharing their food with the people of our community, especially during the time of Ramadan.

On behalf of our member from Regina Pasqua . . . I would personally like to say how much we like that guy. He is a true friend to everyone, and he is a very good representative of his faith to this city. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all the members of this Assembly please join me in acknowledging the beginning of Ramadan. Thank you.

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

Cathedral Community Fridge

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to recognize today as the official opening of the Cathedral Community Fridge, which showcases our community's solidarity and selflessness. But it also highlights the challenges people in our province are facing, Mr. Speaker. This pandemic has worsened food insecurities. The folks at the Cathedral Community Fridge saw this and took action. This is the third fridge to pop up in my constituency under the guiding principle "take what you need; leave what you can." As one volunteer, Emily Norton, said, "The most important aspect of this project is mutual aid, everyone helping when they can and not feeling ashamed of needing

support."

On behalf of myself and the member for Regina Lakeview, we wish to acknowledge all those who joined together to make it happen.

Thank you to Archangel Builders, Holy Rosary Cathedral, Always Roofing and Contracting, Ryko Telecommunications, The Ultimate Deck Shop, and Nu-Fab Building Products, Everflow Exteriors, Bengert Electric, Hughes Construction, The Rusty Shovel, Brunskill Construction, City Electric, Precision-Fit Doors, M&M Insulation, and Twin Flooring, and a host of volunteers. I understand the logistics were not easy, but thanks to the ingenuity and teamwork of these folks, the fridge is now ready to serve the community along our beloved 13th Avenue stroll.

While we continue to fight for the political alternatives that could end food insecurity today, I ask all members to join me in supporting and celebrating this project, a symbol of the power of community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Construction of New Schools in Regina

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand today to highlight some of our government's crowning achievements, and one in particular. Everyone in this House knows our government has a stellar record on education capital with new schools and major renovations, and this year is no different.

The construction of three new schools in Regina is part of our government's nearly \$190 million education capital plan for the 2021-2022 budget. This includes starting work on three brand new schools right here in the city of Regina: a new joint-use facility with two elementary schools in Harbour Landing; a brand new francophone school; and, Mr. Speaker, a joint-use facility with two elementary schools to replace St. Peter, St. Michael, Imperial, and McDermid elementary schools. These are just 3 of the 16 new schools that are in various stages of development throughout the province, a stark change from the days of the NDP [New Democratic Party] closures.

Our government is delivering for the people of Regina, and I can speak on behalf of my constituents who are quite excited for this new school to open. This is going to be a game changer, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Coronation Park and the community. And I ask all members to join me in recognizing the three new school builds in Regina. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Sikh Community in Canada

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to say Happy Vaisakhi to all. We are very passionate about equality, equal treatment for all, and equal rights for women at this time and age. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to share with you and my colleagues today that born on April the 15th, 1469, our first guru, Guru Nanak Dev, had these thoughts and principles over 500

years ago. Treat all human beings the same, regardless of colour, caste, or creed is the basics of Sikh religion. Everyone is welcome in our Sikh temple to pray, socialize, and to have meals together.

The history of Sikhs in Canada started with the *Komagata Maru* ship incident, from which a group of people from British India attempted to immigrate to Canada in April 1914. Most were denied entry and forced to return back. Mr. Speaker, we have come a long way since then and have become an integral part of the cultural diversity of Canada and have contributed a lot in our nation's economy.

Now I feel very privileged and honoured being the first Indian and the first Sikh person ever elected to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, and I thank each and everyone who has helped me to stand in this Chamber today. Mr. Speaker, now I would invite all members to join me in congratulating the Canadian Sikh community for their contributions to Saskatchewan and to the nation as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

[13:45]

Highway Construction near Prince Albert

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in my place today to recognize significant highways projects happening near Prince Albert. Mr. Speaker, construction will soon begin on passing lanes on Highway 2 and 3, and plans for twinning on Highway 3 are under way. Since construction, these highways have seen a lot of travel. From families heading to the lakes to commuters heading to the city and farmers moving their equipment, these highways are well used. That's why I am so grateful for twinning and passing lanes to begin construction, to not only give these well-travelled roads a facelift but to also improve their safety and flow of traffic.

Mr. Speaker, our government is investing \$520.1 million to improve the safety and efficiency of key highway corridors. This is a significant investment into our infrastructure but is an even more significant investment into the safety of our families and our communities.

Mr. Speaker, this is the hub of the North. I've spoken with many of our local governments and municipalities and they can't wait to see construction begin in our area. Mr. Speaker, I now ask all members to join me in celebrating these highway projects.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw North.

Saskatchewan Air Ambulance 75th Anniversary

Mr. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year will mark the 75th anniversary of the Saskatchewan air ambulance, the oldest non-military government air ambulance in the world. This vital emergency response service dates back to 1946 and has continued to be a lifeline for all corners of our province since its inaugural flight. And to celebrate this milestone, our government will be showcasing videos and footage of the air ambulance to feature the incredible impact this service has had on

Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the air ambulance provides province-wide emergency medical evacuation 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service has also adjusted its training program, security, and call rooms to enhance safety measures for its staff, so they can operate safely during the pandemic. Mr. Speaker, on average, the air ambulance flies approximately 1 million kilometres per year and averages about 110 flights per month. Since 1946 it has transported more than 71,000 patients.

Mr. Speaker, this significant anniversary gives us an opportunity to celebrate our front-line health care workers who will, quite literally, travel to any corner of the province to help a patient in need. Mr. Speaker, I now ask members to join me in recognizing the 75th anniversary of the Saskatchewan air ambulance and to join me in celebrating the many lives saved by this critical service. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Matthew Cardinal's name became known to many of us in this province when his mother, Dianne Desjarlais-Cardinal, shared her story of his story, his time in the ICU [intensive care unit]: a 34-year-old man who found himself intubated in Regina's intensive care unit. And it was just a really clear example of how the virus has changed, how it's making younger people sicker.

A few days later, or nearly two weeks later, in response to a tweet from Dr. Shaw, who shared this story and encouraged Matthew in his recovery, Matthew replied, "Dr. Shaw, I'm alive," which was a great joy to see. But he hasn't stopped speaking up since that moment, Mr. Speaker. And today Matthew is speaking out against a government, against a government that failed to protect him and so many other young people as the spread of the variants of concern made this virus so much more dangerous here in our province, Mr. Speaker.

When will this Premier stop denying the seriousness of the third wave in Saskatchewan and protect people like Matthew Cardinal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The variants of concern that have arisen not only in Saskatchewan but across Canada and originated, in many cases, in other areas of the world, Mr. Speaker, are much more transmissible than the original COVID virus was. And that has caused us to continue to look out virtually at a daily basis as to the measures that we have in place, Mr. Speaker. And we've increased those measures today.

There was a news release that went out a little, short while ago indicating that Saskatchewan, yes, is increasing our public health measures to ensure that we are finding that balance of keeping people safe, ensuring we're finding that balance of preserving our hospital care capacity, Mr. Speaker. And we do have a couple

hundred people in the hospital — 202 people in the hospital right now.

We're also ensuring, Mr. Speaker, that while we are doing that, we are unrolling the most robust vaccination plan in the nation. As of last night, we were just under 300,000 vaccines provided to Saskatchewan people. I presume we went past that 300,000 at some point here this morning. Over the last seven days, we have delivered 70,000 of those 300,000 vaccines, Mr. Speaker.

So we are an all-hands-on-deck effort here, Mr. Speaker, increasing measures here today to ensure that we're safe through the last number of weeks — possibly a month or two — of this COVID pandemic. But also ensuring that we are finding a path through this pandemic and providing those vaccines to Saskatchewan people as quickly as we receive them.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, front-line workers in Saskatchewan, workers like Matthew who works as a server in a restaurant here in Regina, they're doing much of the heavy lifting during this pandemic. They ensure life goes on. They ensure we're still able to eat, to get access to all the things that make life possible. They do so much work. And we need to do more than just thank them; we need to support them.

First responders, delivery drivers, servers, grocery clerks — they've been taking great risk with little reward in a province with the lowest minimum wage in the entire country. And that risk has only multiplied with these more contagious and dangerous variants.

