



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

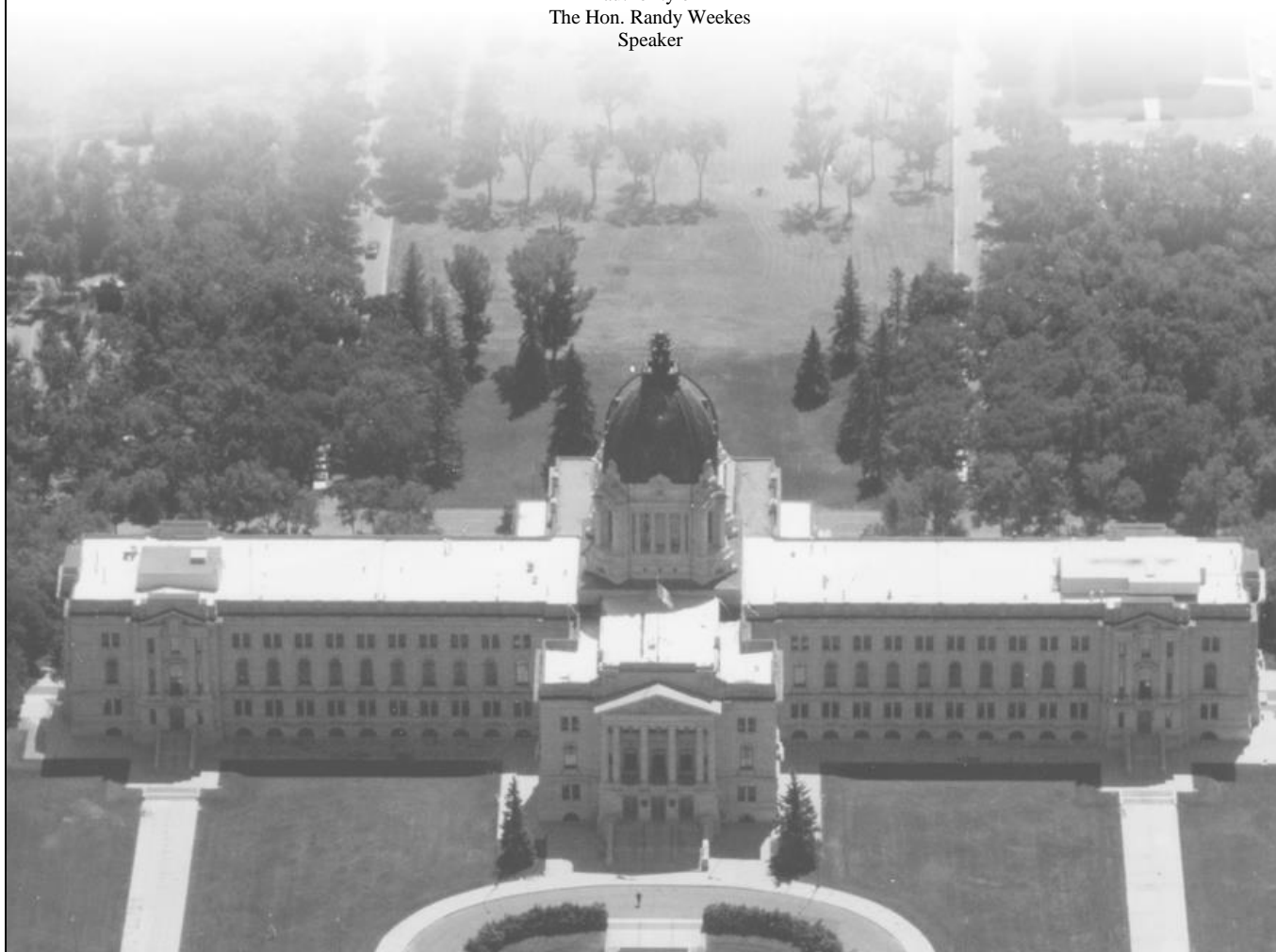
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd 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)	Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)	Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)	McLeod, Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Bradshaw, Hon. Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)	McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	Meili, Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)	Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	Meyers, Derek — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)
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Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)	Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)	Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
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Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)	Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP)
Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Stewart, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Harrison, Daryl — Cannington (SP)	Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)	Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)	Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)	Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)
Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	
Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)	Vacant — Athabasca

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 47; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Independent (Ind.) — 1; Vacant — 1

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request notice for extended leave to make formal greetings.

The Speaker: — Request for an extended introduction has been asked.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Ritchie: — Again, thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome guests seated in your gallery that are here to hear the introduction of a member's statement — which I'll get into more later — focused on water here in the province.

It's a great privilege of mine to be able to welcome these fine folks into the gallery this afternoon. This is truly an outstanding group of individuals who care deeply about this province and about future generations to come, and particularly as it relates to the preservation of water and water quality here in the province.

With us here today is Ken Hutchinson. He is the Vice-Chair of the Calling Lakes EcoMuseum. He resides at Pasqua Lake and was very instrumental in the opposition to drainage from the Quill lakes to Last Mountain Lake you will recall a number of years ago, and opposed to salt water entering freshwater bodies.

Very, very pleased to have Ken with us here today along with his partner, Marj Hutchinson, as well. And I have to also extend a deep, deep gratitude to Marj for all the work that she's been doing to present and distribute our petition on water quality and bring awareness to this critical issue.

Along with Marj we have Ann Donovan, and Ann is a long-standing resident and former councillor for Saskatchewan Beach. And she continues to enjoy her cottage property at Sask Beach every summer and, you know, is a really strong, committed advocate and stalwart for protecting water quality and through her involvement with the Last Mountain Lake Stewardship Group and the Saskatchewan Alliance for Water Sustainability.

Also present in your gallery here today, Mr. Speaker, is Jeff Olson. Jeff Olson is a former provincial employee and a very strong advocate for water quality. He is the managing director of the Citizens Environmental Alliance and concerned about water management in general in the province and farm drainage, and very committed to fighting the good fight for future generations.

To that end, Mr. Speaker, he has also brought his daughter. Cheyenne Olson is also present in the gallery. It's very

heartwarming to have Cheyenne here to observe the democratic process here in the Assembly, and for her taking that bold step forward to take an active role ensuring that justice is served when it comes to water management in our province. Welcome, Cheyenne. She's missing school today, but I'm sure she's going to get an excellent education through her attendance here today in the gallery.

Also present is Lorna Fulton. Lorna is in fact a former Page and tour guide here in the Saskatchewan legislature. I overheard her say that the cafeteria looked exactly the same as it did back then. And she's really excited to be back here after spending many years working in Ottawa as a federal public servant, serving Lorne Taylor and working on major projects. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, and as somebody who has returned to the province, residing at Katepwa Lake and since her return, has become very concerned about the state of water and water quality here in our province and has decided to take an active role in addressing issues of green algae growth.

She's also in attendance with her partner, retired engineer Rick Vigrass, and he brings a wealth of expert knowledge and experience. He's very concerned about sewage discharge from the city of Regina entering our water bodies and also shoreline cleanup, particularly as it relates to waste tires. And he's very encouraged to see that his village council is taking great steps to clean up tires on the shoreline as well as within the lake.

And really he believes strongly that it's important that we all have skin in the game and that everyone is doing their part. So he shows up, bringing forward that attitude of working constructively with others and, like the rest of the group, wanting to see that water is protected for future generations.

Also present in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are Murray and Alison Steffenson. They reside presently in Regina. They are originally from the Quill lakes region. They had donated a quarter section of their land to the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation and were very, very disappointed when they learned that that quarter section near LeRoy had actually been ditched illegally, without proper approvals. And so you know, their efforts to provide and conserve land has been thwarted by those efforts. It's very disturbing. I'll have more to say about that later, but I want to welcome Murray and Alison to their gallery.

Also present is Aura Lee MacPherson. Aura Lee prides herself on being a connector, a communicator, and building community confidence. I have had the great privilege to get to know Aura Lee over the past several months and really have become so impressed by her work to address issues of water quality. She understands these issues at a very deep level. She is so active in finding all channels, particularly through the Calling Lakes EcoMuseum, the Saskatchewan Alliance for Water Sustainability, and other international organizations including CLEM [Calling Lakes EcoMuseum] as the grassroots arm of the United Nations, and works fairly closely with Saskatchewan Regional Centre for Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development.

CLEM believes in protecting Qu'Appelle Valley's Calling Lakes and using the 17 Goals of Sustainable Development to do that. So a very comprehensive approach that they take. Aura Lee,

welcome to your gallery. It's so good to have you here.

I'm not quite finished, Mr. Speaker. I do have a couple more, two more, with this group of very esteemed residents of Saskatchewan that I would like to introduce. We have here also Sherry Forsyth. Sherry Forsyth is very active with the Saskatchewan Alliance for Water Sustainability and the Last Mountain Lake Stewardship Group. I had the great opportunity to meet with Sherry and others from these organizations a couple of weeks ago and talk about the issues that concern them greatly as it relates to water quality, the Quill lakes, and all of the water bodies within that Qu'Appelle lakes region. Sherry is a very strong advocate and articulate speaker. She understands these issues well, and is working hard to protect water quality here in Saskatchewan.

She has brought along with her, her sister Diana Lazurka who resides in Regina. And I think she credits her sister for providing her with the education and awareness around these critical issues. She's here today because she's wanting to see good outcomes be achieved when it comes to protecting water here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like for you and all of us to join me in welcoming our representatives here today in the gallery on water quality. And so happy to have you here. Thank you so much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, through you and to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I know there's a number of folks here that are eventually going to be recognized by the Minister of Advanced Education and a number of others.

But I wanted to just take the opportunity first to introduce a couple of former colleagues of mine, Mr. Speaker, as well yours. And that is one Rob Norris, who is here today I know on a number of different meetings. Rob served in the cabinet of the government, served with the Saskatchewan Party for a number of years.

Not near as many years as the gentleman in the front row, Mr. Speaker, Dan D'Autremont. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to acknowledge and welcome a couple of former colleagues of all of us in this Assembly, or many of us that were elected for so many years, again not as many years as Dan. But welcome both of these former colleagues and friends of mine to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the Premier in welcoming all of our guests here today, but in particular those former legislative colleagues. Great to see Mr. Norris. I didn't get the chance to be on the floor when you were, but I've heard many stories of your eloquence and persistence in your roles.

And I also really value the work that you're doing with the Canadian Light Source, and welcome all of the folks joining us from the Canadian Light Source. We had a chance to tour through the facility a couple of years ago now and I was just so impressed

by the wide variety of scientific research, the incredible contribution that Light Source makes, not just to the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], not just to Saskatoon, but to Saskatchewan and to the entire world in the knowledge that's developed there, and was impressed by your commitment and knowledge to that project.

I also want to recognize Mr. D'Autremont. Good to see you, Speaker Dan. You know, I was thinking as the Speaker and Clerks and Sergeant-at-Arms walked in, we didn't know when to stand if we didn't watch Dan. He always had the exact right moment, not a second too early. You know, Dan was here for a very long number of years, a committed parliamentarian, a committed legislator, a partisan fellow in for the debates, but also I found always very decent. And I remember one particular experience, cruising through the hallways in wheelchairs with some of the awareness work that Dan used to do around abilities and access.

So I ask all the members to join me in welcoming them — the folks here on water quality and all our guests in the legislature today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the member from Nutana welcoming all the people here, looking at the water end of it because I'm also Minister of Water Security. And I'm hoping that they're here to hear about all the good things that Water Security is working on to try and improve the life for everybody within this province, and to make economic gains and to help our producers within the province on water security. So thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join in the introduction of the fine folks that are here today. My former colleagues that are here today, great to see you. The folks from the synchrotron — brilliant, inspiring people and world-leading research right out of Saskatchewan here, something we're all proud of.

[13:45]

I want to join in the welcome of all the folks that have come here on the water front as well — real good people. And I want to give a special shout-out to two special people to me up there. Marj and Ken Hutchinson are amazing citizens of their community and of their province. They give back in so many ways. They're incredible volunteers. They're citizens that are engaged in good governance of this province. They care about things like water and the environment. They care about making sure supports are there for people. These two people are vibrant, hard-working citizens that really represent the best of Saskatchewan. I thank them for their friendship. I thank them for their investment in the interests of Saskatchewan people.

And many might also know Marj. She's a famous actor from a SaskTel commercial that we might all see. So it's a pleasure to have a famous actor/actress here as well. My pleasure to welcome Marj and Ken Hutchinson to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to join in welcoming the members to their Legislative Assembly. And a big shout-out to Rick Vigrass. We've had coffee together and discussed many of the issues around Katepwa Lake and all of the lakes in my constituency. So to you and through you, Mr. Speaker, welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to introduce, in the Speaker's gallery, a group from the Canadian Light Source, a group of scientists and administrators. They are Dr. Lucia Zuin, Ms. Kathryn Janzen, Dr. Chithra Karunakaran, Ms. Sandra Ribeiro, and Mr. Norris — has been the third time now, I guess — Dr. Gianluigi Botton, Mr. Bill Matiko.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the great work that's done at the CLS [Canadian Light Source Inc.], one of the largest science infrastructure projects in our country. Many members this morning heard from this delegation about the amazing research being done right here in Saskatchewan by Saskatchewan-born scientists, but also we attract many scientists from right around the world to Saskatoon.

We look forward to all the work being done in the future to solve the world's problems and help our economy into the years ahead. So we welcome this delegation here this afternoon. Thank you.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to join the minister in welcoming our delegation from CLS today. As the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Saskatoon University and the critic for Advanced Education and Innovation, some of my colleagues and I had a chance to hear from the CLS delegation just earlier today on some of the fine work that they're doing.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Light Source is world class in terms of the scientific advancements it has enabled in health, agriculture, energy, and environment, as well as advanced materials. So I just would like to extend a warm welcome to you all and thank you for taking the time to present to us today. Welcome to your legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome today former Cannington MLA, Dan D'Autremont, to your gallery. Dan was a founding member of the Saskatchewan Party, a 29-year member of this Assembly, and I could go on and on but I won't. But talking to some of his former colleagues, they reassured me that Dan was the second-best Cannington MLA in the last 30 years.

