



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

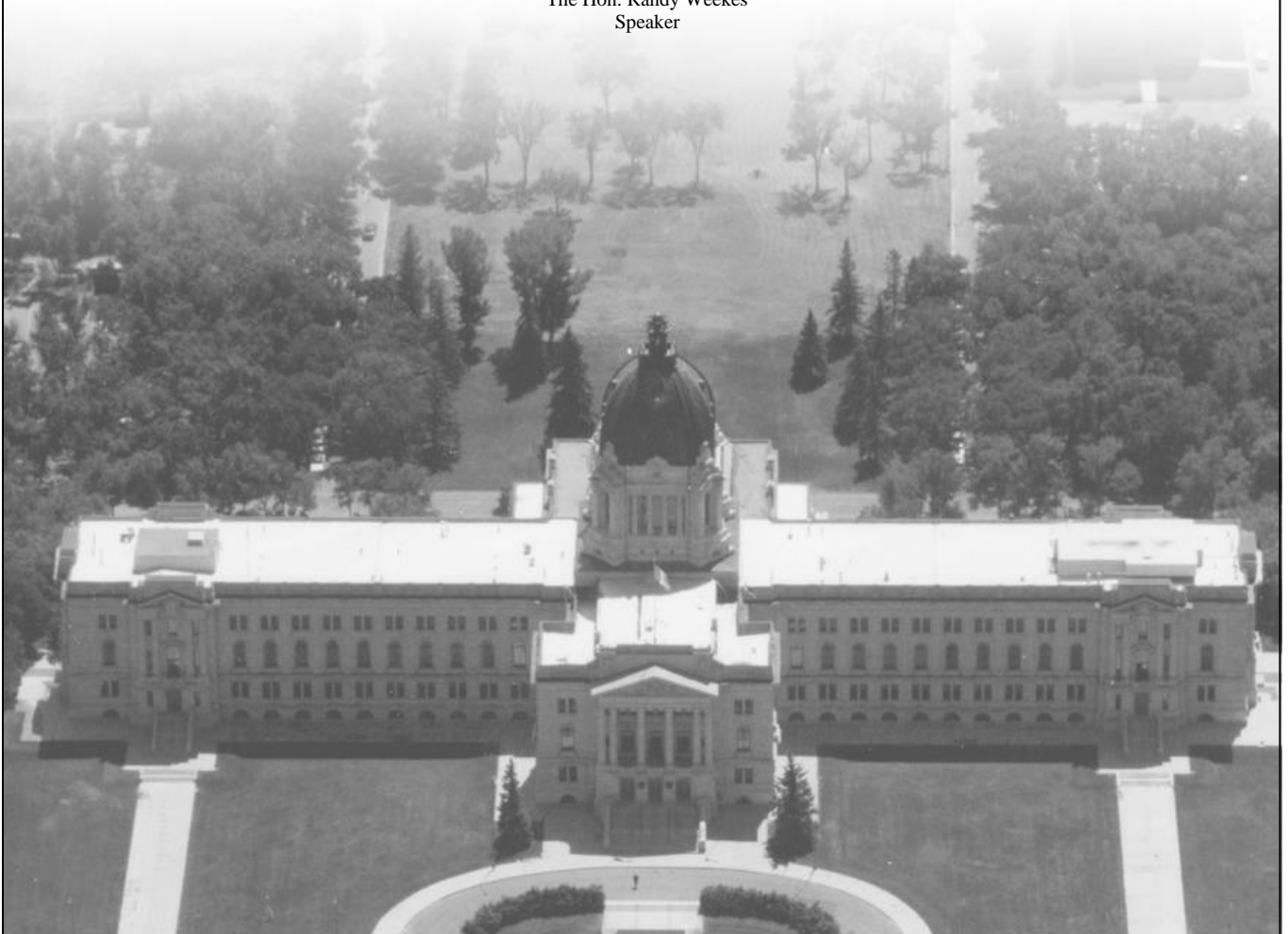
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

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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) |
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| Cockrill, Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP) | Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP) |
| Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP) | Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP) |
| Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP) | Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP) |
| Docherty, Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP) | Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP) |
| 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) |
| Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP) | Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP) |
| 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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Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 58

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 58 — *The Securities Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter into debate again today, this time on Bill No. 58, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2021*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the minister's second reading speech on this bill, he talks about how this bill aims to make several updates to Saskatchewan's securities legislation. Specifically, some of the changes that are being proposed here will prohibit a person or a company from aiding and abetting any person who contravenes security laws. These provisions are proposed based on a recommendation from the Canadian Securities Administrators or CSA, and have been already adopted by numerous jurisdictions across the country, although the minister doesn't specify which jurisdictions those are or get into many of those details.