And Matthew and I, we had a really good conversation last night. And he shared the trauma of his experience in the ICU and his ongoing physical and mental challenges that he's still dealing with weeks after being in hospital. As he hears more stories like Matthew Cardinal's, Mr. Speaker, does the Premier regret ignoring the reality of the third wave for as long as he has?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, you know, I understand Matthew's call as well as so many other folks that would like to access a vaccine sooner, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is, is we just simply don't have enough vaccines to deliver them to everybody immediately.

And so what we are trying to do in the early days, Mr. Speaker, is with some priority on age, but also some priority, yes, has been given to some geography as well as certain occupations here in the province. We're trying to ensure that we have the ability to deliver those vaccines that we do receive, which have been relatively few to this point when you compare us to other nations, for example the United States. We're ensuring that as we receive them, we're making them available to Saskatchewan people as quickly as possible.

We prioritized the far North. We did some in the North, down into Regina. We've prioritized this area, moving out now into the surrounding communities, and just recently, Mr. Speaker, did prioritize a number of our first responders as well as our additional health care workers, Mr. Speaker, and ensuring that

where we can continue to preserve that capacity and provide some vaccines to some of our front-line folks in grocery stores and pharmacies, that we're doing that as well.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Premier made a choice. He chose to ignore expert advice. He chose to ignore the guidelines. He chose to ignore the people at highest risk who were asking for help.

Matthew, for example, took every precaution at work but he still got sick. His early days in the hospital are foggy, but he remembers the moment when staff told him he needed a ventilator. On the advice of his health care team, with only 10 minutes to spare, he sent a goodbye message to his family and friends via Facebook. He said, and I quote, "I literally was waiting for my turn to die." This was entirely avoidable. And sadly, as these numbers continue to rise, stories like these are becoming all the more common and our ICUs are being filled.

The Premier's flip-flopping, confusing vaccine schedule has made it much more difficult for people to be protected. Does the Premier agree with Matthew's call for him to follow the guidelines, fix the rollout, and protect the people who are working on the front lines?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, there has been the vast majority of Saskatchewan people that have been following the public health measures that have been in place, literally following them if not all of the time, much of the time, Mr. Speaker.

There has been times when we have had COVID infections across the province. We've had over 30,000 infections, Mr. Speaker. This virus is not selective in who it does or doesn't infect, Mr. Speaker. But we have had those public health measures in place. And I thank the people of this province, Matthew included, for the effort that they have made in following those measures throughout the course of over the last year and now, until such time that we are able to access vaccines, Mr. Speaker. And we are unrolling those vaccines as quickly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, we do have, you know, some good statistics. I often say that we are leading the nation in providing those vaccines to Saskatchewan people, and that is true. But today, or as of yesterday, pardon me . . . I guess it's as of Sunday, actually, we have vaccinated 27 per cent of the people in this province that are eligible and over the age of 18. Mr. Speaker, that is nation-leading.

That speaks to the effort of our Saskatchewan Health Authority, our Ministry of Health, the plan that they have put together. But most importantly I think it speaks to our front-line health care workers that are ensuring that these vaccines are being turned around in quick time so that we can at some point in time in the future not be talking about public health measures, but talking about, you know, how we used to live in this province, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Fairview.

COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, the Health minister got pretty wound up yesterday in response to straightforward questions about why some, but not all, essential workers were offered vaccines. And let's recall: Regina police were offered vaccines Saturday evening, mere hours after the minister said, "If we're targeting everybody, then we're targeting no one." Being nimble is important but so is clarity and consistency. Does the minister recognize that ongoing flip-flops sow confusion and doubt in already uncertain times?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier had indicated earlier, we're almost at 300,000 people that we've vaccinated. I just checked, Mr. Speaker. We're at 89 per cent of the vaccines that we've been allocated are actually in somebody's arm — leading the country, Mr. Speaker. The next-closest one is our neighbours in Alberta at 77 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

I know the other provinces are struggling with the same challenges that we have, Mr. Speaker, but this goes to show, the front-line workers, how they are getting out this program in a very, very effective way and how we continue to lead the country.

Mr. Speaker, I think the only ones that are confused about our vaccine program are the ones opposite, Mr. Speaker, because I've been hearing very positive feedback from people all over this province on how our drive-throughs, how our appointment clinics as well as our mobile clinics are being utilized. The staff there is a great staff that is helping everybody, making sure that they get their vaccine as quick as possible, Mr. Speaker, so the only ones that don't understand this are the members across the way, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, maybe that minister should spend some time answering the phones, because we are getting a very different story. We are as happy as anyone to see vaccines making it into the arms of Saskatchewan people. What's concerning is that this minister seems to have taken his eye off the ball when it comes to getting COVID-19 under control.

The SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] told doctors, "Vaccination will not fix the problem in the short term." Regina's public health measures have been in place for nearly three weeks and our numbers are not coming down. We're also seeing Regina's trajectory playing out in Moose Jaw, Weyburn, Lloyd, and now Saskatoon.

We'll hear from the minister this afternoon on new measures for the province announced minutes ago. Why did the minister wait so long to act, and does he realize he can take action on days that aren't Tuesdays?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we continue to work with Dr. Shahab and his experts on this, following Dr. Shahab's advice on when we need to move. Mr. Speaker. We move in a very calculated and surgical way when we make restrictions. We understand that the restrictions that we impose on the people of Saskatchewan have a huge impact, not just on their economic impact but on their social, also their mental health, Mr. Speaker. So these are made very carefully, Mr. Speaker.

And as far as the member saying that I'm just doing this on specific days, Mr. Speaker, I've been down in this Chamber and . . . not in this Chamber, but in this building, Mr. Speaker, every week since March. I've been spending more time down here than I have with my family, dealing with this situation. And it's practically very insulting that the member over there who just showed up a week ago is questioning how I'm dealing with this and how Dr. Shahab is dealing with it, and how all good the people at the SHA and the ministry are dealing with this. We've been dealing with this every day of every week since this has started back in January. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A complete distraction from the question. He's not listening to experts. He's not listening to their calls, and he's flip-flopping. He should be answering those phones and hearing directly from Saskatchewan people what their issues are with this vaccine rollout.

And we know the vaccines aren't enough. Here are the facts. The SHA is telling Saskatchewan doctors, "We are in exponential growth." They are warning about a surge of COVID patients and ICU pressures in the coming weeks. Health experts say we need 85 per cent of people vaccinated before herd immunity has an impact, and that isn't expected for months. Vaccines will not outrun the variants, Mr. Speaker.

Does this minister think that the new measures being announced today are enough, and why did it take him so long to act?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Again we make the informed decisions on what we have at this moment in time. We have seen what's happened in Regina over the last three weeks and we put those measures in, Mr. Speaker. Now we're seeing that that is moving out slightly across the province and we want to make sure that we protect the people out there, while our vaccination program rolls out, Mr. Speaker, which is again — and I will tell them over there even though they referred to this as haphazard — leading the country, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is just amazing to me that everybody in this province understands the vaccine rollout. We have our SaskVax. If she's asking if I picked up the phone, no. We have people picking up the phone on that SaskVax line every day booking thousands and thousands of appointments.

I have heard some concerns about our vaccine rollout. But, Mr.

Speaker, what I am overwhelmingly hearing from the people of Saskatchewan is the vaccine program is rolling out. It's getting into people's arms. We're at over 120 clinics across this province, Mr. Speaker. We're lowering the ages as soon we get it, Mr. Speaker. And again, Mr. Speaker, 89 per cent of the vaccines that have landed in Saskatchewan are in somebody's arm. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Support for Education during COVID-19 Pandemic

Ms. Beck: — Yesterday the Minister of Health said that teachers, unlike first responders, worked in a “controlled environment.” I think that the minister needs a lesson about what defines a controlled environment.