But truthfully, Mr. Speaker, Dan is I believe the second-longest-serving MLA in the province, and I wish to thank him for being here today and thank you for all his years of service.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens that have been hit so hard by the cost-of-living increases that are a direct result of the Sask Party's mismanagement and choices. Of course we've spoken about the doubling of the PST [provincial sales tax], the take on the PST, the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history that hit people hard, that stalled our economic recovery and that has hurt businesses across Saskatchewan, the PST that was stuck on hard-hit restaurants in Saskatchewan, the PST that was stuck on construction labour that caused permits and construction to plummet.

But the petition here today is a petition that is very impactful to families around the PST that was imposed on used cars, \$100 million that's been taken out of the pockets of Saskatchewan people, those hard-earned dollars. And at a time where inflation is high, where Saskatchewan people are paying the price on so many fronts, they certainly can't afford to pay the price for more Sask Party mismanagement.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party to stop saddling families and businesses with the costs of their mismanagement and immediately reinstate the PST exemption on used cars.

These petitions are signed by concerned residents of Saskatchewan. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Domotor: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to continue its work in attracting large-scale capital investment projects to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year the government has attracted the following large-scale projects to our province: BHP Jansen's potash mine with a total value of \$12 billion, which will create 3,500 jobs during construction and over 600 jobs in operation; Viterra's two-and-a-half-million-metric-ton canola processing plant right here in Regina; Cargill's new state-of-the-art canola processing facility in Regina, valued at over 350 million; Richardson International doubling its canola crush processing capacity to 2.2 metric million tons in Yorkton; AGT Food's investment in a logistics and processing hub in Delisle; Ceres Global Ag, 1.1 million-metric-ton canola processing plant at Northgate; Red Leaf Pulp's wheat straw pulping technology development and commercialization and eventual establishment of Canada's first wheat straw pulp facility in Regina; Northern Nutrients' 28 000-tonne sulphur-enhanced urea fertilizer manufacturing facility near Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. Paper Excellence's restart of the Prince Albert pulp mill valued at over 550 million and over 1,600 jobs; One Sky's OSB [oriented strand board] mill in Prince Albert valued at 250 million that will create over 700 jobs; expansion of Dunkley Lumber's saw mill that will

create 240 new jobs in Carrot River.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot go back to the dark days in our province when the NDP [New Democratic Party] was in power, when our youth and businesses would flee our province to other jurisdictions with opportunity. Mr. Speaker, we must not go back to the days when the NDP were planning for decline.

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue our momentum and attract large investments from all over the world to our province to create opportunities for our young people and improve the quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents. Mr. Speaker, we must not take our foot off the pedal of building a stronger, safer, healthier, better-educated, and more independent Saskatchewan.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan demand the provincial government continue its efforts to promote the province, encourage investment, attract new jobs, new opportunities, and drive growth for the people of Saskatchewan.

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today to present a petition calling on the Legislative Assembly to improve access to midwifery services in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: midwifery provides a model of care that is individualized, community centred, and cost effective; wait-lists for midwifery care in Saskatchewan are extensive, and many people who wish to access midwifery services are unable to do so; midwife-facilitated births amounted to only 2.9 per cent of babies born in 2019, with demand far exceeding the limited supply of midwives that are currently in our province. According to the Canadian Association of Midwives, 53 per cent of people seeking midwifery care in Saskatoon are turned away due to lengthy wait-lists. Expanding midwifery services makes sense for pregnant people and families, and it makes sense for our province's fiscal well-being.

Mr. Speaker, I benefited from the care of a midwife for my first-born and my second-born child. I know that not all people in Saskatchewan are lucky enough to have midwifery care that want midwifery care.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to introduce a post-secondary midwifery training program in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today come from Regina and Sedley. I do so present.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to see the members opposite engaging in the petition. The support from the member for Indian Head-Milestone seemed quite keen on what the Deputy Leader was discussing here. I hope the member didn't hurt himself patting his back so hard on behalf of other people's work there, Mr. Speaker.

But today I rise to read a petition, a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan calling for pay equity legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand how this could be a controversial concept, how the idea, that basic core philosophical notion that if two people do the same work they should receive the same pay.

But sadly that's not the case, not in Saskatchewan. A woman working the same job as a man earns \$4.88 less an hour on average. That's 15 per cent, or it's 85 cents on a dollar to what a man doing the same work earns. It's completely disrespectful to those workers. It's unfair, and it's bad economics.

You know, these are often people who have added costs, are paying for child care, are paying for other added costs for children, carrying more of the burden of care at home. It gets in the way of women being able to be in the workforce, of women being able to fully participate in our economy.

And yet somehow this government, so committed to the economy they say, manages to allow Saskatchewan to be one of four provinces that has no pay equity legislation, Saskatchewan having one of the highest gender wage gaps in the entire country. This is the result of systemic gender discrimination in compensation for work, and this discrimination must be corrected with pay equity legislation.

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has recommended proactive and comprehensive pay equity legislation. The human rights body in this province has made it clear that this government has chosen not to pursue that course of action. *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* prohibits gender-based compensation, but the complaint-driven process puts no positive obligation on employers. Really, there's no impetus to change. But that change is needed. And that while pay equity advocacy primarily seeks to address gender-based wage discrimination, it must also be mindful of ability, sexual orientation, age, identity, race-based wage discrimination. So:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to introduce pay equity legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from here in our capital city of Regina.

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

[14:00]

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to restore microbiology lab services in rural Saskatchewan.

I had the opportunity to visit Yorkton this summer, fall, Mr. Speaker, and hear directly from the workers who have been

impacted by this change and their complete lack of understanding of why this government would take this step, that they feel abandoned in rural Saskatchewan, and that they see this government not having their back. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that the Government of Saskatchewan is cutting life-saving microbiology testing from the Yorkton regional hospitals. Samples will now be sent to Regina for processing. The Yorkton lab currently processes thousands of tests each year.

The government says there won't be a delay in processing. But with one courier a day from Yorkton to Regina, if you're not there by the cut-off time, your specimen will not get to the Regina lab until the next day. And this poses significant health risks to those who are in hospital locally waiting for those test results if they can't be diagnosed and treated in time. So if there are any delays, if roads are impassable by snow, samples will not get to Regina in a timely manner. Their treatment will be delayed.

We know that the centralization of health services in Regina increases the workload for staff in Regina and it erodes our community's ability to recruit and retain medical professionals, and that lab staff in Yorkton have the skills, expertise, and know-how to get tests processed in a timely manner.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to immediately restore rural lab services, and ensure that residents of Yorkton and area have community-based microbiology testing on a go-forward basis.

This petition is signed by individuals from Yorkton and Regina, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege and my pleasure to rise today and present a petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for the funding of in vitro fertilization, or IVF treatments in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention the following: that one in six couples in Canada experience infertility. Think of all the people in Saskatchewan right now struggling with this, Mr. Speaker, wondering if their ability to have a family is going to be based on their ability to afford it. That IVF treatments are prohibitively expensive for many, with one cycle typically costing at least \$10,000. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the medicine, the drugs that you need to initiate that and to proceed with that treatment cost anywhere between 2 and \$7,000. Mr. Speaker, that is out of reach for the vast majority of people, even those amongst the wealthy.

Despite public health care being a right in Canada, there is no government financial support for Saskatchewan couples pursuing IVF treatments, and that Saskatchewan people's ability to conceive should not depend on their socio-economic status. Mr. Speaker, the money these families have to spend on fertility treatments could be better spent in the local economy, saving for

retirement, purchasing a house in this beautiful province, or simply saving.

Other provinces, Mr. Speaker, have created programs that financially assist in providing IVF treatments to those struggling to conceive. And, Mr. Speaker, investing in people determined and trying to grow their families here right at home in Saskatchewan makes economic sense.

Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately move to cover the financial burden of two rounds of IVF treatment for Saskatchewan people experiencing infertility.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition reside in Weyburn and Colgate, Saskatchewan. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the petition to reject the proposed Lambert Peat Moss development. Many good northern residents, local trappers, traditional land users, leaders, are opposed to the proposed peat moss mine near La Ronge. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band is opposed. I've talked to the Métis leaders in the area. They are opposed. I have talked to municipal leaders who are opposed. I've talked to children, our young people who understand the value of traditional lands. I've talked to many of them, and they're opposed to this. They're very concerned about what the muskeg does, and how it protects and how it cleans mother earth, and they speak well about it. Our elders are very concerned. Our traditional users are very concerned. And they're asking the government, please do not do this.

And I think sometimes when we have individuals, and so many of them, Mr. Speaker, asking a government to please hold — don't do more damage — we need to work together. We need to hear our leaders. We need to hear our traditional land users. Those elders who have the knowledge, they're our knowledge keepers. We need to hear what they're saying. When we talk to a government that says it's supposed to consult, it's supposed to work with its residents, here's a government that's not. And it's very clear the good people of the North and all over the province are asking.

But not only is it signatures on this petition. Online petition has over 20,000 names on that petition. People are making it very clear they're concerned, and they want their government to hear their voice very loud and clear. Mr. Speaker, I have talked to different individuals, even the young people in our schools. They're educating themselves about the concern and the worry they have about the next generation, and that's important. Our elders, our teachers are doing that in the classroom. They're trying to.

So, Mr. Speaker, if our young people are asking the government, they're the next generation. They want to make sure you're taking care of the land, making sure mother earth is okay.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but I'm going to go to the prayer. But I wanted the government to understand how concerned and

serious this is being taken back home and the rest of the province. I know a lot of people are signing the online petition.

So I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the provincial government to protect the boreal forest and reject the proposed Lambert Peat Moss development.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to present our petition for the first time today, calling for paid sick leave. Mr. Speaker, we know that access to paid sick leave in our province is far from universal. Less than half of Saskatchewan workers have access to paid sick leave when they become ill, when they need to recover from minor injury, or when they must self-isolate due to exposure from COVID-19. Often these are our province's lowest income workers.

Mr. Speaker, many of these underpaid and underprotected workers are the very same workers who have been lauded by this government as the pandemic's front-line heroes, the very people who kept our economy functioning, going into their jobs and risking their well-being so that Saskatchewan people could continue to access important and essential services.

It's time for this government to step up, Mr. Speaker, and show leadership in implementing this key element of progressive labour policy. It's time that all Saskatchewan workers are afforded the dignity, respect, and security that will come with guaranteed paid sick leave.

Those who have signed the petition wish to bring to our attention the following points: a healthy workforce is good for the economy; lives could be saved if workers could afford to stay home when they're sick; no one should have to make a choice between going to work sick or risking the roof over their head by staying home. Workers, doctors, public health officials have all called for paid sick leave in Saskatchewan. The official opposition has twice now introduced paid sick leave legislation since the onset of the pandemic, calling for a minimum of 10 paid sick days each year and 14 days during a public health crisis.

Mr. Speaker, 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 and pass paid sick leave legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the petition today has been signed by residents of Sedley and Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be

on my feet again today to present a petition on the Saskatchewan income support program or SIS. This is a petition that we've been presenting every day this session, and it calls on this government to make changes to the new SIS program.

The signatories of this petition wish to bring to this government's attention that, unlike its predecessors . . . The Health minister's heckling the SIS petition. He of course is the one that oversaw the inauguration of SIS. But I'll come to that in a moment.

Unlike its predecessors, Mr. Speaker, SIS does not directly pay for housing and utilities. A bit about that. The previous government brought in a direct-payment method because it recognized that there were some obstacles that folks faced to covering rent and utilities, whether it had to do with mental health or addiction or just the day-to-day struggles that come with being low-income, Mr. Speaker.

That direct-payment option was changed under SIS, and SIS also cancelled the direct payment of utilities to our Crown corporations. So previously there was a rental supplement that was a little bit lower and it went towards rent, and then utilities were covered on a guaranteed basis in addition to that. That is no longer the case under this new SIS program.

The signatories of this petition wish to bring to the government's attention that SIS has led to dramatic increases in rental arrears, evictions, and homelessness. There were two reports put out by the Sask Landlord Association that would support that. About 30 per cent of people didn't make their rent in September and that number repeated again in October.

According to the signatories of this petition, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government was warned years ago — two years ago to be exact — when the now Health minister brought in SIS, announced it. They warned that this would lead to increased arrears, evictions, and homelessness. Of course SIS was inaugurated two years ago, and it's been two years of slowly introducing people into the program. And we saw the completion of that, I believe, at the end of August. So now SIS has completely replaced all pre-existing programs — SAP [Saskatchewan assistance program], TEA [transitional employment allowance], etc.

The signatories of this petition wish to bring to the government's attention that the provincial government ignored alarms from social workers, landlords, housing and anti-poverty advocates for months on this exact issue. I have personally been copied on hundreds of letters from individuals that would meet this criteria, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, the signatories of this petition wish to bring to this government's attention that these unprecedented evictions and homelessness have led to people living in tents as we approach winter. Of course we had Camp Hope in Regina. I saw something online about a woman in Moose Jaw just last night sleeping in a tent, and I saw many members opposite were tagged in that post to bring that to their attention. So all signs would indicate indeed people are living in tents in winter, Mr. Speaker.

So I'll read the prayer:

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

that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to restore direct payment of rent and utilities for income support clients.

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to be able to stand in my place today and present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan on behalf of those who have signed this petition. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to stand in this Assembly. And not every person in this province has a voice. This is one way for the people of Saskatchewan to bring their voice to the floor of this Assembly. It's an important part of the democratic institution, Mr. Speaker. It is something that is valued by those who have concerns or comments or wishes that they would like heard by the government, and I think this is important.

[14:15]

The petition I present today, Mr. Speaker, is calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the crisis in our classrooms. And those who have signed the petition wish to draw our attention to a number of points: that the 2021-22 provincial budget's failure to fully fund the teachers' contract amounts to a cut. Mr. Speaker, in fact this is year upon year of cuts by underfunding to education with declining per-student funding going back to 2013.

In 2020 Prairie South School Division had to approve their third-straight deficit budget because of flat funding from this government. When funding is flat to education, Mr. Speaker, it does not allow boards to cover the cost of living, increased staffing, student growth, inflation, or any improvements, Mr. Speaker. It hampers school boards' abilities to innovate and meet the needs of students when they are just trying to keep teachers in front of the classroom and keep the lights on, Mr. Speaker.

This amount, the funding gap going back to 2013, has been pegged at well over \$100 million, Mr. Speaker, meaning that we are shortchanging our children every year in this province. And it's something that people want to stop.