The second set of proposed changes clarifies that under the Act's secondary markets of liability provisions, the limitation period is suspended while the plaintiff is seeking the Court of Queen's Bench. Again the minister is citing Canadian Securities Administrators as making this recommendation and indicating that this change has been adopted by a number of different jurisdictions across the country.

And then third, these changes that respect promotional activities. So the minister talks about the expanded use of social media and electronic platforms and how securities regulators are increasingly concerned with the effective electronic communications on the integrity of capital markets. We know that information about financial markets and activities is often provided through social media by a variety of different groups and individuals that claim to have expertise in the matter and that this information might lack appropriate due diligence or could support fraud agendas as the minister notes.

So the proposed changes here would prohibit false or misleading promotional activities and regulate promotional activities. And so I understand that British Columbia is taking a leading role in addressing some of this misleading information. We know that we can't always trust what we see online, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that is more true today than it ever has been. And we have seen some of the very real consequences of misinformation being spread online even as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Speaker. And I think that there is a serious need to look at regulating some of this conversation. I know there have been

some small, incremental steps that have been made by social media platforms.

But it is incumbent upon government to take leadership on this front despite the fact that many of these agencies cross jurisdictional boundaries and we don't have, you know, a specific Saskatchewan social media platform and that sort of thing. I think it is our responsibility to think about what leadership in this domain looks like. And we'll become one of . . . It is a problem of today, but it increasingly will become one of the big challenges of tomorrow.

So with that, I know there will be a lot of opportunity to dig into this legislation and to look at what some of the consequences of it will be. But I will leave that work to my other colleagues and to the critic. And with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 58 for today.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 59

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 59 — *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur les juges de paix*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to enter in with my comments on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill No. 59, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2021*. This bill creates two new positions, the first being relief justices of the peace. This position allows justices of the peace to continue in their role up until age 75 for the purpose of supplementing absences of regular justices of the peace.

Currently, justices of the peace are required to retire at the end of the month in which they turn 70. The minister explained in his comments that this will assist with managing court volumes, which would seem to make good, pragmatic sense. We know there is quite a backlog of the court systems, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The bill also creates a second new position, administrative justices of the peace, and provides additional compensation to those justices of the peace who take on extra administrative work.

The bill furthermore shortens the terms of the Justice of the Peace commission from six years down to four years which, as the minister explained, will match up the term for the Justice of the Peace commission with the Provincial Court Commission.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, justices of the peace play a very important role in our justice system, whether it be through handling oaths, affirmations and affidavits, conducting remand and release

hearings, or issuing search warrants. The amendments being made to this Act appear to be good ones based on the terms and positions currently used in our provincial court system, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Of course, my colleagues will have additional remarks to add to the debate, and our critic will undertake more detailed scrutiny once this bill reaches committee. And with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 59, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 61

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 61 — *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a pleasure to be on my feet to join in debate on Bill No. 61, *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*. This is a bill that fully replaces the original Act that was passed in the year 2000. It provides oversight for post-secondary education institutions and skills-training institutions, as well as centralizes the minister's authority to provide grants, provide some more tools to oversee and account for public funds in the sector.

We will have questions about why these broad changes are being made, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We'll have some particular questions around section 3 and 4 I anticipate around the responsibilities of the minister and the powers of the minister.

Most importantly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the opposition would really call on this government when it comes to post-secondary education and skills training to . . . It would call on this government to concern itself with being proactive really about providing futures for young people in this province. We are hearing increasingly that many young people don't see a future for themselves in this province unfortunately, particularly in the health care sector but beyond that as well. And we need to be preparing for the economies of the future. We need to be anticipating the future of work. We can't always be reacting. And of course training institutes and post-secondary institutions have a role to play in that as we know.