We are hearing from educators and staff, hearing their concerns about having 2, 3, 400 contacts in a single day. From one teacher whose wife works in four schools and whose youngest goes to daycare, “Any given day my family can be exposed to 700 people. We can control ourselves, but we can't control the actions of the other 700.” In fact, education workers often are in multiple schools in a single day. Will the minister come back to reality, and will he apologize?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question. I think, Mr. Speaker, people will understand what was being said, Mr. Speaker. First responders are called into situations in which they don't know the circumstances of the environment, and they likely don't know the people where the circumstances around those individual people that they're responding to, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly understand why teachers would want to be vaccinated. We all want to be vaccinated, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, for the most part teachers know the students that they're dealing with. They know that there are protocols in place, Mr. Speaker, and there is a high degree of compliance with those protocols. That's why we've seen classrooms remain safe throughout this entire pandemic, Mr. Speaker. But certainly as we've seen and have heard from this minister, this vaccine rollout is the best in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and it's going to ensure that teachers along with everybody else are vaccinated as quickly as possible.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that puts much salve on the wound that the Minister of Health created yesterday. In fact this government seems incapable of doing much without offending the entire education sector. To add further chaos to the mix, the Health Minister is now saying that rapid testing in schools will be performed by teachers.

It's not just teachers and staff who are frustrated; it's entire school divisions. I quote the Prairie South School Division yesterday:

Take a look at the group of people who are single-handedly

keeping the rest of the workforce at work. Can't find them? You'll find them in community schools all over the province. Let's get school staff vaccinated.

When will this government finally make keeping schools, early learning, and child care a real priority?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the people of Saskatchewan know very well that keeping schools safe has been a priority by this government right from the very beginning of the global pandemic being declared, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we've worked with school divisions to put forward a plan that would ensure that schools could remain open as much as possible, that students could remain in class as much as possible, and that teachers would remain safe along with the students, Mr. Speaker. We also provided — along with the federal government — combined, over \$150 million, Mr. Speaker, that had been accessed by school divisions to ensure that there is sanitation, that there's additional staff, that there is technology, and that there is PPE [personal protective equipment] as well as a number of other areas that we have funded, Mr. Speaker.

As a part of that, what is able to be accessed by school divisions if they so choose is rapid tests, alongside the existing testing capacity that we have in this province that I think on very few occasions have actually been maximized in any given day, Mr. Speaker. So that capacity still exists and will remain going forward, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — And they've had to fight every step of the way for everything that that minister just mentioned. Schools are uncontrolled environments at the best of times. But here's a list of the additional chaos in the recent weeks: more moves to remote learning; delivering more complex mental health and educational supports to more and more students; rapid tests collecting dust; confusion about who, when, and how rapid tests will be used; more and more dangerous, contagious variants getting into schools; and nearly 160 outbreaks in schools over the last month, even with the Easter break.

The wheels are falling off the bus, Mr. Speaker. When will this government get both hands back on the wheel and drive our school staff through that vaccination line?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that school divisions would be surprised to hear that the wheels are falling off the bus, Mr. Speaker. Nearly 80 per cent of schools returned after the Easter break in class at level 2 learning, Mr. Speaker. In the time that I've had the opportunity to meet with school divisions, not one of them has said it has been a fight with the provincial government to get resources, Mr. Speaker, or to get advice from the province, from the ministry, from Dr. Shahab and his officials, Mr. Speaker.

To a school division that I've met with, they've been complimentary of the resources that have been put in place and the support that has been put in place, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am confident that school divisions can continue to adjust to the changing circumstances in the province while at the same time keeping staff and students safe until the time that the best-in-Canada vaccination plan can ensure that teachers and all of the support staff can be vaccinated.

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

Management of Provincial Economy

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And you know, I used to sit on those phone calls, and that's a questionable recollection to say the least, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, every single one of those schools referenced, every single one of those schools has dozens of children with parents who are desperately looking for work. And, Mr. Speaker, yesterday I read a long list of provinces in Canada that are creating more jobs than Saskatchewan. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the list could not be longer, and that's because we have the worst jobs record in the country.

There's another thing that all those other provinces have in common: they all have a higher minimum wage than Saskatchewan's dead-last poverty wage. It is proof that a \$15-an-hour minimum wage isn't just good for workers, it's good for the economy. So what more does this Sask Party government need to see before they come up with a real plan, a real plan for jobs, and one that includes a \$15-an-hour minimum wage?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And what I would say, Saskatchewan has right now one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. And the fact of the matter is Saskatchewan has had one of the, if not the lowest unemployment rate in the country for most of the last year. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that exports from this province through the pandemic have not only increased, they've increased by 13 per cent, Mr. Speaker, leading Canada.

We have an ambitious growth plan out to 2030, Mr. Speaker, which we've worked very, very hard on, which is the plan and is the road map to recovery — something we're very proud of. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we came forward with over \$2 billion in economic support since the beginning of this pandemic. Saskatchewan capital plan, \$893 million. Small-business emergency payment program, \$70 million, a program that's been copied right across the country, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan temporary wage supplement program, \$56 million. Saskatchewan small-business tax rate reduction to zero per cent, Mr. Speaker, \$39 million. Saskatchewan tourism sector support program, \$35 million, providing more support for that sector than any other government in the entire country.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if there were

points for pedantry we'd certainly be leading the nation. So that minister can huff and puff all he wants and avoid the question, but he cannot escape the fact that he has the worst jobs record in the Dominion of Canada. Quite simply, there is no other jobs minister failing more than he is, and there's no workers in this country that this government is failing more than those making minimum wage.

That minister should be concerned that there are 23,000 people who have already lost their jobs, and there are thousands more who have to stop at a food bank on the way home from work because they earn the lowest minimum wage in the country. Does that minister, who's very, very, very eager to cite his record, does that minister really think that there are people in this province whose work, labour, and time is only worth 11.45 an hour?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I know a party in this Chamber that's sitting opposite who are very, very much not wanting to talk about their record. Because, Mr. Speaker, during their time in government, they had the absolute worst economic record in the entire country.

And I think folks who are my age, you know, in their 40s, remember when you were graduating from high school and, Mr. Speaker, what did you get as your graduation present under the New Democrats? You got a set of luggage, Mr. Speaker. Because the only way that you were going to find a path forward was to have to leave this great province, Mr. Speaker.

That has changed markedly over the course of the last 14 years, Mr. Speaker. And our economic record speaks to what has been a profound change in this province, both economically and attitudinally, from the point when those members were in government.

Mr. Speaker, we have been leading the country in export growth. We have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the entire country. Those are things we're going to build off of, Mr. Speaker, going forward. And we have great faith in the people of this province to continue to create jobs and move our economy forward.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again eager to cite his record and not eager to acknowledge that under his watch, we are also leading in people fleeing this province.

So we have again the worst jobs numbers in Canada and the lowest minimum wage. And you think that minister would actually engage with the question and show an ounce of contrition. This minister should be coming up with a plan that works for people and gets people working. Because at the rate we're going my delicious, chubby little baby will not see a \$15-an-hour minimum wage until she is 28 years old. And meanwhile our neighbours in Alberta have been there for years.

So honestly, Mr. Speaker, there are hungry people, worried people in this province. And Saskatchewan people deserve so

much better from this minister than this wannabe Pierre Poilievre routine. So why won't this government help create jobs from the bottom up and bring in a \$15-an-hour minimum wage?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I cited some of the examples of how this government has supported the economy through this pandemic. And it is paying results, Mr. Speaker.

And I would point to just some announcements that have been made just very recently, Mr. Speaker. And we've had some members who have been able to provide updates on those projects. But I'd point to Richardson International, who are going to be building a very, very significant expansion to their facility in Yorkton which has such an important economic impact for that community and all of southern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We have Farmgredient Foods pea fractionation plant. We have AGT logistics and processing hub, Mr. Speaker. We had Saskatchewan Mining and Minerals just made a very large, over \$200 million, announcement very recently.

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, these announcements are not made by accident. They are made because we have worked very closely with these proponent companies. It's because we have in place the economic environment and the fundamentals for them to have a high degree of confidence to make hundreds of millions of dollars of investments. And those were the sort of investments that were never made when the members opposite were in government.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 28 — *The Active Families Benefit Act, 2021*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 28, *The Active Families Benefit Act, 2021* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport that Bill No. 28 be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time?