The Saskatchewan Party's cuts mean, as I've said, falling per-student funding and fewer supports for students, which is always important, Mr. Speaker, but is especially important as we attempt to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN [United Nations] has described this as a generational catastrophe for students, Mr. Speaker, and those who've signed the petition would agree with that. They also want us to know that the Sask Party government's cuts leave educators and support staff without the resources that they need to support a pandemic recovery.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to immediately fix the crisis in our classrooms by providing stable and adequate funding for

public education in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition today reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to raise my voice above the din in the Assembly so that I may be heard by my guests here in the Assembly. They're having trouble hearing, Mr. Speaker.

I wish to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to protect Saskatchewan's water supply. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege and honour to present this petition on behalf of the many signatories to this petition. And I would not have that distinct pleasure and great honour if it were not for the fact that the people that are seated in this gallery today have worked so hard to submit it, circulate it, and ensure that they could sign it.

They wish to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, that water is life and that it deserves to be protected. This past summer I met with a group of stakeholders in Lumsden, and we called on this government at that time to take action to address the state of our water quality as we were heading into a very hot summer. And indeed it was a record-breaking summer. We had drought conditions, and you know, the threats to habitat and ecosystems were exacerbated. Not only that, we've continued to see how wild wet weather, drought, fire has continued to run rampant across the environment, affecting bridges and infrastructure right across the province.

So I want to . . . The people of the province want you to understand and bring to your attention that water is essential for human health, recreation, the health of our ecosystems, and our economy. Also that research from the University of Regina shows the water quality of Saskatchewan lakes is getting worse. I think that stands in direct contrast to information posted on the Water Security's website that is not representing the true state of our water here in the province.

It's also important to note that the Provincial Auditor has noted that Saskatchewan's lack of a wetland policy negatively impacts water quality, and that significant work remains to better regulate drainage.

It's also stated on this petition, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan sat idle as our water supply was threatened by the Government of Alberta's decision to rescind their coal development policy, and that the provincial government needs, needs to take an active role in opposing policies that have downstream impacts on Saskatchewan rivers and deltas.

And certainly with the proposed irrigation project — which has been touted as transformational, once-in-a-generation kind of a project — that the absence of wetland policies, as identified by our Provincial Auditor, is going to run against our ability to properly ensure development of any kind of major projects regarding water here in the province.

Not only that, but we've seen that there has been a lack of enforcement. And when asked about this in committee, the

Minister for Water Security indicated to me that he would take his time to get it right. That is totally insufficient and inexcusable. The time to act is now. These recommendations from the Provincial Auditor have been outstanding for four years, and that's far too long.

We have the most arable agricultural land in all of Canada, and the fact that we do not have wetland policies to support agricultural production is detrimental to the growth of agriculture. We see this as part of environmental and social governance and our ability to market our grains internationally when they are looking . . . Marketing boards are looking for sustainable production, and wetland policy supports that.

Mr. Speaker, these are wide-ranging issues. They're complex. They're diverse. They affect every person here in the province. They affect ecosystems. They affect our economy. We need to ensure we have proper water policies to ensure that people prosper, livelihoods and our economy prospers.

Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan actively protect Saskatchewan waters from current and future threats to our valuable water supplies.

This petition is signed by the residents of Fort Qu'Appelle. I do so here present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet in the Assembly today to present a petition that I think is very important. This one is of particular importance to me because this one has to do with the level of care and services that we provide to seniors. And I choose to believe, Mr. Speaker, every member of this Assembly, every member agrees with me that our seniors, they don't just need the best services and care available; they deserve it. And the folks who've signed this petition agree with that statement as well.

This petition is calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to implement a seniors' advocate for the province of Saskatchewan. The undersigned of this petition want to bring several points to our attention. First, that for too long the concerns of Saskatchewan seniors have not been a priority for the Sask Party government. They also want us to know that many Sask Party government cuts directly impact Saskatchewan seniors; and instead of making life more affordable for our senior citizens, they've slashed programs like the hearing aid plan. They've cut the seniors' drug plan. They've eliminated a provincial support for seniors living with disabilities. They cut other supports for seniors, hiked the rents in long-term care, and are desperately selling off public seniors' housing.

Saskatchewan does not have legislated minimum standards of care for long-term care. And even with continued reports and concerns from families on the issues of long-term care, the Sask Party government has failed to ensure safety, has failed to ensure a quality of life for seniors living in long-term care facilities, and they've failed to protect the dignity of seniors living in long-term

care.

Mr. Speaker, several other provinces have a seniors' advocate who successfully work to ensure seniors have the supports they need and deserve. I was part of a panel discussion with the Minister for Seniors, with the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism. We were joined by author and the pre-eminent health journalist in Canada, André Picard. In his book *Neglected No More*, he says that every province should have a seniors' advocate. And he looks at the work done during the pandemic to protect seniors. He says, "No person in the country did more for seniors than the seniors' advocate in British Columbia." And that's why the folks who signed this petition believe that a seniors' advocate would provide vital support for seniors and their families right here in our great province.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately appoint a seniors advocate to ensure the rights of seniors are upheld, and that all seniors across the province have the supports they need and deserve.

This petition is signed by residents of Regina. I do so present.

The Speaker: — Okay, colleagues. Obviously that was a display of petitions that were to the extreme. I'll read again what I have stated at other times, remind all members according to rule 16(3)(b) in the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* when presenting petitions:

The Member may read the prayer, provide a general explanation of the subject . . . and location of the petitioners . . .

No debate on any [other] matter on or in relation to the petitions is permitted.

So I agree, I have been in the past shutting these petitions down. It got started, one side did it; the other side joined in, tit-for-tat, and that's fine. Everyone's made their point. I can rule every time. Every time somebody gets up, I'll shut you down. This is for both sides. It's for both sides, don't forget. Naturally one party does petitions more than the other side.

I would welcome the House leaders to meet and discuss this. If the sides agree to some kind of a time allocation, that would be fine with me. We have it for all other types of things that we do in the Chamber.

So I will impose my will on members when they're doing petitions, if that's what you want me to do every time. But don't forget, both sides are doing it. And I understand, I could've shut it down early, but I thought well let's let it go and see where it goes. And you've seen where it goes.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Protecting Water in Saskatchewan

Ms. Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, climate change continues to wreak havoc in real and catastrophic ways, and Saskatchewan people are increasingly concerned of this government's inaction to protect water.

Our Provincial Auditor reports the Water Security Agency has yet to act on their 2017 recommendations that address wetland retention and water quality. A distressing outcome of this inaction can be witnessed in the Quill lakes region. Currently subject to a drainage moratorium, the government has turned a blind eye to the burning of wetlands, and heavy equipment draining water and building illegal ditches. I saw this first-hand when the member for Regina Rosemont and I toured the Quill lakes watershed along with concerned stakeholders this fall. Mr. Speaker, it's high time that this government establish clear wetland policies consistent with neighbouring jurisdictions and halt illegal drainage activities.

[14:30]

Today I would like to pay tribute to connectors and organizations who have drawn attention to this environmental crisis, including the Saskatchewan Alliance for Water Sustainability, the Last Mountain Lake Stewardship Group, the Calling Lakes EcoMuseum, the Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan, and the Citizens Environmental Alliance.

Mr. Speaker, these folks understand that good water governance is essential as we grapple with the changing climate. I ask all members to join me in recognizing important advocacy work and the people protecting local watersheds.

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

Multicultural Youth Leadership Awards

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan was the first province in the country to pass multiculturalism legislation, *The Multiculturalism Act*. This year, Saskatchewan Multicultural Week is celebrated November 20th to the 28th to honour and recognize those in our community. Each year the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan organizes and publicizes events around this week to celebrate the richness of our diversity. Their theme this year is Together We Make Saskatchewan Strong. In past years, the event has been held multiple times at Government House and hosted by the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, at the heart of this event are the multicultural awards. These are presented to some very deserving people who have made an impact on our province through their work and leadership in support of multiculturalism, and this was truly the case for all the nominees who are worthy of recognition.

This past Saturday the event was held at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. I'd like to congratulate Neelu Sachdev of the Regina Immigrant Women Centre on being awarded the Leadership Award, B'yauling Toni for the Youth Leadership Award.

Mr. Speaker, the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan works

all year long in support of multiculturalism and fighting racism. Thank you, executive director Rhonda Rosenberg, staff, and board for your leadership. We believe in our provincial motto, "from many peoples, strength," and we support the ongoing work done by the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Rights of Saskatchewan Citizens

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The spirit of the Charter has been lost in Saskatchewan and is being abused under the tyranny that has arisen since the advent of the COVID narrative. Over the past two years, Saskatchewan has seen a sweeping change in the way government respects various constitutional freedoms, such as freedom to assemble and hold peaceful rallies. Now the government wants to lock down our beautiful legislature, the people's building.

In order for government to take certain actions, they have to demonstrate and justify what it is they are proposing to do. The government has not justified its data to use as an excuse to suspend the rights of Saskatchewan citizens or amend Bill 70, security within the legislative district.

The fearmongering and scapegoating is demonstrating a decline in the ethical standards of Saskatchewan society. If we uphold the rule of law, why does Saskatchewan need isolation camps, snitch lines, extra security detail for the Premier, and sheriffs for the people's building? Government is instigating aggression, not the people.

Saskatchewan people continue to express their ideas, hope, and encouragement to help right the ship. Let them help. Let the people help. The captain needs to listen to his leaky ship as he navigates this rocky climate it currently sails in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Book Showcases Photographs of Saskatchewan Grain Elevators

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize and congratulate Jack Robson and Warren Iverson on their published book, *Saskatchewan Elevators*, that's been 25 years in the making.

It all began when Jack and Warren met each other and discovered they both had been collecting photographs over the years of Saskatchewan grain elevators. After several years, the men decided the collection of photographs should be printed. They had more than 2,000 photographs between the two of them.

Thank you to Trudy Janssens, a retired photographer who helped with the design of the book. Trudy worked on routine colour correction, cropping, and retouching the photographs. It was also important to them that the images selected also highlighted that in many prairie towns there were several grain elevators.

Finally the dream of creating a coffee-table book took shape, and

after many, many hours of time spent checking elevator and town names for accuracy, the final book has 1,128 images. Jack and Warren are sure that there are only a few elevators from across the province that are missing, actually, from the collection.

Currently there are 100 books that have been printed. After orders are filled, they plan to give books to some libraries and senior centres across the province. This project is a non-profit venture and truly a dream come true for Warren and Jack.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating Jack Robson, Warren Iverson, and Trudy Janssens on their amazing publication. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Kihew Fabco Plant Grand Opening in Melville

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was joined by the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, and I was very pleased to participate with dignitaries from Melville, suppliers from across Canada on another grand opening in Melville.

August 25th was a great day for Kahkewistahaw First Nation led by Chief Evan Taypotat as they celebrated the grand opening of the Kihew Fabco facility in the Rail City and surrounding area.

The facility they purchased was previously owned and operated by Babcock & Wilcox Canada. The Kihew Fabco plant will fabricate steel and assemble large equipment for a variety of industries, including mining and oil and gas. The company has spent a good part of the last year installing and refurbishing with state-of-the-art equipment like the Lincoln PythonX SPG beam line plasma cutter, which is a machine used to cut steel beams with incredible efficiency.

They also installed a welding robot that assists in welding pipes and reducing errors, and a number of other machines that'll be used to create building structures and supports including 3-D [three dimensional] modelling software, 3-D laser scanning, and a virtual reality capture. The company currently has nine full-time staff members working out of the Melville location with hopes to bolster its employment into the triple digits over the next year.

Kihew Fabco, Kahkewistahaw First Nation, and other First Nation bands in the area are working with Parkland College and other local institutions to develop a robust job training strategy. This will prepare local Indigenous students with experience in the trades as a means to ensure those new hires will be ready to take advantage of the jobs and work that will come as Saskatchewan continues to build better.

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

Conservation Officer Visits Saskatoon School After Moose Encounter

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There was a moose on the loose a couple of weeks ago in the Saskatoon Willowgrove constituency. On November 16th, conservation officer Sergeant Chris Maier visited Dr. Sylvia

Fedoruk elementary school in the Evergreen neighbourhood of Saskatoon to meet and discuss the wild moose chase with students and staff.

The moose in question, who some have named Elliot, was tranquilized and later safely released into the wild. Sergeant Maier explained the role conservation officers hold in protecting our wildlife and the environment and offered some great tips in dealing and encountering wildlife in the city. Members from the Saskatoon Police Service and the Saskatchewan Association of Conservation Officers on hand gave out stuffed moose souvenirs to students and answered any questions that they had.

Mr. Speaker, this exemplifies the importance of our conservation officers in Saskatchewan and the important work that they do in both education and engagement here in our province. While visits from wildlife in the city are uncommon, conservation officers are always there to lend a hand.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to thank Officer Maier, the Saskatchewan Association of Conservation Officers, and the Saskatoon Police Service for taking the time to educate our students about this most important topic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Introduction of Saskatchewan Trafficking Response Team

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government recently announced the introduction of Saskatchewan trafficking response team, or STRT. In recent years we have seen an increase in criminal activity tied to organized street gangs. These gangs bring illegal weapons, drugs, and human trafficking to Saskatchewan through established trafficking corridors. The repercussions of this criminal act have been felt across the province.

As a response to this concerning trend, we are proud to introduce the new intelligence and enforcement team dedicated to tackling illegal weapons, drugs, and human trafficking. STRT will investigate these criminal activities proactively, leverage dedicated resources, and introduce interprovincial collaboration to target trafficking in Saskatchewan. It will have three offices strategically located in Lloydminster, Estevan, and Swift Current, close to provincial boundaries and established trafficking corridors.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of several initiatives that this government introduced to ensure the safety of citizens across Saskatchewan. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Recommendations of Chief Medical Health Officer

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Shahab has said that it's up to the government to release his recommendations. The Premier has refused, knowing that it would further reveal that he had the information he needed to prevent the loss of hundreds of lives in the country's worst fourth wave.