You know, I know that the critic for Advanced Education will have more questions around this bill, but I would say, you know, I would point out that there are some concerning trends that we've seen from this government when it comes to post-secondary institutions. We have not seen the level of funding coming from the Sask Party government keep up with the growth in post-secondary institutions.

Infrastructure is not being properly maintained, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The debt loads taken on by these institutions is increasing year by year to really unprecedented levels. And these institutes and these institutions have to increasingly kind of do backflips to stay afloat and maintain these institutions at the quality, the fine quality I would say, that we expect from many of the institutions across our province.

You know, I'll note that there's an increasing reliance on, you know, the enrolment of out-of-province and out-of-country students, mainly for the increased tuition they spend. And there's not always, you know, commensurate supports provided for that student body, be it around language, be it around supports when they come and live away from their home countries.

We really need to be thinking about what that future looks like in terms of employing, you know, the students that we attract here from China, Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Iran, Ghana. I mean these are students that are attracted to come study here, but we need to be thinking about, you know, how do we keep some of these students. What are the opportunities that we're providing for newcomers? And I have the pleasure of representing many newcomers in my constituency who contact me on a regular basis about the lack of supports and lack of plan around supporting these communities.

Often these institutes have to turn to sort of private models of delivery. You know, they turn too often to contract teaching. You know, we don't often fill some of our tenured positions and rely on the more precarious and exploitative contract-teaching model. And frankly some of the, you know, roads that these institutions have to pursue are not at all conducive to the kind of robust public education that we want to be seen, not to mention the independence of academia and ensuring that these institutes can really be pursuing goals that reflect the public interest rather than, you know, the preferences or the interests of private industry. So these are some of the things that this opposition would hope that this government is turning its mind to when it comes to the area of advanced education.

With that, I know that the critic is reaching out to stakeholders, gathering feedback about this bill. I know she'll have more questions about why these broad changes were necessary. And with that I'm pleased to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 61, *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 62

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hindley that **Bill No. 62 — *The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

[19:15]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. It's a pleasure to enter in briefly with respect to Bill No. 62, *The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act, 2021*. I understand that this bill allows for dental hygienists, dental therapists, and dental assistants to practice independently, not a requirement for them to practice along with a dentist.

So I understand the focus is on increasing public access to dental care. I understand that this brings Saskatchewan in line with other jurisdictions. Certainly as the official opposition, we are strongly supportive of ensuring public access to dental care and ensuring accessibility. Far too many Saskatchewan families and children are shut out from dental care. Dental care is important and increasing that access is a good thing.

But we'll be engaged with stakeholders on this front to make sure we understand all of the implications and consequences of this piece of legislation. We'll make sure we're listening to all and work towards that aim of, you know, improving access to dental care. This could be a positive move as well for access in rural areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So this is an area that we'll continue to follow up and consult on.

You know, it reminds me as we're talking about access to children's dental care, to dentistry and dental care in Saskatchewan, I think of the social innovation that occurred once in Saskatchewan under Premier Blakeney in this province. A social innovation of building a children's dental program, Mr. Speaker, that actually extended dental care to well over 100,000 children across Saskatchewan. In fact, at that time Saskatchewan children had the highest level of dental care in North America.

What we know is that dental care is incredibly important for one's health. We also know and learned through that program that it could be accomplished in a very sustainable and an affordable way because of the improved health benefits and the cost that it avoided later on in the health system, when those with poor dental care and those with dental situations that had become very costly and very tragic and when they manifest and they end up in very expensive emergency care and acute care in hospitals.

So the innovation that the Allan Blakeney government, that the Premier Blakeney government ushered in was something that extended meaningful dental care to the people of Saskatchewan. But it also was exceptional by way of value for money for the people of Saskatchewan. It was sustainable, it was affordable, and made a difference in so many people's lives. Of course that program, sadly, was scrapped by the Devine government in 1987, Mr. Speaker, after that program had had such a legacy for so many people.

Of course when we think of that Blakeney government, this was a government that was innovating and creating programs, expanding things like dental care in a sustainable, affordable way, and always doing so in that context of affordability and sustainability, doing so with balanced budget after balanced budget after balanced budget, a government that also left a Heritage Fund, Mr. Speaker, that left a Heritage Fund for future generations, Mr. Speaker, a fund that as well was gutted by the Devine government of the 1980s.