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 24 — *The Vehicles for Hire Amendment Act, 2020*

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of *The Vehicles for Hire Amendment Act, 2020*. Vehicles for hire are things like taxis, limos, and ride-share services like Uber that transport passengers for compensation. The proposed changes to the Act align the sanctions for all vehicle-for-hire services and SGI's [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] ability to administer those sanctions. In other words, Mr. Speaker, this gives SGI the authority to apply the same sanctions to taxi and limo services that it can for ride-share services. This will ensure an even playing field for all vehicle-for-hire services.

Mr. Speaker, another proposed change to the Act will enable SGI to fine vehicle-for-hire companies that are not complying with the Act or its regulations. This will allow for a more gradual escalation of sanctions in cases where the non-compliance is fairly minor in nature rather than suspending or cancelling a company's business operations.

Some examples of transgressions that may result in sanctions or fines for vehicle-for-hire companies include firstly, failing to submit the required criminal record checks for its drivers; secondly, failing to provide its driver list and any subsequent changes to it; and thirdly, authorizing drivers to provide vehicle-for-hire services when driver and/or vehicle requirements are not met. This proposed change would apply to all vehicle-for-hire services which include taxis, limos, and ride-share services, again ensuring a level playing field.

Mr. Speaker, there is also a proposed change to add an immunity clause into this legislation. While there is already an immunity clause in *The Vehicles for Hire Act* to protect the cities and municipalities, no clause was added to protect SGI, since immunity clauses already exist in both *The Traffic Safety Act* and *The Automobile Accident Insurance Act*. This proposed change will make it clearer that SGI has immunity against actions taken in good faith related to vehicles for hire.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Vehicles for Hire Amendment Act, 2020*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 24 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 24, *The Vehicles for Hire Amendment Act* of 2020. Appreciate the minister's remarks here. I think that this is an area that we absolutely have to work to get right in our province, so I think it's encouraging to see amendments coming forward, and we would just want to ensure that it strikes the correct balance.

I know that many folks have friends from many different areas of the world. I have a lot of friends in the taxi industry, and so I know a little bit about the challenges that have come to exist as a result of introducing ride sharing in the province. We certainly know that we live in a modern world and we need to keep pace with the rest of the world, but there certainly needs to be protections in place to make sure there aren't unintended consequences for other industries.

So I know that we've all ridden in taxis and Ubers and probably the odd limousine as well. Aligning these industries certainly seems to be prudent, and if these changes do in fact create a level playing field, then that could be a very positive thing for folks across the province and for these industries as they work to bring themselves out of COVID.

This particular bill requires a transportation network company, taxi service, or limo service to follow the requirements for driver licensing and criminal record checks. It makes it an offence to operate a transportation network company in Saskatchewan if they're not properly insured and also makes it an offence to operate in a municipality without authorization from that municipality, which is a dynamic that we saw playing out initially when this legislation came out. And it also includes a new immunity clause that protects the Government of Saskatchewan and SGI from legal action related to actions made in good faith.

So some initial thoughts on this bill. New Democrats support a fair and level playing field for taxis, ride shares, and limos. We will work together with taxi drivers and taxi company operators to make sure this legislation strikes the right balance. We want to make sure that the stakeholders have been consulted and that the bill doesn't have any unintended consequences. And I do have some concerns about the new immunity clause and why it's required and what types of legal actions the government is trying to protect themselves against. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on this bill.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 26 — *The Police (Serious Incident Response Team) Amendment Act, 2021*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Police (Serious Incident Response Team) Amendment Act, 2021*. This budget bill will implement a new civilian-led, independent serious incident response team, or SIRT, to investigate cases of sexual assault, serious injury, death, or spousal violence arising from police actions.

Mr. Speaker, police officers play a critical role in our society by enforcing laws and protecting our citizens. During the current COVID-19 pandemic we continue to see the hard work and dedication of the province's policing community, even as they

face unprecedented challenges. The Government of Saskatchewan would like to express its gratitude for the work that's being done by our policing community.

Mr. Speaker, in order to maintain safe and effective policing, it's also necessary to ensure transparency and accountability with regard to police oversight. In 2020 this government passed amendments to enhance the investigation observer process for serious police incidents and implement new complaint review processes respecting special constables and harassment within police services. These changes were intended as an initial timely response to concerns that have been raised respecting police oversight.

Mr. Speaker, this bill takes the next major step in enhancing police oversight in the province by implementing a civilian-led SIRT. The SIRT will be led by a civilian executive director who will report directly to the Chair of the Public Complaints Commission. The director, with the assistance of SIRT-appointed investigators, will be responsible for investigating serious police incidents within the province.

Mr. Speaker, it's also essential that our province's Indigenous community is represented within the SIRT process, and as a result this bill will require the director to appoint a community liaison who is of First Nations or Métis ancestry to assist the director with completing an investigation if the victim is of First Nations or Métis ancestry.

The community liaison may fulfill a number of different roles depending on the specific matter. For example, a liaison could assist the director with identifying community members who may be of assistance in an investigation or provide resources and information to the family of a victim.

Mr. Speaker, the government has committed new resources in the current budget to fund the new SIRT process. This is in addition to the additional resources the Public Complaints Commission received in the previous budget in relation to its expanded role in policing matters. Mr. Speaker, the government is confident that SIRT will meet its mandate of ensuring accountability and transparency in the investigation of these serious policing incidents. We will continue to work with interested stakeholders to ensure its successful rollout and implementation.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to move second reading of *The Police (Serious Incident Response Team) Amendment Act, 2021*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 26 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into second reading debate on this bill, Bill No. 26, *An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990 and to make consequential amendments*.

I thank the minister for his second reading comments, Mr. Speaker, and I think largely this is a bill that is going to be welcomed by many in the province. I know for sure that there has been a considerable amount of advocacy put forward to ensure that we have similar legislation to this in the province, and I

understand that we are one of the last jurisdictions in the province to have civilian oversight. And I think this is largely a welcome measure by many in Saskatchewan.

I have had the opportunity to speak a little bit with the critic about the bill and what's been proposed here. I know that she'll have more questions as well. There are some questions about the budget and whether that will be adequate to do what needs to be done here, Mr. Speaker. But again sometimes when we're last to the table, we have the benefit to look at what's happening and working, or perhaps not working so well, in other jurisdictions and to use that to our advantage when we're crafting legislation here.

I hope that this is something . . . As I said, it's been anticipated and largely welcomed here. I think that ensuring that we've got it right and getting it into force so this civilian oversight can take place, I think is something that is important to members on this side of the House. I know that there will be a lot of questions, as I said. This is a substantial piece of legislation, maybe not in size but in terms of consequence, so I will leave the bulk of that to my fellow members and to the critic in committee, and with that I will move to adjourn debate on this Bill No. 26.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 27 — *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2021*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2021*. This legislation amends *The Summary Offences Procedure Act, 1990* to implement the first phases of the provincial offences project. This project is part of a multi-year e-justice initiative that will modernize court procedures and improve access to justice for all Saskatchewan residents.

These amendments will establish a new online system for processing summary offence tickets. The new online system will allow eligible summary offence tickets to be resolved outside of court in a manner that's simpler and more convenient for defendants. Initial phases of this project will focus primarily on traffic safety offences. The online system will provide neutral information to defendants about their options for resolving a ticket and will empower them to make informed and efficient decisions.

Mr. Speaker, a new part will be added to the Act to set out an online procedure for a specific subset of offence notice tickets. This new part will include a new step that will require a defendant to have an early resolution discussion with a prosecutor before entering a plea. Early resolution discussions will allow defendants to make a more informed decision before entering that plea. Currently many defendants come to court just to ask prosecutors questions about their tickets. This will no longer be

necessary if the defendant has the chance to formally engage with a prosecutor outside of the courtroom to learn about what their options are.

[14:30]

If a summary offence ticket matter proceeds to trial after an early resolution discussion, it is now possible to conduct that trial online. Moving trials to online will allow for more efficient scheduling of limited court resources and will reduce in-person court volumes.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will also implement a new application for an automatic extension of time to pay a fine. Defendants will be able to apply to automatically be granted one extension of time to pay a fine. Defendants will no longer have to come to court in person to request that extension.

These amendments will also allow an easier registration for our fine options program. Defendants will no longer have to attend court to obtain the required paperwork to register in that program. This new application process will allow defendants to begin working off their fines much sooner than is currently possible.