Today Dr. Shahab is making new recommendations to avoid a fifth wave. Will the Premier release those recommendations, or will he learn nothing and continue to ignore the experts, continue to put politics ahead of people's lives?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, on the first question with respect to the recommendations and the conversations that the government, the Health minister, other health officials have had with Dr. Shahab — who is our provincial chief medical health officer, and yes, does provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Saskatchewan — they're out there. They're out there, Mr. Speaker, as public health orders and public health recommendations. The government moved on those recommendations in the middle of September.

With respect to the second question, Mr. Speaker, as we know, at the end of the month the public health restrictions in this province do expire, Mr. Speaker. And so you are going to hear the government come out — prior to next Tuesday, I believe, is November the 30th — later this week with some additional information and clarification on what the public health orders, public health recommendations will be as we move forward into and through the Christmas season.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier is simply not stating the facts. He chose to ignore those recommendations. He's chosen to hide those recommendations because he doesn't want people to know that he waited far too long and far too many people died.

Dr. Shahab has said so, that these recommendations are up to the government to release. He's also said publicly that we need to maintain masks and proof of vaccination at least until the spring to keep people safe. Will the Premier avoid making the same deadly mistake he did last summer? Will he release the recommendations, listen to Dr. Shahab, listen to the experts, and commit to keeping these measures in place until we are truly out of the woods?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Again, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the preamble of that question, it's simply not the case. Mr. Speaker, the conversations, the decisions that the government had made on the recommendations of our chief medical health officer are out there as public health orders. They are out there as public health recommendations.

Yes, there's one recommendation that has been widely discussed in here on which the opposition and the government disagree, and that was a recommendation around mandating vaccines for in-person attendance in schools, Mr. Speaker. And I think the Minister of Education has done a very good job in clearing up any muddy waters that may have been present here in the province due to the switching position of the opposition, Mr. Speaker.

In the next number of days, you are going to see our government, again, is going to speak to what the public health measures will be in the weeks leading into Christmas, through the Christmas

season, and ultimately into the new year.

Mr. Speaker, I would just add the public health orders and measures and recommendations that we have in place are working. Our active case count is down now over 80 per cent here in the province. And again, you can have all of the public health orders in place, but if the people of the province aren't adhering to those public health orders, they really aren't effective. That isn't the case in Saskatchewan. The vast majority of people are adhering to the public health orders, and for that I once again say thank you to each and every one of you.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If what the Premier said was true, he would release those recommendations. But it isn't, so he won't.

Mr. Speaker, it's a simple question, a simple and direct question to the Premier today. Will he release the recommendations Dr. Shahab is giving now and commit to following them, or has he learned nothing from the death and damage caused by his commitment to putting politics ahead of people's lives?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[14:45]

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, again that just isn't the case. The recommendations, the conversations that this government had with Dr. Shahab, among other health officials, and the Ministry of Health, who provides the policy direction for the Government of Saskatchewan, with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, which is the operational arm delivering health care services across this province, those recommendations, those conversations resulted in a number of public health orders that are in place under our chief medical health officer's signature. There are some public health recommendations around gathering size, Mr. Speaker, that are in place.

And again I say to the vast majority of Saskatchewan people, thank you for what you are doing. We have over 200,000 people that have went out, done the right thing, have gotten vaccinated since that announcement was made in the middle of September. That is helping drive our COVID numbers down in this province, Mr. Speaker. Our seven-day average is down to under 100, the lowest level since August the 12th, down 81 per cent from our peak.

So again I say through you to all the people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, thank you so very much for how seriously you have taken this, how you are adhering to the public health orders that are in place. You are making a difference in this province, and for that your government is forever grateful.

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

Provision of Security at Legislative Building

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The highest COVID death rate in the entire country, the worst fourth wave in the entire country, and a premier who is allergic to taking any form of responsibility for his own failures.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: does the Premier think that it's important that the security in this building be non-partisan and independent?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, we all find ourselves living in an ever-changing world, and that speaks to the level of threats in security in our country, in our province, and in our cities.

This includes here at the Legislative Building where a number of incidents have occurred that brought the overall level of security of the building, including members of the public and staff, into question. That is why, Mr. Speaker, that we have chosen to enhance, to look at enhancing . . . We have begun the process of looking at ways we enhance the overall security of the Legislative Building for all, Mr. Speaker.

The first step in doing so was to amend the legislation, which was what happened yesterday, to bring clarity to security on the floor of the Assembly, in the building, and legislative grounds, while still respecting parliamentary procedure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a simple question to the Premier. Does the Premier think it's important that the security in this legislature be independent and non-partisan?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to . . . Safety and security should never be political. Safety and security in this building should never be political. Just as we have had discussions in response to . . . To respect and protect the dignity of individuals who have faced security incidents in the building, we obviously are not going to discuss specifics. Elected and unelected officials as well as staff have encountered threatening behaviour and incidents and actually increasingly so.

The response of these incidents has left questions on how we can enhance security for everyone who works in this building and the public. Mr. Speaker, it is . . . The members opposite should be ashamed of themselves. The only ones that are politicizing safety and security are the members opposite.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again the question is to the Premier. The minister references threats. To the Premier: have there been any threats to MLAs, to visitors, to staff, to media, any threats that your office has not informed either the Sergeant-at-Arms or the opposition?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, I mean I do realize and understand that the members opposite have expressed that the safety of this . . . they feel safe and secure in this building. And I

find it very disconcerting that what they're doing is dismissing those who have come forward with concerns of safety and security in this building.

So just because they haven't experienced any safety or security concerns does not mean it doesn't happen, Mr. Speaker. It's extremely disappointing and actually quite alarming and dangerous, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite would try and minimize the experiences of others in place of their own. We will continue to explore . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, order. Minister.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We will continue to explore ways in which we can enhance the security for all who use this building, including those of the public, staff, and all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: does he have faith in the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff to do the work to keep the MLAs, the staff, the media, and visitors in this House safe? Because we do.

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, we have been informed and advised over a long period of time actually of various incidents that have indeed caused concern to people using the building, to those that work in this building. And legislative changes have been made, Mr. Speaker, to help highlight, you know, different areas of responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, the concerns that are coming from . . . you know, are for real. And they are ones that are coming from, you know, a very . . . You know, people are getting very uptight and very loud and aggressive with respect to their concerns being expressed. We will continue to explore ways in which we can enhance the security that we currently have in the building, Mr. Speaker. Stay tuned.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — To the minister: again, have these concerns that she's speaking about been brought to the Sergeant-at-Arms' office, and is she indicating that they have not been properly addressed?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The concerns that have been brought forward to us over a period of time have always been brought to the Sergeant-at-Arms. What the Sergeant-at-Arms decides to do with that information is been up to him. So just because the members opposite haven't heard of anything in particular doesn't mean they don't happen.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas

Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday when asked who the government's proposed partisan security force would report to, the minister said, "Not me." Mr. Speaker, the bill is crystal clear: "The member of Executive Council responsible for the administration of *The Police Act, 1990* shall appoint a Director of Legislative Security." Did the minister read the bill before she went out into the rotunda to defend it?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, there are over 2,000 full-time equivalents employed within the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. To say that each one of these is in a partisan appointment is an affront to the hard-working civil servants who work to keep our communities safe each and every day, Mr. Speaker. Like any other special constable such as SCAN [safer communities and neighbourhoods] officers, highway traffic officers, conservation officers, these positions will be tasked with specific duties and obligations under *The Police Act* and other applicable legislation.

It is clear in the legislation that the Director of Legislative Security may make arrangements with both the government and the Speaker on services required for the security of people within the Legislative Building, not just one or the other, Mr. Speaker. This service will be collaborative in nature, including working with the opposition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, we already have a collaborative process for this, a non-partisan process for this. The Government House Leader should know this very well. He's the one who gets up and stomps on his feet every single time he thinks that we aren't taking the traditions of this building seriously. He knows they are throwing decades of precedent out the window.

He knows that the BOIE [Board of Internal Economy] is where these conversations are supposed to happen. If there is an issue with funding, take it to the BOIE. That's where this belongs. This is a slap in the face to all of those who serve and protect us in this building every single day, Mr. Speaker. Do the right thing, scrap Bill 70, and have these discussions at the BOIE where they belong.

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, we have worked consistently and repeatedly with yourself, Mr. Speaker, and the Sergeant-at-Arms about how we can improve security in the Legislative Assembly and beyond the Legislative Assembly. Ultimately many of the barriers to improving services are structural and jurisdictional in nature, Mr. Speaker. These changes will provide access to additional resources — listen up over there — that will allow the new security positions to work with the Sergeant-at-Arms and others on eliminating these jurisdictional issues and improving security within the building and beyond.

As the opposition is well aware, Mr. Speaker, the House leaders on both sides met previously to discuss, where we explained our rationale for this change and to seek bipartisan co-operation on this. We will continue to try to get bipartisan support on this, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, there is no place for a partisan, government-controlled security force in the people's Legislative Assembly. If it's good enough for the House of Commons in Ottawa, it's good enough for us here. If the Sergeant-at-Arms needs more resources, let's get them those resources at the BOIE table. But throwing out decades of precedent, and replacing our independent Sergeant-at-Arms with a partisan security force is not on.

Will the minister scrap Bill 70 and work with us to address security in this place if they really believe there are serious shortfalls?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin by saying I reject the premise of the member's question opposite. That is not the case. Are they suggesting for one minute that every policing agency in this province is political? Every security agency in this province funded by the taxpayers is illegal or is . . . there's a conflict? Are you kidding?

Mr. Speaker, I must add right now here that the current security has been in place since 1984. Right? The world has changed. And you'd have to be living under a rock if you haven't noticed that it actually has indeed changed, Mr. Speaker. Alberta has a special security service within the legislative building and grounds in Alberta. British Columbia has a very similar type of service, utilizing their sheriffs, I might add. Mr. Speaker, it's high time that we get with the times and respond appropriately to protect anybody from anything that may happen.

The Speaker: — I want to caution the minister not to bring the Speaker into the debate. I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, if there is really a problem with security here, why would we be scrapping an entire force that already exists and trying to build a new one? How is that going to keep us safe right now, Mr. Speaker? These members know full well this conversation is supposed to be at the BOIE. This is a process that has worked bipartisan for many decades. It's a shame to see this bill come forward.

Mr. Speaker, this government needs to do the right thing, show some respect for the people who provide us security in this building to this day, and scrap Bill 70. Will the minister come to her senses and finally do that?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, yes it is indeed true, it isn't about

the members opposite. It's about the people that actually use this building. I think it's incumbent upon the Government of Saskatchewan to ensure the best safety apparatus, security apparatus that is possible. Does that mean it will always be perfect? No, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

But when we became aware of a number of incidents over time, a number of us . . . It was time, after discussions with the Sergeant-at-Arms and that office, Mr. Speaker, it is time to bring the security of this particular building and the precinct and the district into the year 2021. We don't want to have to do this. We are facing increasingly more intense threats, intensity in demonstrations. It is time that we actually look at what we're dealing with, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, arrogant and entitled government at its finest.

Yesterday we learned that leaders at SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] were blocked from taking steps to protect people from COVID-19. Now we know that other Crowns also asked about COVID measures but were told to stick to the Premier's lines.

Officials from SaskPower reached out on August 24th asking, "We are thinking of giving our employees a choice in our essential areas. Either they choose to show their vaccination record or they produce a time-stamped rapid test result." The response: "Given we are under the broad public sector umbrella here in Saskatchewan, there is constant sensitivity from our principals — that's the Premier and cabinet — and the expectation that public sector employees be consistent in their approach and protocols."

To the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan]: can he please explain why his government forced our Crowns to put the Premier's politics ahead of people's lives?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of CIC.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we take the health and safety and security of our employees and our customers very seriously. Government, including our Crown utilities, took a consistent approach to the pandemic over the course of the last 19 months.

Mr. Speaker, directions are given to the Crowns all the time through CIC. It is the umbrella organization which controls all of the Crowns. CIC has had continued communications with its subsidiaries to ensure consistency and compliance with public health orders. That has been the course in the past, and that will continue to be the course.

Mr. Speaker, a resident of this province should know that if they go down to pay a power bill, whatever, the vaccination or masking requirements will be exactly the same as if they go over

to Energy or if they go to Tel or if they go to SGI, that it will be the same. And, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the roles of CIC. Government does not give a direction on that. That's something that happens, and we're fully supportive of that direction taking place.

We acted on Dr. Shahab's recommendation the middle of September by reintroducing the mask mandate. Mr. Speaker, that's what this government has done, and that's what this government will continue to do.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So let me be clear. The minister's response is that they should be able to fail everyone equally, Mr. Speaker?

It's clear from the emails that CIC officials were sympathetic to the rest of the Crowns who wanted to lead. But it's also clear that CIC heard the tone from the top: don't deviate from the Premier's lines. Innovation Place asked about bringing in a vaccine mandate and was told on August 20th, "I can't personally see our government going there. They couldn't drop the restrictions we had in place quickly enough."

Why did the CIC minister force our Crowns to slow-walk measures that could have protected lives?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of CIC.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the directions from Dr. Shahab and the recommendations were followed. In the middle of September, the mask mandate was reintroduced. That approach, Mr. Speaker, is working as active cases have dropped by over 75 per cent from over the peak of the fourth wave.

We will continue to protect all of our employees and all of the customers. Mr. Speaker, legislation was introduced in this House to require employees that work for all the Crowns to either be vaccinated or produce a negative test.

Mr. Speaker, the Crown employees were worried about it, so we made sure that there was similar and companion legislation so that all of the partners that work with SaskTel, SaskPower, and all of the Crown utilities were dealt with on exactly the same fashion, that those people had to produce a negative test or a vax.

Mr. Speaker, those are the things that we've done, and it is working. Over 94 per cent of the 10,600 employees in the Crown sector are now fully vaccinated. Maybe the members opposite don't want to hear that because it doesn't fit with their narrative, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, page after page of correspondence of that government blocking our Crown corporations and its leadership from protecting Saskatchewan people. Let's review why all of this matters. At the end of August, cases and hospitalizations were on the rise in a serious way. The Premier was defending his decision not to act, not to

bring in masking, not to bring in proof of vaccination.

And what happened with that failure to act? Our hospitals were overwhelmed. Our ICUs [intensive care unit] were overwhelmed. We sent patients out of province at the end of their life to receive ICU care out of Saskatchewan. Hundreds of deaths in the worst fourth wave in Canada with the highest death rate in Canada.

Does the Minister of CIC recognize that his choice to block the action of leaders at CIC was but another failure of leadership by the Sask Party to not act and contain COVID, like on so many other fronts, that drove this disastrous fourth wave that cost Saskatchewan people so much?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of CIC.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the members over there have absolutely no class and no dignity by going after the hard-working civil servants in this province, both in health and in the Crowns.

Mr. Speaker, during the pandemic, during the worst of the pandemic I buried my mother and my mother-in-law . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 71 — *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move that Bill No. 71, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2021* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 71 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.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Bill No. 72 — *The Life Leases Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 72, *The Life Leases Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice

that Bill No. 72 be now introduced and read a first time . . . Order. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — Order, order. I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Mr. Steele: — Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Private Bills met earlier today and considered compliance of the rules for the petition for Bill No. 902, private Bill No. 903, and private Bill No. 904. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Private Bills to present its third report. I move:

That the third report of the Standing Committee of the Private Bills be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. It has been moved:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried and, pursuant to rule 102, private Bill No. 902, *The Mennonite Union Waisenamt Amendment Act, 2021*; private Bill No. 903, *The Collège Mathieu Act*; and private Bill No. 904, *The United Church of Canada Amendment Act, 2021* are deemed to be read the first time and ordered for second reading on the next private members' day.

I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report Bill No. 48, *The Public Health (Safe Access to Hospitals) Amendment Act, 2021*, without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in the Committee of the Whole and that this bill be now read a third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 48, *The Public Health (Safe Access to Hospitals) Amendment Act, 2021* and that the bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading. I recognize the Minister of Health.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 48 — *The Public Health (Safe Access to Hospitals) Amendment Act, 2021*

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Third reading of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: — I am advised that His Honour the Administrator is here for Royal Assent. All please rise.

[At 15:14 His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne. His Honour then gave Royal Assent to the following bill.]

ROYAL ASSENT

His Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly in its present session has passed a bill which, in the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour and to which bill I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Clerk: — Your Honour, the bill is as follows:

Bill No. 48 - *The Public Health (Safe Access to Hospitals) Amendment Act, 2021*

His Honour: — In Her Majesty's name, I assent to this bill.

[At 15:16 His Honour the Administrator retired from the Chamber.]

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question no. 8.

The Speaker: — Question no. 8 is tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 66 — *The Education (Safe Access to Schools) Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'éducation (accès sûr aux écoles)*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 66, *The Education (Safe Access to Schools) Amendment Act*. These amendments of *The Education Act, 1995* will ensure that students and staff have safe access to Saskatchewan schools without fear of threats or harassment, especially as vaccines are rolled out to children ages 5 to 11.

Earlier this month an amendment to *The Public Health Act, 1994* was introduced to the Saskatchewan legislature aiming to protect health care workers, patients, and families by creating safe access zones around hospitals. These provisions prevent impeding, intimidating, or protesting within a 50-metre area surrounding Saskatchewan's 67 provincial, regional, district, and community hospitals.

Today I'm proposing we provide the same level of protection to students, teachers, staff, and parents across our beautiful province. This amendment will create a similar 50-metre safe access zone around Saskatchewan's more than 700 schools. These changes will prevent sidewalk protests which can cause obstructions, delays, and anxiety for those entering and exiting schools.

Mr. Speaker, when our students arrive at their school, their focus should be on getting the most out of their education. There is no room for harassment or intimidation. No one should be afraid of going to school; that includes our teachers, school staff, and parents as well.

There is also a regulation-making authority to permit zone extensions of up to 150-metre zones. We have seen similar steps proposed for both hospitals and schools in several other provinces including British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. These provisions provide the safe and secure environment that teachers, administrators, parents, and children deserve while still allowing for citizens to exercise their right to peacefully protest outside of the proposed safe access zone.

It is worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation will allow for

lawful labour picketing within the aforementioned 50-metre area. Similar to the provisions put forth regarding the creation of safe access zones for hospitals, this legislation is not intended to be permanent. Instead these amendments are set to expire two years after the date the legislation comes into force.

The safety and well-being of our students and school staff is our government's top priority. It's for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that I'm pleased to move that *The Education (Safe Access to Schools) Amendment Act, 2021* be read a second time. Thank you.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 66 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. And I thank the minister for his comments, his introduction in this second reading of this Bill No. 66. And I would say off the top, Mr. Speaker, we agree wholeheartedly on these points: that we want children to get the most out of their education in this province, and that no one — student, parent, staff member — should be afraid to go to school.

And, Mr. Speaker, I will put some comments and questions onto the record but note off the top that we've had opportunity to meet with stakeholders and we will, at the end of my comments, be prepared to allow this bill to move onto next steps.

But before I do that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to note, and I guess maybe stating the obvious and especially obvious today, we live in interesting times. And I know now why that is considered a curse, that phrase, Mr. Speaker.

I can scarce believe that we're standing on the floor of this Assembly today talking about the need to keep children safe from anti-vaccine protesters, but that is where we're at, Mr. Speaker. And something shouldn't have to be said and shouldn't have to be in legislation, but we are in this place. And I think that there is a great deal of support for this bill and certainly for its aim, which is keeping our children and all who go to our schools safe.

When I was getting prepared to enter my remarks into the record, I was looking at instances where this legislation exists in other provinces, as the minister mentioned, but also incidents in recent months where schools have had to put up with this behaviour. And unfortunately, I think many of us will remember back to September when a number of schools in Salmon Arm, British Columbia had to deal with protesters not only protesting but attempting to get into the schools, Mr. Speaker. And I do remember this: hoping and maybe even thinking, well that won't happen here, or I certainly hope it doesn't.

Unfortunately in recent months we have seen instances of children being harassed on their way to school. As recently as last night, Mr. Speaker, we saw large protests, out of the scope of this bill for sure, but large protests outside of the Regina Public School Board. And I'm not sure if there were also protests outside of the Regina Catholic School Board as well, Mr. Speaker. But these are troubling times, and all of the stakeholders that I've spoken with would like to see these protections in place.

One thing that we know over the course of the pandemic, is there have been some difficult decisions to be made. I remember very clearly in this Assembly when we rose to . . . because of the

COVID outbreak, and thinking — people were talking about it would be two weeks or maybe four weeks — and thinking I was being very cynical in thinking, well it'll be two months, Mr. Speaker. And of course we all know we're going on 21 months here in the province.

And you can feel the tension in the province. You can feel the concern. You know that impacts have hit people right across this province. But those impacts have been unfortunately disproportionate, as many things are. One of the groups who have paid a disproportionate price are children in this province, Mr. Speaker. We know that children are in their third year right now of a disrupted school year, and that has impacts.

I believe, as I said earlier in petitions, you know, this has been described as having the potential for a generational catastrophe. It's time we prioritized our children in our schools, Mr. Speaker, and this is one of the ways that we can protect that learning. No child, no person working in our schools should have to be fearful when they are going to these institutions of learning.

Specified in the bill is that this applies to schools and further specifies independent schools. Mr. Speaker, some of the questions that I have heard from stakeholders are around, as noted, places of learning that might be outside of schools proper as defined in this bill. Sometimes schools will have educational programs take place at their board offices or other off-site places. So those will be some of the questions that we will be asking in committee.

Mr. Speaker, it also is clear to me when I'm looking at this bill and thinking about where we're at, where we're having to bring in a bill to protect children from protesters going into schools, is what role we play here as members of this Assembly. I think all of us as adults in the province, but certainly as members of this Assembly, the things that we do can ramp up division, or we can be careful about our language and wind down those divisions, Mr. Speaker. And that's something that, you know, I'm afraid that we'll be looking at for years and decades after this pandemic is over, how to unwind the polarization and the tensions that we have seen brought to the surface. Unfortunately in this case, Mr. Speaker, we don't have the luxury of time and something needs to happen immediately to ensure that those students and those going to our schools are protected.

As I noted, I will continue to meet with stakeholders. But in the conversations I've had so far there have been questions about, what about those who work in school board offices, the trustees? Certainly these elected people, these administrators, have been tasked with many of these decisions.

We know that vaccine clinics will be held in schools. Decisions right from masking to vaccine mandates, Mr. Speaker, have been delegated to school boards. But I do think that it's worth noting — I know like many members in this Assembly have had the privilege of serving not only as an MLA, but as a school board trustee — we enjoy many protections and privileges here in this Assembly that those elected officials do not. They go to school board meetings. The whole town, the whole city will know when their meetings are. And agendas are published, Mr. Speaker. And they don't enjoy the protections that we have, be it the Sergeant-at-Arms' staff or metal detectors or any of the provisions that we enjoy here, Mr. Speaker.

So I think that that's very important to note. And we should be mindful that when those decisions are being asked of those local elected representatives, that we need to be thinking about what we're asking them to do and how we're ensuring that they're not only protected physically, but supported in those decisions. And that, unfortunately, isn't something that we have always seen.

As I mentioned, you know, there are already volumes being written on how we deal with things like vaccine hesitancy, how we talk about vaccines. How we talk about them is very, very important. And again we can talk in a way that escalates divisions or we can talk in a way that brings us closer together, talking factually, addressing hesitancy, ensuring that information is there, leaning away from language like forcing and two classes, Mr. Speaker, and leaning into answering those questions that people might have.

Not only is the impact of this pandemic disproportionately impacting people based on age, also things like location in the province, background, socio-economics. And also the reasons why there may be a lower uptake in some communities than others vary. And that's something we've been consistent in asking for. There will be people who are very eager — and I know there were many; I saw posts from members on all sides — to get their children vaccinated as soon as possible, the 5 to 11s. But there are others in the middle who maybe don't have access, that might have questions, and there may be some myths that they need dispelled, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

And so that's when it's so important that all of us have a clear message, that we listen to the medical experts, and that we ensure that we have a plan to not only get kids vaccinated, you know — those who signed up, thousands of families who signed up already — that's not where we need to focus our efforts now. Which is great . . . I first want to say that that's great that that happened. But we need to focus our efforts on that next group and understand the reasons why, and tone down the language and the rhetoric and the division and make sure that we have an effective plan to get more children vaccinated.

Because as it stands right now, Mr. Speaker, schools are the number one location for transmission in our province. And I think what some might not know if they don't have children in the system or don't have access to those young ones, is that kids are missing school today. Those who are unvaccinated, they're getting close-contacted. They're having to isolate, Mr. Speaker, and they're losing another school year.

Schools are — by definition almost — crowded, often under-ventilated, in this province for sure. Indoors, certainly as we move into December here, let's look at ways to effectively mitigate risk. But the number one way we're going to do that is ensuring that that vaccine uptake rate is high. And we can't do that by being divisive about our language and by polarizing.

And as I've said, I think we all have a role to play in ensuring that not only the rollout and the availability is effective, but that we're addressing hesitancy and getting past that initial quick uptake of vaccinations. Because that is the way that we are going to ensure kids get to stay in school in this province, Mr. Speaker. And that is something we, I believe, I do believe we can agree on

in this Assembly, all members on all sides.

As I've said, I've had the opportunity to meet with stakeholders. I will continue to do that. I will have the opportunity in committee to ask additional questions of the minister and his officials. But at this point I am prepared to conclude my remarks and allow Bill 66 to move on to next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 66 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 Deputy House Leader.

Mr. Dennis: — I move that we move Bill 66 to Human Services.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 67 — *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my comments, I'm going to move second reading of the emergency planning Act, 2021 (No. 2). Members of this Assembly are more than aware that over the past year the province of Saskatchewan and indeed the rest of the world have faced ongoing challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Speaker, the government continues to take steps to address the pandemic, including the ongoing rollout of our provincial vaccination campaign and the implementation of our proof-of-vaccination system.

However, Mr. Speaker, we're also first to acknowledge that the government has not been alone in the fight against COVID-19. It's important to recognize and honour the important role being played by people all across Saskatchewan. Many groups and organizations, including family-run businesses, sports and recreation groups, places of worship, educational facilities, and community-based organizations have joined our heroic front-line health workers in striving hard to comply with public health laws and protect the people of this great province.

Mr. Speaker, the government believes it would be unfair to these Saskatchewan citizens to face COVID-based litigation after they have demonstrated such a strong commitment to fighting the pandemic together. The proposed amendments will provide enhanced protection from liability to individuals and organizations who comply with applicable public health laws and orders. These changes build on existing protections that were passed in the spring. As with previous amendments, persons that have not complied with applicable health laws or have acted in a grossly negligent manner will not receive protection from liability under these provisions.

The bill also provides clarified liability protection for the Crown and its agents against COVID-related litigation. The issue has become even more pressing in recent weeks as we've witnessed unfounded threats of litigation against our health care workers. The ongoing heroic efforts made by the front lines of our public service in response to this pandemic should not occur under the shadow of threatened litigation or result in litigation at the expense of the general public.

Mr. Speaker, the government would like to thank everyone in Saskatchewan who has made sacrifices and implemented measures to help fight COVID-19, including the new proof-of-vaccination system. This bill demonstrates our commitment to ending this pandemic, recognizing that we are all in this together, and supporting those who continue to work together to achieve this goal.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill 67 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin by thanking the minister for his introductory comments on Bill 67, *An Act to amend The Emergency Planning Act*. Certainly of course we will be having many questions coming forward with respect to this Act, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide some initial comments.

And certainly of course I want to join with the minister in acknowledging the important role that all organizations, businesses, non-profits, government institutions, and employees have all been playing throughout the pandemic here in Saskatchewan, in particular of course thanking our health care heroes for their heroic efforts and outstanding role in terms of responding to the crisis that has been inflicted upon families and individuals throughout the course of the pandemic.

Certainly of course vaccinations are the way through this pandemic. And it's been rather tragic that our government on the opposite side hasn't been more clear and consistent in their messaging and in the ways that they have encouraged and assured all Saskatchewan people that this truly is the way forward. And I think if that had been the case, we certainly wouldn't be where we are today in terms of the response.

And you know, certainly of course it's important that those who are acting in good faith are not exposed to COVID-based litigation. And you know, it is important that we have enhanced protection measures so that when people are acting in good faith and are taking reasonable measures, as that is defined, that they're not going to be subject to litigation. And obviously of course that excludes gross negligence, and it's important that those kinds of acts are not inadvertently protected by this legislation.