Mr. Speaker, as I previously stated, the new procedures in the Act will initially apply to a defined set of traffic safety offences. The project's scope will be expanded over time to ensure that required staffing and system changes are manageable.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will also modify the in-person reconsideration hearing process. Defendants can apply for reconsideration of the matter when they can show that they had a legitimate reason for missing a court appearance date. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Speaker, this process has been modified by the court to require written submissions instead. This simplified written process will be codified as part of these amendments. These changes will permanently move those reconsideration hearings out of court and will further contribute to reducing court volumes.

The Act also includes some changes to ensure that the Act continues to align with the federal Criminal Code. Terminology and section references are being revised to maintain consistency with the terminology of the Code and to continue to support efficient prosecutions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the changes in this Act will replace previously unproclaimed amendments from 2016 and '17. So those earlier amendment Acts will be repealed.

Mr. Speaker, these changes will transform provincial offence processes to make them more simple and certainly more efficient and effective. The Act contains multiple significant procedural changes that are all aimed at improving the experience of the defendant. These changes will empower citizens to more easily navigate the court system and to resolve their tickets fairly and efficiently.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2021*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 27 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I

recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to take part in the debate. The minister has just done the second reading on Bill 27, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2021*.

I was listening to the minister's comments, and I'm not going to go on long about it. But I would just like to say the process to go online, I think, gives people ability to deal with an understanding of their tickets, the offence they may have been charged with, and to have the opportunity to talk to a legal counsel. As he said before, they go to court and tie up our courts.

If there's a way that they could resolve the issues, the minister talked about different ways that they can deal with their ticket, maybe online asking for, you know, a work option to pay off your fine. He mentioned different areas where they're going to make it easier, I guess, for citizens to access online information. I don't know who they all consulted with it, but just from some of the comments that the minister made in there, obviously it's a procedure, new procedure. Some of them are being amended. He's moving this along.

And I guess in light of, as he referred to COVID, you know, there's challenges and the courts are seeing lots of numbers. So maybe if this gives an opportunity for our courts to deal with the cases that are more severe than tickets and offences that are driving, where you can resolve them before and pay them or do the fine option or fine, get the legal advice you need before you tie up the court's time.

And I hear what the minister was saying. Obviously we're going to have more questions about this bill. I know the critic will have the opportunity to ask in committee and get clarification. You always want to make sure that, you know, this information and changes, amendments and legislation that we amend and adapt and, you know, bring in new or amended, that we've made sure we consulted, that this is what fits best for the system. And in this, obviously it's justice, and we want to hope that process happens and the right people have been consulted and talked to. And I'm sure the minister, I'm sure he's done that.

But I know my colleague, the critic for Justice, will do her part in committee and reach out to stakeholders, seeing if there's any challenges. And I know if there's any citizens figuring they have concerns, they can reach out to the critic as well as the Minister of Justice to say they've got concerns about it, letting the government know. That's part of that process, that we work together at the end of the day for the citizens.

So I would just say I don't have a lot more to say on this, on Bill 27, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2021*. So I am prepared to adjourn debate on that bill.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 4

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 4 — *The Construction Codes Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to offer comments on behalf of the official opposition here today. You know, I look at this bill and I think there are some things in it that New Democrats support. We certainly support accessibility and updating construction codes to help make life better and more accessible for people living with disabilities and who are part of the disability community.

And I know very well that the member for Elphinstone-Centre recently held an accessibility town hall, which was quite well attended. And unfortunately one of the things that we did hear in that is, while I recognize that there is an engagement process under way that the government has undertaken on behalf of the disability community, some of the things that we did hear in that town hall, which I was fortunate enough to attend, is that that process itself is perhaps not as accessible as it may be to people within the community or people who work shift work or whatever the issue may be. So while I recognize much of the specifics for what these accessibility standards may look like will be in the regulations, we of course won't see this until after the bill has passed in the Assembly.

So I guess beyond that, you know, I would also urge this government to look carefully and ensure that employment and labour standards are not being cut, and that we as the official opposition will look carefully at any kind of so-called red tape reduction measures to ensure that health and safety of Saskatchewan people is not compromised. And so, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 4, *The Construction Codes Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 6

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 6 — *The Business Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2020/Loi de 2020 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Business Corporations Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise

again and enter my remarks into second reading debate on Bill No. 6, *The Business Corporations Consequential Amendments Act*. I did have the opportunity very briefly to speak to this bill last evening. Of course this is the companion piece to Bill No. 5, *The Business Corporations Act* that has already found its way to committee.

I will keep my remarks here brief. Again, as the minister noted yesterday, this bill will implement consequential amendments to the bilingual legislation that are necessary to implement the new business corporations Act, the aforementioned Bill No. 5. I see no reason to delay it being reunited with Bill No. 5, so with that I am prepared to have this bill moved to next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 6 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would designate that Bill 6, *The Business Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2020*, a bilingual bill, be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 7

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 7 — *The Marriage Act, 2020/Loi de 2020 sur le mariage*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure again to rise, stand in my place, and enter into debate on this, Bill No. 7, *The Marriage Act* of 2020. I had the privilege of sitting in the Chamber last evening when this bill was introduced. Second reading debate was kicked off by the minister and I heard the response from my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

I think that there's broad consensus that this bill largely contains housekeeping measures. There are a few changes in modernization of language, which I think we canvassed last evening. We certainly agree with updating that language to make it more modern, changes to ensure that the legislation is in line with what current practice is.

There's some updating of fees associated with this new bill. I think one of the examples that the minister used in his second reading remarks, I know often people will be asked to become marriage commissioners to marry a friend or a family member in

a civil ceremony, and that certainly is something that I had experience with recently with a friend of mine. She was able to marry her niece, as it were. As you can imagine in COVID times, there were a few twists and turns along the way, but I think that that worked out well for them.

What's being proposed here is that there would be some fees associated with becoming a marriage commissioner. Currently there are none. But just to recover the costs that are associated with becoming registered as a marriage commissioner, that seems rather reasonable, Mr. Speaker. I suspect that there may be a few small questions that the critic has come across in her consultation about this bill prior to this session, but I think those questions are best left to her. So with that I am prepared to have this bill moved to next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member that Bill No. 7 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 7, *The Marriage Act, 2020*, bilingual, be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 8

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 8 — *The Marriage Consequential Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

[14:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief in my comments on Bill No. 8. Much like Bill No. 6 that I just spoke to, this is a consequential amendment Act. I'll read from the minister's second reading comments from last night: "This is the companion English bill that will amend the . . . Act." This bill will put in place the necessary consequential amendments stemming from *The Marriage Act* of 2020. I think that's self-evident, Mr. Speaker.

And again as I noted, if there are additional questions that the critic has, I'm sure she will be prepared to ask those in committee. So I see no reason to delay that further. With that I am prepared to have this bill moved to next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion

by the member that Bill No. 8 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 8, *The Marriage Consequential Amendment Act, 2020* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 9

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 9 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Appeal Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 9, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Appeal Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020*. For the enthusiastic folks who are following along at home, any time we talk about miscellaneous statutes, we're talking about a number of different Acts that are being amended all at the same time, so it sort of pulls all of that together.

In this case, these Acts are related to appeal provisions, and specifically we're talking about various administrative statutes. So there are appeal provisions changing in *The Agrolologists Act*, *The Animal Health Act*, *The Cemeteries Act*, *The Charitable Fund-raising Businesses Act*, *The Chiropractic Act*, *The Cities Act*, *The Controverted Elections Act*, *The Dental Disciplines Act*, *The Expropriation Procedure Act*, and *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*. Whoa, there's a few more too, so I'm not going to read all of them, Mr. Speaker. A number of different . . . There are miscellaneous statutes that are being included here, Mr. Speaker.

The changes that are being included here are often referring to the Court of Appeal, so it would be quite familiar to folks who are in the legal profession, but for folks who aren't following that very closely, it would be harder for them to appreciate. It allows for appeals on a question of law only for various statutes. It also includes appeal provisions for *The Legal Profession Act*. This bill deals with amendments to various pieces of legislation regarding the appeal process itself in various administrative statutes.

The minister had a chance to weigh in on this yesterday as well and talked about these various amendments yesterday. And we're talking about where an Act provides an automatic right of appeal, a full panel of the court is required to prepare for and take part in

a hearing and render a decision, and that these amendments will require that one judge review the merits of the appeal before the full panel is engaged.

So, Mr. Speaker, we certainly want to look at the implications of this bill, make sure there aren't any unintended consequences. But at this point we are prepared to let this bill move to its next stages.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 9 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 9, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Appeal Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 10

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 10 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Appeal Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)/Loi corrective (dispositions d'appel) de 2020 (n° 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think most times you see folks standing up on these legislations that are tied to each other, it's because it's a companion piece of legislation. So it's my pleasure to enter into debate on Bill 10, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Appeal Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)*. And although I'm not entirely clear of why these had to be separate pieces of legislation, the legal minds in here probably have an idea of how that came about.

This Act also includes proposed amendments that will require one judge reviews the merits of the appeal before the full panel is engaged. The minister has indicated that these amendments will promote efficiency and will provide the Court of Appeal with greater control over which appeals are heard by a full panel. So we definitely want to make sure there aren't unintended consequences that come along with that. It's specifically talking about amending *The Dependents' Relief Act* and *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act*, and it accompanies Bill 9 making amendments to the appeal process.

It doesn't appear to have too many controversial components, Mr. Speaker. However, we will make sure that we dig into some

important questions as it goes into committee. But with that we are prepared to move that Bill No. 10 move on to its next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 10 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 10, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Appeal Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)*, a bilingual bill, be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 11

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 11 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate again on Bill No. 11, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)*. Mr. Speaker, the minister weighed in with some second reading comments yesterday indicating that the bill mostly makes housekeeping changes to a number of pieces of legislation in order to update and modernize. And although my spidey senses are always triggered a little bit when we hear the word "modernize," we will have a look, Mr. Speaker.

But it does appear that many of these changes are housekeeping in nature, including implementing gender-neutral language as well as removing references to repealed legislation such as the development fund Act. These changes also update the names of organizations to ensure that they're correctly cited as organization names change over time. So it does largely appear to be housekeeping in that regard. And we want to make sure, obviously, that we have the correct references in our legislation. The legislation should be as clear as possible in directing people in the correct direction.

So we think they're largely housekeeping in nature. There are some questions about why section 4 is being removed in the existing legislation, whether the section 7 changes precedent, and really a question about whether the standardized forms are going to be changed. The existing legislation includes standardized forms, and so we have a question about whether there will be major changes to these forms as well.

So we will have an opportunity to dig into some of these questions and hear some responses in committee. And with that,

Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to let this Bill No. 11 move on to its next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member that Bill No. 11 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 11, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 12

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. L. Ross that **Bill No. 12 — *The Wanuskewin Heritage Park Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to offer very few additional comments on behalf of the official opposition as they relate to Bill 12. I think it was covered off quite well last night by my colleague.

And I would just recognize, you know, the importance of ensuring that flexibility and the retention of knowledge, spoken to both by my colleague and by the minister, and the importance of ensuring a full complement of members in line with the intent of the legislation. And I do want to recognize the codification of Wanuskewin's mission in legislation is an incredibly positive development.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 12, *The Wanuskewin Heritage Park Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 13

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. L. Ross that **Bill No. 13 — *The Doukhobors of Canada C.C.U.B. Trust Fund Amendment and Repeal Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to offer comments on behalf of the official opposition on Bill No. 13, the Doukhobors of Canada trust fund amendment and repeal Act.

My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that the goal of this bill is that the trust fund be fully disbursed and then the Act repealed by order in council. I will just take a moment to make a few remarks on the place of the Doukhobor culture and religion in Saskatchewan and across the country.

I had the pleasure of hearing the comments of my colleague the member from Lakeview last night about her experience in Veregin, Saskatchewan. And of course it's quite a fraught and fascinating history, Mr. Speaker. As we know, Doukhobors immigrated to Saskatchewan a long time ago on the offer of land grants from the Canadian government and an explicit undertaking that they would be permitted to practise their religion. And that included to hold land communally, as was their practice. There was an about-face on that when they were asked to register land individually, which of course was contrary to their deeply held belief. And almost from the moment of arrival, Mr. Speaker, they faced hostility and repression, and in the years that followed there became, you know, great schisms within that community as they disagreed about how to survive, how to thrive in this country.

[15:00]

And I had the great pleasure of being in Castlegar, British Columbia, which was a really . . . There's a museum there that touches on the history of Doukhobors in Saskatchewan in a large way. And I didn't know this at the time but due to some of the repression they were facing in Saskatchewan, about 8,000 Saskatchewan Doukhobors emigrated to Castlegar, British Columbia, hoping to have greater freedom in practising their beliefs and hold land communally, and went on to become quite renowned fruit pickers in the area.

It's not a piece of our history perhaps that we acknowledge often enough, and of course there were more high-profile kind of examples of the repression they faced into the '50s with some of the residential schools that were set up for the children of the Sons of Freedom of course. But I was very struck by that experience, and I was touched by the stories and the connection to Saskatchewan history and of course the foundational values of the Doukhobors, which is anti-materialism, Mr. Speaker, pacifism, and communal living.

So with that, we're pleased to see that the funds will be disbursed in full, funds that will go to celebrating the culture and heritage of Doukhobors of Saskatchewan and of course of the rest of Canada. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 13, the Doukhobors of Canada trust fund amendment and repeal Act, 2020.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 14

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 14 — *The Protection From Human Trafficking Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to rise today to offer some additional comments on behalf of the official opposition. And before I begin, I want to recognize the remarks made yesterday by the Minister of Justice as well as the member for Elphinstone-Centre in regards to this bill.

This is something I was personally quite interested to see before this Assembly. I remember maybe being like 15 or 16 years of age when I first learned about human trafficking. I'd certainly been aware of, you know, the use of rape and commodification of sex in times of war and crime, but I'd certainly never considered it as its own unfortunate economy. I read the book, *The Natashas*, I believe by Victor Malarek, a well-known Canadian journalist, and I was horrified not only to discover that there have in fact been historic waves of human trafficking internationally, but also that this was something prevalent here in the country of Canada, and also something certainly that we know unfortunately occurs right here at home.

So I do want to laud the introduction of Bill 14, *The Protection From Human Trafficking Act*. It's very clear that this is an issue there's no one on the other side of.

But I do just want to echo some of the comments made by the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, just some concerns that we do have in regards to consultation, making sure that the voices of victims and of sex workers are present in that engagement and sincere consultation, and that there was that work done on behalf of the ministry to reach out to survivors of human trafficking and sex workers while, of course, respecting any necessary provisions to ensure that this legislation doesn't actually make sex work even more dangerous for those workers.

And I would also echo, you know, just we all look forward to learning more about this. But at this point it remains unclear as to how this might actually reduce the risk and prevalence of human trafficking. And I think that should of course be the overall goal, is reducing the number of victims of human trafficking in the province.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 14, *The Protection From Human Trafficking Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 15

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 15 — *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to offer initial comments on behalf of the official opposition for Bill 15, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2020*. So I would just like to start off my remarks by mentioning that this bill allows the ability to terminate a lease if a tenant experiences a sexual assault in the home, and it allows landlords to serve nonpayment related to eviction notices after seven days, which is a change from 14.

I think that this bill makes several significant changes to *The Residential Tenancies Act* which will have a negative effect on tenants. In addition, this bill will expand the allowance for lease-breaking for survivors of domestic violence to extend to survivors of sexual assault. While protecting survivors of sexual assault is important, we may have questions about how this provision will work and whether it will actually assist survivors.

I think, as mentioned last night by my colleague, you know, that we do have a number of concerns in terms of, you know, whether or not with the changes to this provision that we'll see that survivors will be able to be better off, or if there's perhaps other means which would serve them better. And I know the Justice critic will have many more questions regarding this in the coming days.

I do want to mention, Mr. Speaker, that I have been a landlord myself in the past and certainly do have, you know, personal experience with the tenancies Act. And I have the personal pleasure of having many very positive examples of relationships with my tenants, and certainly do understand the intricacies of how to be a responsible landlord, ensuring that you're providing a tenancy that is going to, you know, live up to contractual obligations and that it is a mutual agreement.