And certainly as we look at the terminology, the wording of the bill, we will be looking very closely to ensure that the scope and the intent are adhered to, that they are preserved, and that we're not inadvertently capturing those who truly, truly acted in good faith and without negligence. I do note that that also is intended

to protect the Crown against litigation where it's been acting in good faith and in a reasonable sort of way.

And I would say that again, you know, we've been very outspoken on this side of the House in terms of the fact that it didn't need to be as bad as it has been here in terms of having the highest COVID death rate in the country, having the highest COVID case rates, and increasing likelihood, I suppose, of people finding themselves in a situation where they may be exposed to this type of litigation that the bill is trying to protect good-faith actors from experiencing.

And it's also quite tragic that the government side was so slow to act. Certainly I found it very disturbing that we had modelling — good, world-class, leading modelling — showing us the implications of removing all restrictions, as was done on July 11th in order to have a great Saskatchewan summer. And in fact, well my goodness, it was anything but.

And so to watch the numbers increase, watch health care workers become increasingly concerned, and those concerns falling on deaf ears for months until finally we saw action being taken on September 13th — far, far too late — that it only just served to create situations where the necessity of this sort of Act became all the more important.

And as I say, we will be taking the time and have many questions and comments to make on this bill to ensure that it is not overextending its reach. And I will leave my remarks at this time at that and allow us to adjourn. I move to adjourn debate on Bill 67, *An Act to amend The Emergency Planning 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. 68 — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders
Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur
l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires***

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again at the conclusion of my comments I'll move second reading of *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021*.

Mr. Speaker, members of this House will know that *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act* sets out a number of instances where steps may be taken to enforce a maintenance order. Typically this occurs when a payor is in arrears of more than three months of payments. This threshold applies to enforcement measures such as attachment of pension entitlements, driver licence suspensions, and corporate liability payments.

Mr. Speaker, it's become apparent that some payors are taking advantage of this rule by repeatedly refusing payment until the end of the three-month period, or even then only making a partial or a nominal payment to restart the clock. To avoid abuse of this

threshold, this bill would introduce an amendment that would give the maintenance enforcement office, MEO, a discretion to commence enforcement proceedings after the payor is one month in arrears, where the payor has defaulted on payments more than once in bad faith. This provision is the first of its kind in Canada. It will allow the director to prevent this abuse and seek more immediate enforcement in appropriate cases.

The maintenance enforcement office indicates that this type of malicious conduct is not widespread among payors. Nevertheless while it will be narrowly used for situations in which a payor was clearly acting in bad faith, the maintenance enforcement office indicates it would be helpful to have this option available to effectively and immediately address any payors trying to game the system in that manner. Simply put, Mr. Speaker, these legal mandated payments are too important to the support of these families to allow them to be avoided or delayed in this manner.

[15:45]

So I invite all members of the House to support the amendment. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 68 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I rise to debate Bill No. 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act*. And I want to begin by thanking the minister for his introductory comments. I think it was quite helpful for me in terms of understanding a little bit more in terms of what has been the impetus for what largely seemed to be more sort of technical housekeeping kind of amendments — my words, not his of course. That might be an oversimplification. I'm not really sure, you know, just going off of what I heard here today.

I mean, certainly I don't take exception to what has been explained here today in terms of trying to sort of tighten up the rules a little bit to avoid some of that gaming of the system that allegedly has been happening. And you know, certainly want to concur that free riders are to be discouraged and those that try to find these workarounds. And certainly anywhere that we can tighten up the language, make it clearer in terms of when these timelines maybe start and when they end and people aren't prolonging or kicking down the road payments that are necessary and, you know, having that impact on the provincial coffers is important work.

And it's obviously, you know, disheartening to hear that there are folks who perhaps are taking such measures. And as we go forward with debating this bill and into committee, I'm sure we'll be looking for further details in terms of understanding the extent that these kinds of issues are occurring and who's been consulted on this bill to identify the abuses of the provisions, and the remedies that are being proposed here in order to close those kind of loopholes that are being exploited in this case.

But as always, I'm always sort of astonished with some of the irony I see when I see these kinds of administrative amendment bills that are coming forward, trying to tighten up the system and

address purported alleged issues that we're seeing here, you know, that are largely of an administrative or housekeeping or modernization effort. And I always have to wonder, well my goodness, you know, where is the important work that we so desperately need to be addressing? Why are we constantly looking at all these amendments?

And I ask myself, you know, is this government so tired and lazy that they have been focused on matters that, while still important, that it's other things that aren't getting addressed at the same time that leave me with so many questions. And when we talk about things where people are delaying taking action, again I think about this government and the myriad ways in which they have failed to act or kicked the can down the road, waiting for a better time, a more fortuitous opportunity, when we've needed them to take action sooner, not later.

And of course the big issue we've all been focused on here is the inability or the delay in action to bring in public health measures when we truly needed them to prevent the escalation of the fourth wave of the pandemic that has created so much misery and heartbreak for so many families here in Saskatchewan with the highest COVID case rate and death rate in the country that never, never, never needed to happen. We could have taken more urgent action, as we saw in every other jurisdiction across the country.

And so I think there's a lesson in here. So when we're looking to tighten up legislation and avoid free riders and people avoiding their due responsibility, that we maybe look in the mirror and see where else in our own backyard we need to be doing the very same thing. I think there's some good lessons to be learned.

We haven't seen a government that's been willing to admit where they've been wrong, where they've made mistakes — goodness — or even say they're sorry. So I think it's always important that that context, that backdrop, is brought to the fore here in these debates, no matter which bill we happen to be discussing today. I know it's uncomfortable to be reminded of government's failures, but that is the truth and reality that we face here today.

And with that, I will conclude my comments and adjourn debate and look to my colleagues to pick up the torch and further debate in further adjourned debates on this bill. Thank you. 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. 69 — *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur les ordonnances alimentaires interterritoriales*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my comments I'll move second reading of *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021*.

Mr. Speaker, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act*

enabled Saskatchewan courts and out-of-province courts to grant and register support orders or agreements where the person receiving support and the person paying the support do not live in the same province or the same country.

The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021 will eliminate the requirement for copies of support orders from other domestic jurisdictions to be certified before they can be filed in a Saskatchewan court. It will eliminate the requirement for copies of support orders from Saskatchewan to be certified before they can be filed in the court of a reciprocating domestic jurisdiction, except where required by that jurisdiction, and it will allow for the transmission of electronic documents in accordance with the regulations.

Members of this House will know that several sections of *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act*, the Act, require the designated authority of Saskatchewan or a reciprocating domestic jurisdiction to provide certified copies of orders before they can be filed in a court. Eliminating this automatic requirement would speed up the process of filing documents. Where the authenticity of a document is called into question, a designated authority would still have the discretion to make a request for a certified copy.

Mr. Speaker, the Act also provides for the transmission of other documents between reciprocating jurisdictions. It is proposed that this provision be amended to allow for documents to be transmitted in accordance with the regulations. The regulations could then set out the process for electronic transmission of documents.

With improvements in technology, Mr. Speaker, the electronic transmission of documents can be an efficient and secure means of sending information across jurisdictions. The interjurisdictional support orders unit identified these changes through their work with the continuity of enforcement task group. This group works with the provinces and territories to identify where improvements may be made in interjurisdictional support order legislation.

Mr. Speaker, support orders are critical to these families and must be continued even when the family members no longer live in the same jurisdiction. This government, Mr. Speaker, is proposing these amendments now as part of our ongoing commitment to ensure that we are doing all we can to facilitate payment of these critical orders as efficiently as possible. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill 69 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to be on my feet here today to speak on *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act*. And well my goodness, this is refreshing. I was expecting somewhere in there for it to say amendment Act, but we're actually . . . *An Act respecting Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders and making consequential amendments to certain Acts*. So maybe I spoke too soon on that point.

But I think that this is certainly a subject matter which is vitally

important, and I thank the minister for his introductory remarks on the bill. I'm sure that my colleagues will have many points to raise and questions to ask with respect to this bill. Certainly it will be something that is highly important and consequential. Certainly these are issues that relate to families and in particular women and their children. And the ability to have support payments received makes a vital difference in the lives of children and their families when one parent is residing outside of the province.

So I did welcome the news when the minister was speaking that, you know, the amendments or measures in this Act are intended to enable electronic transmission. And I'm going to move that we adjourn debate on this bill and take it to second reading.

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. 60

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 60 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2021*** 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 to rise again this afternoon and enter into second reading debate on Bill No. 60, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2021*.

I know that when this bill was introduced we had at least one observer, one here in the gallery, Mr. Speaker, who was cheering on the tabling of this legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, that is because she — and I'll name some of the supporters in a bit — had done so much work in ensuring that some of the provisions that we see in the bill made their way to the floor of this Assembly, and ultimately that they would serve to not only protect her and her colleagues but to protect so many young people, so many people in Saskatchewan from workplace sexual harassment.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I feel like I've been on my feet a bit this afternoon, but there are a few themes. One of them is how important it is that we see people engaged in their democracy, people like Ariana who I'll speak to. The other thing that I want to acknowledge as well, Mr. Speaker, is with regard to seeing this bill in front of us today. I have no doubt that this is in no small part due to the very hard work and persistence of my colleague, my colleague from Regina Douglas Park, Mr. Speaker.

[16:00]

Her and her constituency assistant, who now works in our office,

Kelsey, did really an incredible job checking in with stakeholders, being persistent, being so clear-headed and straightforward, Mr. Speaker. She gets things done, and we've seen that time and time again. And I couldn't be prouder of her efforts but also the results, which we don't often or sometimes get to measure. We get to measure more of our efforts than our results in opposition sometimes, Mr. Speaker, so it is very heartening to see this bill in front of us.

Of course there was a review of OH & S [occupational health and safety] provisions under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* undertaken by this government during the summer. We saw submissions into September I believe, Mr. Speaker, and this is one of the pieces, or this is the piece of legislation that we see coming out of those consultations on those submissions.

And going back to that shout-out to democracy, I want to thank all of those who took the time to submit their briefs to the minister — and we were cc'd on many of them — because that is how we get better representation, how we get better legislation in this building. And the aim of all legislation should be to the betterment of all people in Saskatchewan to the extent that we are able to achieve that.

And I think bringing more workers into the Act, making it explicit that sexual harassment is a prohibited grounds in this legislation, is certainly a step forward, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to acknowledge one of the young women who was really tireless, in addition to my colleague and Kelsey, with pushing the sexual harassment language, was Ariana Donovan, Mr. Speaker. And the members of the Assembly had the opportunity to meet her when she was introduced in this Assembly. Really remarkable.

And I'll tell a bit of a personal story here, but I do say it to encourage others to get involved when they see something happening that they think that they can improve in the province that they would like to see. Don't assume that it's beyond any of us. This democracy works better, more effectively when people get involved. And that is something certainly that Ariana took to heart.

Ariana happened to go to school with my oldest daughter right from pre-K [pre-kindergarten] all the way through, Mr. Speaker, and to watch her grow into this advocate to now — well I guess I know how old she is because I know how old my daughter is — at this very young age, have the ability, the satisfaction of seeing her efforts actually turn into legislation, Mr. Speaker, I think has to be very gratifying for her.

And it will improve workplace protections for not only her, as I said, but precarious workers, those working in the arts, primarily or disproportionately being women, who often find themselves in situations that are dangerous, where they're vulnerable. And certainly we've heard of Ariana's whisper campaign. Imagine having to resort to, you know, whispering about predatory photographers in order to keep yourself safe when you're going on shoots. So you know, I can't commend her enough.

There was Jada Reimer, who also came with us and spoke. But I know that there were others in the arts community who were advocating as well, and I'm reluctant to start a list because I know

there were so many. But we had meetings going back to last spring. And those in the community who were supporting them, I think that that is a real testament to the importance of getting involved. And I want to thank, with sincerity, thank the minister for these provisions and those who worked acknowledging and recognizing that there is a risk to many workers in the province, those as I said, those young women primarily who work in the arts industry. This will add some additional protections. Of course the nature of work has changed so much, and so much since the last time the OH & S provisions were reviewed.

I think all of us will maybe wish that we'd never heard of Zoom, but you know, that's just one of the working conditions that we've seen change — technology that existed before the pandemic but really has taken off as a way that we work. Some of the hazards that are associated, for example, with working from home, I recently was at my massage therapist and we were talking about the number of injuries, of repetitive stress injuries that massage therapists and chiropractors, physiotherapists are seeing because of the time that we're spending at home on our computers with perhaps the ergonomics not being quite what they would be in our office. But one example of, you know, I think things are always changing.

I think when we hit a period of extraordinary upheaval like we've seen with the pandemic, those changes are just exacerbated. And it's really important that we ensure that legislation and those protections that we afford to workers in the province, that they keep up with the nature of work that we see in the province. And I know the minister, you know, talks about the importance of ensuring that workers are safe in the province. And it really is important, Mr. Speaker, and we have seen updates.

There are some pieces that both Ariana and the advocates were hoping to see that we don't quite see yet. I know the member from Regina Douglas Park, it took her, I think, three or four tries to successfully get provisions in around domestic violence. So I will put on the record, she is persistent. And we will persist with some of those requests, Mr. Speaker, because that is what is being advocated for by those who know this best, those who are working in those precarious jobs, but also to move us towards legislation that again protects more and more workers in the province. I think that that is a goal that we should all share, ensuring that as many workers as possible are protected under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, under OH & S provisions, by extension Workers' Compensation benefits.

Just thinking of some of the other changes that we have seen. You know, it sometimes doesn't seem like it's been that long since, you know, you were getting out of high school and thinking about career options. But if I look back, you know, the 30 years since that was the case, there's so much that has changed. You know, watching the options available to my kids, our children, our grandchildren in this Assembly, really it's a different world, as they say, Mr. Speaker: things like the gig economy; the increase in precarious work; you know, Uber drivers, which we've also debated on the floor of this Assembly. It really has changed.

So that's again, you know, the importance of ensuring that we are doing these regular reviews. And I think that that is a strong point to look at regular reviews, ensuring that we're not doing that by rote, that we are meeting with those who are impacted,

soliciting consultations from those who are in the community who have a stake in this, Mr. Speaker. And also making sure, as in the case — and I'm thinking specifically of those in this very vulnerable work, often precarious, low-paid work — that we take steps to ensure that we're including as many voices as we can.