I must say though that, certainly I think for many, many tenants, you know, that they can be faced with a number of extenuating circumstances, which makes it difficult at times for them to be able to provide their rent in a timely fashion, certainly over the Christmas period. You know, right during Christmas and New Year's, myself and my constituency assistant were very busy assisting one of my constituents, who was being very much let down by the Social Services ministry in receiving payment and service from that agency and was at risk of being late with her rent. And I just offer that as, you know, one example of where we see individuals that are on social assistance and not receiving the service in a timely fashion and then, as a consequence, it creating issues around paying their rent on time.

And so I think it's important to recognize that there's an interplay here between the services that the government is offering and the rules that are in place for, as we see here, in the tenancy Act. And my concern, and I think what we need to look at more closely, is how these kinds of situations could be negatively impacted by

reducing the time frame from 14 to 7 days when, you know, we know we have a Social Services ministry that is overburdened with very high caseloads. Very difficult for them to respond to situations in a timely manner. And then there's a spill-on effect, as we see here.

I do also want to acknowledge that, you know, there is a need for an appropriate balance. And there's an interplay always of course between respecting the rights of both parties to a tenancy agreement. I certainly heard from many renters when I was on the doorstep during the campaign period, from people who were particularly concerned about the fact that for those on social assistance and no longer having their rental cheques going directly to their landlord, you know, that this was going to call into question rent being served in a timely fashion and in all cases.

And I think it's just another example of where, you know, I think that we need to look at this legislation and the interplay with other pieces of the system to ensure that there aren't, you know, some unintended consequences that we're seeing here when we don't provide enough leniency for issues to be resolved, and certainly in the cases where we've created unnecessarily some additional issues when those payments aren't being made directly by Social Services. So I did want to mention that.

I also want to raise the issue of . . . And just an observation, I suppose, that I've been making, you know, with a number of these bills that have been coming forward — and some of my other colleagues here in the opposition have touched on it as well — and that being the punitive nature of many of these provisions in the legislation that's come forward that's targeting the most vulnerable in our society, you know, those who face homelessness and resorting to petty crime as a way to be able to make ends meet, and the fact that crime rates here in Regina were reduced over the past year when the CERB [Canada emergency response benefit] payments came in and people had a steady and reliable form of income that avoided them having to resort to these other kinds of measures.

And I would say that, you know, what we're seeing here with this bill is the same sort of a punitive kind of a measure that I don't believe is striking the right balance between the rights of the landlords and the rights of the tenants. And I know that my colleague, the Justice critic, will have much more to say about this in committee. And I just wanted to bring forward these concerns and ensure that as we go forward that these issues and considerations are given due attention.

I haven't really spent that much time on the item related to protecting survivors of sexual assault, so maybe I'll just do that as some of my final remarks. You know, the Sask Party could be more effective at protecting survivors of sexual assault by better funding for the province's sexual assault centres. I think really what we're trying to do is prevent these kinds of, you know, horrible acts of violence from occurring in the first place. Yes, of course we do want provisions for in the event that they do happen. Of course it's a very traumatic situation of a very grave nature, so I know that all of you are, you know, giving this the due attention that it deserves right here in the Assembly right now.

[15:15]

And you know, sexual assault is the root of many other issues that we see in society, whether it does, you know, relate to issues of mental health and homelessness and addictions. And so we would encourage the Assembly to be thinking more about ensuring that we are looking at solutions, that we're looking at the roots of the problem, and putting the due attention that's needed on that end. And so I think that's something we need to be keeping in mind with the provisions in this bill.

We are of course supportive of any measures that will help survivors of sexual violence. We need to ensure that those measures are done correctly and with proper consultation with survivors. It's not clear to me at this point if that indeed has been the case, and I'll be looking for more information on that as we continue to review and study this bill going forward. So, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 15, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2020*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 16

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 16 — *The Pawned Property (Recording) Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 16, *The Pawned Property (Recording) Amendment Act, 2020*. I had the pleasure of hearing the minister's second reading remarks last night when we were in the Assembly, and I know that there are a lot of considerations that are being made to bringing forward this Act.

The minister identified that metal theft is on the rise and poses a significant public safety risk as thieves place property owners at risk by trespassing and stealing materials off of their properties, which we know is of particular concern in rural Saskatchewan. My brother-in-law talks to me about this all the time, you know, just especially when you're not there or, you know, if someone does come, there are a lot of concerns about what happens to your property and how you're able to look after it.

I learned by reading the remarks or by hearing from the minister that Saskatchewan's critical infrastructure advisory network conducted a review. I don't know much about the critical infrastructure advisory network, but according to the minister, they've requested this legislation to address this problem by specifically targeting scrap metal sales and scrap metal dealers and recyclers.

So the goal of the legislation is really to require identification and transaction information as well as to limit the sale of scrap metals by individuals unless they're 18 years old. And so we are definitely going to be making sure that we touch in with

stakeholders on this. We have heard some concerns with the recording information and how cumbersome it's going to be to record these transactions and take this personal information. I know there was a story in the *Leader-Post* about scrap metal dealers wanting to avoid buying stolen scrap metal because obviously they don't want it to be confiscated by the police. And there are some concerns, though, about that additional data collection and what that looks like.

So with talking about more oversight of scrap metal sales, we're certainly going to be looking into this, but again we're talking about more punitive measures, as my colleague was just referring to, rather than, in this case, trying to address some of the root causes of crime as well. And so we think it needs to be a twofold approach, Mr. Speaker, looking at the reasons for this notable increase in crime and trying to address those head-on.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to let Bill No. 16 move on to its next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member that Bill No. 16 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 16, *The Pawned Property (Recording) Amendment Act, 2020* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — The bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 17

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 17 — *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to offer initial comments on behalf of the official opposition on Bill 17, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2020*.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the administrator to suspend, cancel, or refuse to issue a driver's licence where the holder of that driver's licence suffers from a medical condition that affects the safe operation of a vehicle and that driver fails to file a medical report with the administrator. It requires a holder of a driver's licence to self-report a medical condition to the administrator if that medical condition may affect the safe

operation of a vehicle.

It also requires the use of standardized bill of sale for the purpose of selling a vehicle, trailer, or semi-trailer. It requires motor vehicle drivers who obtain a registration permit to carry that permit on their person or in the motorcycle. It removes the requirement for charter buses to display a sign bearing the word “charter,” and it modernizes and harmonizes the process and procedures applicable to garage keepers who store and dispose of impounded motor vehicles. I think that there’s also a number of other, you know, administrative items attached to this bill.

I would say that there are some very comprehensive changes to traffic safety in Saskatchewan, and we’re certainly supportive of measures to keep people safe on the road. And I did have the pleasure of listening to my colleague speak on this bill when it was introduced last evening and talk about, you know, some of these measures. And certainly we want to make sure that the amendments are going to be fair and benefit people, and particularly amendments that change the rules for disposing impounded vehicles and electronic definitions regarding personal information.

I think that, you know, it’s always . . . You know, I think certainly as someone who really hasn’t spent a lot of time reviewing this Act up to this point, I know it’s certainly touching on a number of things that I’ve often had some concerns and questions about in the past. I know certainly whether it, you know, those who are elderly and ensuring that they are safe and fit to drive and that there are provisions in place when that may not be the case, you know. But certainly, of course, we never want to have legislation that’s going to be overbearing or overreaching in its effect, I guess I would say. And so we’ll be wanting to look at this bill very carefully to ensure that it does indeed strike that right balance that we’re going to be looking for that will protect people and ensure that our highways remain safe for all those using our roadways.

And I know certainly I have often had a question about, you know, with these modern conveniences of taking photos of our driver’s licence and the opportunities to have, you know, electronic copies of our driver’s licence on our persons . . . You know, oftentimes people are running out of the house and not taking, you know, their wallet and all of their ID [identification].

And I guess that’s just one of the things that I’m wondering about with this particular Act and the registration permit that’s now required for motorcycle drivers, if there’s going to be an alternate provision as part of the Act. And again, of course, that would be something that we’ll be looking into more as we continue to further review the provisions.