If you'll indulge me for a second, Mr. Speaker, I remember the first time making a presentation to the public school board. And I was someone who, you know, I had a university degree. I had some connections. I, you know, was solidly middle class. And how difficult it was to get up the nerve and the courage to go present to that board. Mr. Speaker, I think we all need to remember that, how intimidating it can be for people to access these consultations. And really, you know, encourage us to go out of our ways to ensure that all voices, all voices are heard.

And I'm not just speaking about this review, maybe I should stipulate that, Mr. Speaker, but all voices in the province whenever we're making decisions. There have been gains made in this Assembly with regard to diversity and representation for sure, but we still have a ways to go to ensure that those voices, that people see themselves physically represented in this building. We have a long ways to go. But also that all voices, all points of view are present in this building and heard. I think that that is, you know, something we all should be striving for.

None of us are elected to only serve for a few. We serve all of our constituents as government. We don't serve for one political party or one bent. We serve for all people in this province. And that takes some compromise at times, Mr. Speaker. That takes some skill. That takes probably some difficult conversations with people that we might not like to hear from, but I do think that is very important.

With regard to the specifics in this bill, as I mentioned, there is language identifying explicitly that sexual harassment and unwanted action of a sexual nature constitutes harassment. We will see an extension of those who are covered by these provisions: contractors, students, and volunteers. And again that's something that we were happy to see in this bill.

Something that has been in a bit of a state of flux in this province goes back to a 2017, I believe, Labour Relations Board ruling striking down provisions brought in in 2014 excluding supervisory employees from bargaining units, requiring them to have a separate bargaining unit. That was affirmed, I think, earlier this year with the ASPA [Administrative and Supervisory Personnel Association] case from Saskatoon, the University of Saskatoon. So we do see some clarification about what next steps are there with the supervisory workers.

We also see some new good-faith liability protections reflecting minimum standard of employees choosing to provide either proof of vaccination or negative test in the workplace, Mr. Speaker, something that I know many labour lawyers, many legislators, many employers have been watching as that case law moves through the country. You know, will it stand up in court? What constitutes proof? Who pays for the testing, and all of those things. And there is a little bit of that case law building up right now. So very timely indeed that we see it in this bill.

As I said, you do a regular review, and making sure that we are moving the dial with regard to, in this case, OH & S legislation

is very important. I have also put on the record that we will continue to be persistent where we see gaps. We're happy for this legislation, put the minister on notice that we will continue to push where we see gaps and where we need to include more and more workers under the protections of this employment Act, things like mental health first aid, domestic violence provisions. Extending OH & S provisions and protection under the employment Act to more and more workers, Mr. Speaker, I think is really important, especially coming out of the pandemic, as we've seen so many workers not covered by things like sick-time benefits, people working extraordinary hours.

[16:15]

And it really is one of those opportunities, and really a generational opportunity, to review what we thought we knew and ensure that we take a pause. And hopefully the next chapter in this province, and on a more global scale, we make the adjustments that are necessary that have been laid so bare over the course of the last 21 months.

As I said or I believe I said, Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my remarks, I had opportunity to meet with stakeholders to garner feedback. I know that there is a lot of excitement about the sexual harassment provisions in this Act. There's an appreciation for the clarity around supervisory positions. And I will continue to speak with them before we bring this bill to committee. But I am ready to conclude my remarks and allow this bill to pass to next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 60 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt this motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — 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 No. 60 be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 38

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 38 — *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet in the Assembly and enter into debate on Bill No. 38, *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act*. And I took some

time to review that legislation, to have a look at notes and comments here from my colleagues, from the minister. I understand that this is bringing some amendments and some updates to a bill previously from 2009. So always positive to see that modernization and progress in our legislation is being done, that the work is being done by this government. So I appreciate that.

Having a look at the legislation, just a quick summary, it does look like it gives the director of civil forfeiture additional powers to make preliminary orders with regard to things like preservation of property, disclosure, and investigations that requires financial institutions to disclose certain information that's required about a person's property or assets if there is suspicion that those assets and that those resources were obtained as the proceeds of crime.

So it seems to be the type of thing that we would, the change that we'd hope to see, you know, in the 12 years between when this Act was in place and when these amendments are coming forward. Certainly also happy to see that there are new offence provisions for people who fail to disclose or those who mislead the director. Not complying, not releasing information is certainly an indication that one has something to hide, and I think that we have established that through question period this session.

I also want to say that it's interesting, I did review the minister's comments and I kind of want to take just a few minutes to speak to those. You know, I'm sure that we in the Saskatchewan NDP and the official opposition were also concerned about levels of crime in this province and interested in addressing the root causes of crime, Mr. Speaker. I think that there's certainly lots of evidence to point to the fact that the root causes of crime, when we address them, are a much more effective way to limit the conditions that lead one to engage in crime as a way to perhaps meet their needs.

And so I'm kind of curious, when I first looked at this bill, what types of crime does it hope to limit. And so I looked at the minister's comments. And the minister said, and I quote:

These changes demonstrate the government's commitment to fighting money laundering, taking profits out of the hands of criminal organizations, and supporting Saskatchewan victims, law enforcement, and Saskatchewan communities.

And you know, that was kind of interesting. And I've got to be honest, Mr. Speaker. It did kind of create some interest in me because this is a crime that we don't often hear a lot about from this government or from others. You know, we hear a lot maybe about violent crime, property crimes. We've heard issues raised in this Assembly about things like trespassing, theft, you know, other crimes out there. But this is the first that I've heard, you know, that I've been made aware of looking at the issue of money laundering.

And this is quite interesting, I think, if we consider, you know . . . One thing that maybe I haven't seen considered in the minister's comments, and I will continue listening to my colleagues in opposition, is how much money laundering . . . Like what is the status of that crime in Saskatchewan? How much money is this government aware of that's being laundered? And

the minister spoke to, you know, ending up in the hands of criminal organizations.

This is fascinating stuff. I think that, you know, members on both sides would agree. Like what role do criminal organizations play in Saskatchewan? Where are they located? Is this something that affects rural areas, urban areas? What are they doing with the proceeds? I'm getting some involvement from the other side. He's cheering me on, and I feel good about that. You know, what are they doing with the proceeds that they're laundering?

But there just isn't a lot of information in the minister's comments, and so I choose to believe that this is a significant problem in Saskatchewan that does require the updating of this legislation. But I'm just left with a lot of questions, wondering lots of things about, you know, how does that money laundering work? How big of a problem is it? How much money are we talking about, to necessitate a change to the legislation?

So maybe it's not the kind of thing that we would always see discussed in here in a back-and-forth. Maybe that's the kind of thing that I'd ask some questions, you know, at some point over a coffee or a beer to find out what led to this. It is kind of interesting stuff. And maybe I've watched too much crime TV or movies, you know, the Hollywood examples of what money laundering looks like, where it comes from.

But we know it happens here. I'm not disputing that. I'm just kind of curious about how big of a problem it is in Saskatchewan. What are those organizations that are profiting off of this? And what will this look like in real life to enforce the new rules brought about by this legislation?

Again I want to point out one last time just the importance that, the provisions here that I hope to see how they'll . . . You know, I'll look forward to seeing what they'll look like in real life for folks who fail to disclose or mislead the director. Failing to share that information certainly is an indication that one has something to hide.

You know, with that I think, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude my remarks here on Bill No. 38. We do want to make sure that proper consultation has taken place with stakeholders, and so to do that I'll continue to listen to my colleagues speak to this bill, especially our critic.

We'll see what questions come up when this does proceed to committee. I'm not prepared to recommend that right now, but you know, we just want to know how these amendments will impact this province to limit money laundering and to enable authorities to effectively combat that crime.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 38, *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2021*. 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. 39

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 39 — *The Queen's Printer's Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just had a quick minute to grab a drink and refresh my voice, and here we go again.

I'm honoured to be on my feet to speak to Bill No. 39, *The Queen's Printer's Amendment Act, 2021*. What an exciting piece of legislation we have here. And we've seen a trend of, you know, modernization, and I think this one really captures it.

You know, this Act is making changes to the previous Act to allow for electronic publication of *The Saskatchewan Gazette*, the official publication of the Queen's Printer. I think that this is a positive move, and I'll voice early in my comments here that I am in favour of this updating to the legislation.

So the Act currently requires paper publication of the *Gazette* not less than twice a month. But of course, updating that to allow for electronic publication is, I think, a much overdue change to the previous legislation.

I understand that the delay to print, then mail the *Gazette* will now be waived, making it accessible online for folks. But that printing will still be available. We know that people do appreciate that.

So you know, when I looked at this change, it made me think about how much things have changed in my lifetime. And for all of us in the Assembly, I don't think anyone's young enough to have no experiences . . . But it made me think about a couple things, and the first thing is, you know, as a university student, the first time that I began using email and the amount of change that that made in how I communicate with others and the use of email.

I was probably one of my last friends to get email. I don't know why. I resisted that change. I didn't want to . . . I don't know why. I had friends emailing through high school. This was in the '90s. But I had to get an email address. And we probably all have some of these embarrassing stories out there: what was your first email address that you chose? I'm going to tell you my first one was brotherlove72. That's kind of funny. Seventy-two was my football number, and Brother Love was my nickname, so I went with that — brotherlove72.

Well here's the embarrassing part. That was a long time ago. That was like 1998, and that was okay then. I was young. But that email address has followed me because it's still tied to some of my social media. And every now and then — and I haven't checked that email in like a decade — I'll find out that that email is on my profile for something else because it got carried over due to how the internet works. I'm a grown man. I'm 41 years old, and some people think that I still use an email address, brotherlove72, which is embarrassing and it haunts me everywhere I go.

But you know, I kind of thought about that, about, like the dawn of the internet age and how that has changed communication for everything that we do. And so, you know, kudos to updating this legislation for the internet age, as so many people access their news and their current events and whatever it is online.

But it also made me think of a time as a teacher when I made a similar change. A few years ago as a teacher, I decided to try and make my classroom paperless. And I know this legislation will continue to print a paper copy of *The Saskatchewan Gazette*, but there was a year several years ago when I thought, I'm going to try and go paperless. And there was a few reasons.

I made a few observations. One of the first observations was access for my students, and I think that that's captured here. I felt that my students would be able to access any materials if I wasn't using a paper handout. There's always a barrier. You've got to be in class to get that handout. You've got to be in the school, in the city. I had lots of students that'd be on holidays. You know, students and their families go on holidays. And I found when I went paperless, they could access what I was distributing from anywhere.

Using Google Classroom products, they could get that information from anywhere. They didn't have to be present. And that saved me a ton of work, a ton of work of re-photocopying, reprinting, keeping stuff around, keeping track of attendance to make sure that if you weren't here that day, you got it the next day. And that act of going paperless, it increased engagement and uptake with the material. And I think that that's what I see here in *The Queen's Printer's Amendment Act*, is a way to increase engagement and uptake. And I think that's really important.

[16:30]

Now the other thing that I noticed as a teacher, when I worked to eliminate paper from the classroom, was the amount of waste. A lot of times in the classroom — I think most teachers would agree with this — you always print a few extra materials because somebody is going to come the next day and, oh I left that at home, I didn't have it. So you know, if you've got 35 kids in your class, you might print 40 or 45 copies.

And I found that using paper, there was always so much extra stuff left on the ground, left behind, left at home, left in a locker, left in a backpack, something gets spilled in there — you know, whatever happens. Dog ate it; we've heard that lots of times. It just felt like there was so much waste. We always went through so much more paper than we needed. And it wasn't affecting the things that I already talked about, the uptake and the engagement of the material.

So again, I think that in this bill, *The Queen's Printer's Amendment Act*, it's kind of the best of both worlds. We can increase that engagement and the uptake by making things available electronically, but we still got to have that paper copy for those who want to engage that way. We know lots of folks do. I don't mind picking up a newspaper and reading it, reading the paper copy. But probably 99 per cent of the news that I engage with is digital, using an app on my phone, accessing a web page, sharing things on social media.

And that's another thing that maybe this will allow, is maybe

allowing some of the material, some of that electronic material to be shared digitally too, right? Using social media. And wouldn't that be cool if we saw, as a result of this legislation, stories in *The Saskatchewan Gazette* shared on Twitter or on Facebook, you know, to increase the engagement and the uptake, as I talked about with my experiences as a teacher when I made a similar change.

So overall, you know, I'm happy to see the *Gazette* moving from print to online, and still being available in print. Certainly I think this fits with other changes we've seen in this session of just kind of modernizing older legislation and bringing about some important changes.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will voice my favour for Bill 39, but I do want to continue to listen to my colleagues as they share their insights and their stories and their opinions with us on this piece of legislation. But I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 39, *The Queen's Printer's Amendment Act, 2021*. 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. 40

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 40 — *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2021*** 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 this afternoon to rise and enter into debate on Bill No. 40, this being *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2021*.

I'm experiencing a little bit of déjà vu, Mr. Speaker. This is a similarly named bill that we saw introduced in the last session with regard to trespass laws. I believe that still has yet to be brought into force, Mr. Speaker, but we are here again on a similar bill.

I do find, as I've noted before, Mr. Speaker, that it's often very helpful that the Justice minister is one of those ministers who does put a lot of detail on the record in second reading speeches. And I do appreciate that sincerely, because it helps us understand exactly why we're seeing this bill in front of us. Looking back to November the 8th of this year, the minister noted that "the Government of Saskatchewan is committing to addressing rural crime" and this bill being part of a suite of legislation designed or intending to do that, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that I wonder, I think first off, without even looking at the substance of the bill, is this is the second time we've sort of seen an attempt at this legislation. I think I do understand some of the concerns behind the bill. I've talked with some members, certainly talked with family members, you know. And any of us who grew up on a farm will understand, you know, how isolated you are sometimes. You see headlights come into

the yard and you immediately want to know who it is if you don't recognize the vehicle. Worse yet, you see a vehicle come into the yard with no lights and then you — unless it's Halloween — really worry who it is, Mr. Speaker.

So I think that's something that, you know, is universally understood that all of us, whether we live in rural areas, in remote northern areas, in the city, in the suburbs, we all want to feel safe in our homes. And I think we can start there, that that is a universal desire. We could extend that to our friends and family as well, I think, Mr. Speaker.

I think that we also all share, and I don't think I have to do a head count or a standing vote to get here, Mr. Speaker, that we all want to see a reduction of crime in our province. None of us benefits from an increased level of crime. And I will resist joking there, Mr. Speaker, because very seriously, we don't want to see crimes.

However, or maybe adjacent to that, bringing a bill to this Assembly and passing it doesn't necessarily get us to the goal. This maybe is a bit of a theme to what I've been talking about. But legislation being brought in, there are a lot of things that will determine how effective legislation is as opposed to what the intent is. And hopefully we get to a place where those things measure up, because I think we have established we want all to feel safe and happy in our homes. We all want to see a reduction in crime. But we need legislation to be effective in order to actually move the dial on that.

And I think this is probably where we will find some divergent views on this, Mr. Speaker. I've written down some notes, and hopefully I'm going to get to all of them, but one of the first things — and I think I said this with the last bill — that I want to talk about is a meeting that I often think of. And this was a meeting when we were fairly newly elected up in Saskatoon with the chief of police, who at that time was Clive Weighill.

And we were looking at crime statistics for the area around Saskatoon, not Saskatoon the city of, but the area around Saskatoon. And I remember seeing the charts, Mr. Speaker, and I suspect that they're similar to this day, a real spike in property and actually violent crimes as well around P.A. [Prince Albert] and North Battleford if I'm remembering correctly. And we asked of course at that time, you know, what were some of the things that were driving those spikes in crime?

And the answer that we received, and this is something that has been consistent, has been, you know, an increase in mental health issues and an increase in addictions. A lot of that you see on that western border with Alberta.

I happened to witness, I think of one of the last times I rode an STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] bus, Mr. Speaker. I was coming from my brother's in Meadow Lake and riding on the bus and witnessing a car, a souped-up sports car, driving like at a speed you could hardly see them down the highway in a very dangerous way. I've come now to suspect that was someone who was up to no good. Members over here are suggesting they might know who that was, Mr. Speaker, and I guess they can take that up with the appropriate minister.

But I think it's probably a well-founded assumption that that was

someone who was moving something that they shouldn't be between the borders, Mr. Speaker. And I remember being very thankful that I was on a bus, first of all, and worrying about other people on the road. So I phoned the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and reported it while I was on the bus. It was sort of a strange thing but one of those things you never forget.

So I certainly, you know, have empathy . . . As I just said, I have family there. We all do, not only on this issue but, you know, driving recklessly on the highways. We all want our loved ones to be safe on the highways. Again, just bringing us back to that shared interest in reducing crime. But effectiveness is another piece of this, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes when we look at something like a rise in crime, we are really, really tempted to look at easy answers. You know, it seems very easy on the surface. Crack down on crime. Increase the fines, Mr. Speaker. And I wish that that were the case, that it were easy. But unfortunately it's not.

These issues have a multitude of factors influencing them. Inequality is one of them. Income inequality is shown to increase rates of crime. Lack of social cohesion, when we don't respect each other as neighbours, that increases crime. I'm very aware at this point, Mr. Speaker, that while I do have a degree in sociology, I am not a sociologist or a criminologist. And we may have some of those in the room, so I'm being very careful about how broadly and how definitively I'm putting this on the record.

But there are many studies, longitudinal studies, that do look at root causes of crime, Mr. Speaker, that suggest — and the Justice ministry would have access to these, members here would have access in the library to them — that, you know, simply putting in legislation and slapping a bigger fine on a certain activity doesn't necessarily result in a reduction of crime or of that behaviour.

I don't know if folks have ever dealt with someone who is, or had a family member — unfortunately many of us will have — who's experiencing addiction. To suggest that they're engaging in rational behaviour unfortunately is just not the case. They're not thinking of fines. They're not thinking of us. They're thinking of their addiction. Their addiction is driving the bus.

So in that case, I would say if you've got someone who's actively addicted, who is committing crimes, better to treat the root causes, first of all, of addiction so that they don't become addicted in the first place. But secondly, that we engage in ensuring that there's treatment, effective treatment. Not just treatment . . . not just 24-hour detox and we're done, and a revolving door, but actually effective treatment that people can access so that we're not seeing that as a driver of crime, Mr. Speaker.

And unfortunately I think often we are moved to look for easy answers, to having that quick clip in the media, to looking at one-year budget cycles and four-year election cycles. But the roots of this problem in our province don't go back a year, don't go back four years. They go back to the formation of this province. And unless we're prepared to deal with some of those issues, Mr. Speaker, we can have the goals to reduce crime, we can have the goals to ensure that everyone is happy, healthy, and safe in their homes, but we're not necessarily going to be effective. So I put that on the record.

One of the other things — and I will admit freely that this was not something I studied in school but I've observed as a human being in this Assembly and in this province over a number of years — is the divide that we see in this province. You know, there's a tendency to see, exploit I will say — I think that's fair — an urban-rural divide in this province, Mr. Speaker, that is difficult to overcome when we need to.

So back, which seems like decades ago — it wasn't that long ago — I had the opportunity to take a leadership course through the United Way here in Regina. And one of the things that has always stuck with me . . . And you know it's a good lesson when you remember it on a weekly basis years and years later, but it was about moving people off of positions. Often when there's something that we feel passionately about, especially if we're afraid or afraid for our friends and families, there's a tendency to want to act quickly and definitively and be seen to act. And I think that is only more the case in these roles, Mr. Speaker.

But that doesn't necessarily get us to solutions that are effective. How do we pull people off of those positions and look at the actual interests here, you know? The starting point again, and I'll go back to it, of how do we actually reduce crime? How do we make sure that people are safe in our province? And I think that, you know, that's sometimes difficult to tackle because we're, all of us, only one person, even as a government and the government resources. This takes a lot of thoughtfulness, a lot of planning and sometimes investments that we won't see come to fruition, the benefit of them, for years and years. I'm afraid I leave that on the record as perhaps an observation more than a solution, but I do think it's something that we need to talk about.

[16:45]

You know, when this bill came up again I was talking to my dad, just asking about some of the concerns. I remember that there were a number of groups in the province like the wildlife federation that did have some concerns about this bill — the one that we haven't seen come into force around trespassing — that had had unintended consequences for many, that maybe it didn't meet the needs as stated. So we've seen it coming back to the drawing board, of course. And I will acknowledge the issue of crime continues to be an issue, but again, has there been enough consultation? Has there been enough, you know, thoughtful discussion and problem solving around some of those initial problems with the trespassing Act? Have those been rectified in the Act that we see in front of us?

So I asked, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to digress just a little bit. And I think I've told this story in the Assembly, but we have a lot of new members here, so I'm just going to mention it again. One of the first times when we were . . . As a group of MLAs we had gone down to MLC, the Midwest Legislative Conference, and we were sitting in a way that's less polarized than this Assembly. We were talking, and I remember one of the members — and I don't think he minds me telling this story — the former member from Arm River who was, you know, I think . . . This is how I recall. Memory is imperfect, Mr. Speaker, but this is how I recall the conversation.

And he said, well, you grew up on a farm. And I said, yes, I did. And your dad had cattle? Yes, we had cattle. And you still get along with your dad? And I said, yes I still get along with my

dad. And, you know, it was . . . couldn't quite see that I could possibly be a New Democrat and all of those things to be true, Mr. Speaker. And I think that's part of this issue of polarization.

You know, as many members on this side either grew up on a farm or have connections to the farm, as most or many people in this province do. So I think that initially that's a bit of a false division, but we see exploited for political purposes in the province.

But when I was asking dad about this . . . Not only did I grow up on the farm, my folks still live out there. My dad's an outfitter so has a lot of interest in hunting, access to property in this province. And some of the unintended consequences I think with the initial bill — and I'm not sure if it's rectified with this bill — is for things like getting, granting permission to hunt. That was certainly a concern that was expressed.

I know people say if you're from the area, I think it is a little bit easier. Even if that is the case, many of us have seen an RM [rural municipality] map, if you're looking at, you know, you might know this section, this section, this section, but there are some strangely titled sections when you look at those RM maps. You know, they might be out of province, might be very, very difficult to get a hold of them. And this was a concern that has been expressed. Not only by my dad, but by the wildlife federation as well. So I'm not sure if that's been rectified, but I know that that would be something that we would look to see.

I think that there is an app that is . . . I did have an opportunity to speak with one of the ministers about this recently, and so that goes some way to getting permission. If you think of something like deer hunting where, you know, it's a little different than hunting geese or fowl. If you happen to just wound a deer, and the deer goes from one property where you do have permission onto another, I think that's something that's been raised as well. So you know, that is a concern.

And again, that's why we have committee. That's why we have oversight. I think that those are some of the things that the critic will be wanting to look into, in making sure that those previously mentioned concerns with the legislation have been rectified here.

And you know, again in conversation with people about this bill, you know, there's been a lot of mention of the damage done by Quadrunners or side-by-sides, or as my nephew called them, side-side-sides. You know, that's something that we need to see. I'm hearing Ski-Doos that has also been an issue. And you know, these are problems to which there are solutions.

But sometimes we see, Mr. Speaker, an overreach, or we see something that sows more division and concern, what we call . . . And one of the things you find yourself saying a lot in opposition is unintended consequences. And that's why we have this role of oversight as well is because we want to make sure that, you know, by trying to correct one problem we're not overcorrecting and creating a new problem.

Another thing that I think that it's very . . . It's delicate to talk about, Mr. Speaker, and especially when I've been giving lectures today about toning down language and rolling back division, but it needs to be stated, Mr. Speaker. There is a racial division in this province, and the genesis of this bill cannot be

understood without acknowledging that and having people to the table with a sincere desire to rectify it.

We have, you know, issues that go back, that predate any of us here, that predate this institution. But that doesn't mean that they don't impact us today. And until we acknowledge that, until we have sincere desire to rectify it, we will continue to see that, Mr. Speaker. And that doesn't just bode not well for some people, for the other. That doesn't bode well for any of us in the province.

And again, I sometimes hear my colleagues from across the aisle here, you know, note that we only come with problems. But these are problems, and you can't acknowledge . . . and you can't fix problems until you acknowledge them, rather.

So that's something, you know, if we really are looking sincerely at reducing crime rates, at reducing this concern in our province that we're going to have to tackle head-on, we're going to have to make sure we have the right people at the table. And we're not going to go to those tables and suggest that we have all of the answers. There's going to have to be give-and-take, and that's not something that we see typically, Mr. Speaker, and it's something that I have hope that we can get to.

I think about the events this summer. I do believe that there were people who were sincerely surprised at the discovery of gravesites at residential schools, Mr. Speaker. But it's also deeply troubling . . . As deeply troubling as that is, it's deeply troubling that so many people in the province didn't know, because this has been a well-established history, well-established.

That knowledge has been handed down, lived unfortunately by too many in this province, Mr. Speaker, in the Métis community, the Indigenous community in this province. But we have had typically such a divide that that knowledge hasn't been available or hasn't been sought out by people. Sometimes, and I've heard from people in communities, you know, we grew up right beside the residential school and we had no idea. Mr. Speaker, we cannot say any longer we don't know.

We have the Calls to Action, Mr. Speaker, which many of those address some of the issues that I think if we were to address, would address the issue of crime in our province. Not exclusively, because this is not just a problem of one community. Addictions, mental health issues do not just impact one community or one demographic. They impact every community, every demographic right across this province.

And again I think that's something that we can all agree on in this Assembly, that we want to see not only legislation tabled and passed . . . You know, a little bit of a spoiler for those listening at home: we know that if the government wants this bill to pass, it will pass. And if they want it to come into force, it will come into force. But that doesn't necessarily mean that it's effective.

I'm just going to take some direction, check in with my colleagues here. It looks like I've got the all-clear, Mr. Speaker. And I don't know; maybe I've spent too much time at home with my own thoughts over the course of COVID but I really do think, you know, some of these issues, when you're elected you think you're going to come here and debate these things and you're going to try to find ways to come up with solutions. And sometimes we do.

And I want to acknowledge the fact that, you know, we've expedited passage of a number of bills — three in fact — in the last couple of days in this Assembly. So we do have the ability to come together. We see other governments, other levels of governments use things like committee.

You know, addictions and crime, mental health, it's not a partisan issue. It's an issue that impacts all of us. So you know, here's a plug for utilizing those levers that we have available to us to not only bring legislation forward to pass it again — spoiler alert: if you're a government with a majority, you can pass it — but actually get closer to those goals, especially in instances where we share those goals.

And I think that there's a lot of common ground here, Mr. Speaker. And we often will only hive off the places where we disagree. That can be politically expedient. That can whip up our base and all of those things, but it doesn't get us closer to where we want to go. And surely, and I think this is universal and there are very few universal truths, Mr. Speaker, but I think that we all, as I said, we want that sense of security. We want to feel safe in our homes. We want to see our families, our children, our loved ones, our community members doing well, not struggling with addiction, not worried about crime.

And the only way I think we move that dial is leaning into some of those conversations, acknowledging we don't have all of the answers. These are not easy answers, but we have a real willingness to work together to solve them. Here's another spoiler alert, Mr. Speaker, and I haven't read this either but I'm pretty sure this is true: that no government has been 100 per cent effective on this.

As I said, this isn't a partisan issue, but we can choose to pretend that we have easy answers and to divide and to hold power. Maybe it's not an either-or. Or we can choose to, you know, to . . . Not on all issues. I don't know how the system would work if we agreed on everything. And of course there are reasons that there are different political parties. We don't agree on everything. But on the things that we do agree on, if we could find our way clear to coming up with solutions, I think we'd all be better off for it.

And so that's, you know, that's sort of my COVID hope, Mr. Speaker, is that on the things that really matter, the things where we do agree, we can find a way to be more effective, because what we're doing right now isn't working. We're seeing rates of mental health, rates of crime, rates of addiction rise, impacting more and more families. This happened before COVID, and this continues to happen now.

So we have a decision to make in front of us. Do we want to be effective? I'd suggest we do with regard to this bill, Mr. Speaker. Again as I said, that's why we have oversight; that's why we have committee.

Others will want to talk to it, I'm not sure as long as I have. I am sure the critic will. But I am prepared to conclude my remarks on this bill and move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 40.

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: — Now that it has reached the hour of adjournment, we stand adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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