I don’t really have much more to say on the Act at this time. And so with that . . . Just bear with me for one quick second here . . . ah, here we are. So, Mr. Speaker, it’s a pleasure to offer these initial comments, and I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 17, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2020*. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 18

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 18** — *The All Terrain Vehicles Amendment Act, 2020* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s a pleasure to offer additional comments on Bill No. 18, *The All Terrain Vehicles Amendment Act, 2020*. This bill is quite straightforward. In addition to substituting SGI for the Highway Traffic Board throughout the Act, the only really substantive change here is to amend the definition of all-terrain vehicles to include vehicles that were originally built with wheels and are modified to have tracks. This bill is obviously aimed at ensuring there’s a regulatory framework in place to ensure the safe use of ATVs [all-terrain vehicle] . . .

The Speaker: — Let’s just take a five-minute recess, please.

[The Assembly recessed for a period of time.]

The Speaker: — Okay, continue please.

Ms. Conway: — As I was saying, this bill is tasked with ensuring there’s a regulatory framework to ensure the safe use of ATVs. Of course we know that ATV use is a common pastime in Saskatchewan. Knowing many health care workers out in rural and remote communities, there’s often a steady stream of individuals coming into those emergency rooms with injuries. And so this is definitely something that we need to ensure is properly regulated and we ensure that it is done safely.

So again as I said previously, Mr. Speaker, a very straightforward bill. We have very little to say on this, and with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 18, *The All Terrain Vehicles Amendment Act, 2020*.

[15:30]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 19

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 19** — *The Human Resources Profession Act* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s a pleasure to offer initial comments on behalf of the official opposition with respect

to Bill No. 19, *The Human Resources Profession Act*. As someone who has worked as a union representative for a good number of years, I can certainly recognize the importance of regulating human resource professionals. I also recognize that self-regulation will be beneficial in legitimizing this profession further, which is crucial for the advancement of good labour relations.

I understand that this Act comes as a result of consultations with the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources Saskatchewan. I would also like to know if this Act has been modelled off of any other jurisdiction as my colleague, the member from Regina Rosemont, also mentioned last night. It's important to ensure this Act gets it right. And so, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 19, *The Human Resources Profession Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 21

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 21 — *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to offer initial comments on behalf of the official opposition on Bill 21, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2020*.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this bill changes language about cannabis to reflect current provincial and federal legislation. It allows people outside of the neighbourhood in question to make a complaint, and changes around timing and process required for notice of safety orders. It updates powers and obligations of the director and allows the disclosure of information to other orders of the government and law enforcement. Also there are changes to language about gangs and the fine structure.

I guess I would just continue on my comments from my earlier observations about, again, you know, it seems to me a very law-and-order kind of a focus we're seeing here. You know, my concern as someone who is only peripherally familiar with theories around, you know, criminology and crime prevention. But certainly, again, it seems like there's a lot of focus being placed here on the wrong end of the stick.

There are several changes to the Act, some of which make it more difficult for residents who are subject to complaints. You know, certainly there's been a lot of changes to our society, cultural changes, you know, certainly with the legalization of cannabis that we saw here a number of years ago. And certainly attitudes have changed a lot around their use. But I would say that it's created a little bit of conflict, and so, you know, there is certainly a heightened risk for there to be misunderstandings and

confusion.

And so I think that ensuring that the rights of individuals that come subject to complaint are being protected, and that we see a balance both for the safety of neighbourhoods and also the rights of tenants and owners, you know, it's also good for there to be disclosure of information on a need-to-know basis. We want to make sure that we're protecting people's privacy. And of course, you know, individuals are innocent until proven guilty.

We also need to ensure that we're addressing needs of access to suitable housing. And I know that my colleague, the critic for Justice, will have many questions for the minister and officials during the committee to speak to these points. And with that I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 21, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2020*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 22

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 22 — *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I rise again this afternoon, this time to enter into second reading debate on Bill No. 22 which is *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2020*. This Act proposes a number of amendments to existing legislation, *The Credit Union Act*, being introduced in 1998. This is about a dozen times that this Act has been updated over the ensuing years, Mr. Speaker. I think it's kind of an interesting metaphor for credit unions themselves in this province — always changing and updating.

And I did listen to the minister's second reading comments last night. I think he mentioned at one point, he noted the value and the importance of credit unions in this province. And that's certainly something that he'll find agreement with members on this side.

There are a number of amendments here but most of them focus around updating the legislation to allow for electronic meetings and electronic voting, something that I suspect not just credit unions, but a number of organizations have had to deal with over this past year and something, you know, that will be interesting to see as we move forward, what changes will come into force and we'll continue to have and utilize when this period is over.

I noted last night when I was speaking that I'm having a bit of a wistful, nostalgic moment for the days when we could just get in our cars and drive around Saskatchewan. And one of my very favourite things to do is to visit prairie museums and the Western Development Museums among them.

I was looking up something that I wanted to check about credit unions. And I remember hearing this and just wanted to confirm it was true before I put it on the record, that Saskatchewan can lay claim to having the first automated bank machines — we call them ATMs [automated teller machine] now — in the country, I believe maybe even in the world. Let me pull this up.

Anyway, today — not today but when we're able — if you're interested in this you can drive down the No. 1. And again not today; I don't know if travel is recommended yet. But when we're able safely to do so, you can drive down the highway to the Western Development Museum in Moose Jaw and find one of the first of these machines on display . . . In Canada, so we were the first in Canada to introduce both the ATMs and debit cards. So on display right now in Moose Jaw — and I don't know if you can access this online — is one of the first ATMs. It's a WDM-2001-S-98. This particular machine was housed in Rosetown for most of its career, from 1981 until the late '90s.

I've always liked that story because I think it speaks to not only the storied history of the credit union in this province and their place as innovators, but also the people of Saskatchewan, how we found ways time after time and continue to come together and innovate, sort of punch above our weight in terms of the things that we've come up with here. And that's always something that's made, I'm sure, many of us very proud to see.

So again, what we see here in this legislation is credit unions innovating, as I mentioned, I'm sure like many other organizations and institutions. This legislation when enforced will allow meetings and voting electronically. I think that's something, as I said, many organizations will adopt and continue with when this is over. And I think it really will be interesting when this period is over.

You know, I got groceries online for the first time and went and picked them up during the pandemic. I'm not sure if that's something I'll do afterwards. Perhaps that's something that's been a benefit to people, that they haven't had the opportunity to do before this period. You know, will we continue with curbside quite the way we do? Or will we all be so starved for companionship that we will be dining out in restaurants many days a week when we're allowed to? It's kind of wistful to think of those times, and again as I mentioned, I certainly look forward to those days.

I think being able to innovate and to connect when there's distance and reasons not to, I understand that, and I think we'll continue with some of those things. But I just want to put it on the record as well, Mr. Speaker, that I think also in this period we've found that there's no substitute for being in person and seeing people that way as well.

With that, I think that the other substantive piece of this legislation is with regard to the deposit guarantee fund. And it lays out explicitly that if a credit union were to go national, to leave Saskatchewan, that they would no longer have access to that fund. And I think that clarification is probably very . . . it seems very reasonable and probably provides assurance to those credit unions that operate here in Saskatchewan that that fund wouldn't be further divided by credit unions that have left the province.

I'm sure that there are other questions that the critic has. As I've said before today, I think it's probably best to leave those questions with her to ask in committee. And with that, I'm prepared to allow this bill to move to next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member that Bill No. 22 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate Bill 22, *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2020* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 23

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 23 — *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2020*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to offer initial comments on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 23, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act*.

I, along with my colleague, the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre who spoke to this bill last night, must express my surprise that there was not an attempt by this government to bring this bill forward much earlier on in the pandemic. It is of course of utmost importance that public health orders are followed, and we have certainly seen issues with this, particularly with the anti-mask protests that have cropped up on multiple occasions throughout the pandemic. In part, the ignorant flouting of public health orders has meant that this pandemic has not been contained as effectively as it otherwise could have been.

This amendment to the Act would have been useful to have had in place much earlier, but better late than never, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 23, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Having gone through the adjourned debates and second readings, I would move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till 1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:45.]

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