When we talk about access to dental care, we should look back to legacies like that. And when we think about the kind of future we want to build for Saskatchewan and our children, we should be willing to be bold and to think big and think about generations. And we should be inspired by governments previous, like the Blakeney government, who were able to accomplish big things for the people of Saskatchewan, all while doing it in a sustainable way with our public finances, again with balanced budget after balanced budget and putting away dollars for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, with that being said, I will adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 62.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 63

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 63 — *The Reviewable Transactions Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Happy to weigh in briefly here on behalf of the opposition with respect to Bill 63, *The Reviewable Transactions Act, 2021*. This is a new bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and as the minister had noted, it serves to replace outdated laws that govern fraudulent preferences and conveyances in Saskatchewan. A fraudulent preference, as I have just recently learned from the minister's remarks, involves the transfer of property by a debtor to pay one creditor which results in other creditors being unable to pay their debts against the debtor. Sounds messy.

Current laws both fail to address modern commercial transactions and potentially cause confusion, as we're informed by the minister. There are also some changes in this bill being made to terminology, which will allow for certain transactions to be reviewed in cases where the debtor did not intend to defraud the creditor. The intent of this bill has been described as striking a balance between the rights of creditors and the interests of debtors.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill also creates a review process. It provides a list of factors for the court to take into consideration when reviewing the intentions of a debtor as well as setting out orders and remedies the court may grant. This Act stems from recommendations that were made by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada which, as its name would suggest, is a body that makes recommendations to ensure legislation is uniform across jurisdictions. Modernization and alignment with other jurisdictions is welcomed by the opposition, Mr. Speaker.

It's also crucial and should be noted that there is a proper review process and factors for the court to weigh. Mr. Speaker, as the critic had mentioned in her second reading response, she will

certainly be seeking, reaching out to consult with experts in this field to ensure that careful and fulsome consideration is given to this bill. I'm going to leave that in her capable hands, Mr. Speaker, and for my part will move to adjourn debate on Bill 63, *The Reviewable Transactions Act*, 2021.

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. 64

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 64 — *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments Act, 2021/Loi de 2021 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Reviewable Transactions Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll weigh in briefly here with respect to Bill No. 64, *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*. The bill's pretty straightforward, pretty cut and dried, Mr. Speaker. The minister's remarks were brief and to the point.

This bill contains consequential amendments to the bilingual legislation necessary to implement *The Reviewable Transactions Act*. And I understand that it clarifies that a remedy cannot be sought under *The Co-operatives Act* or *The Non-profit Corporations Act* if a remedy is made available under the Act. You know, certainly bilingualism in legislation is important, important that legislation is clear and concise to ensure that correct remedies are being used.

And you know, we'll certainly engage with stakeholders. I know our critic is inviting submissions or contact input from affected parties, stakeholders with knowledge as to the implications and consequences, intended or unintended, of this legislation. At this point in time, it will be our aim to be constructive throughout this process and make sure all stakeholders are heard.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 64.

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. 65

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 65 — *The Provincial Court 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 this evening and enter into second reading debate on Bill No. 65, this being *The Provincial Court Amendment Act* of 2021. Mr. Speaker, the bill has a number of aims, the main piece here being the implementation of recommendations of the 2020 Provincial Court Commission to set the salaries of provincial court judges as a fixed percentage amount of the salary of the Queen's Bench judges.

Mr. Speaker, there was a recommendation at that time that those salaries be set three years in advance and set as a percentage of those federally appointed judges. In this case, the recommendation was for 95 per cent, and that's what we see here for the next three years. Reduces the cost, complexity, and uncertainty of the commission process, Mr. Speaker, and I think that to have a clear process for a setting of those salaries with regard to officials and ensuring that that process is followed is very important.

There are some provisions in the bill for extraordinary circumstances. So the 95 per cent of those federal court appointees is in the normal course of events. It does also note that if there are extraordinary circumstances that percentage won't apply, one of those circumstances being consumer price index increase of, I believe it's over 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker, or a decrease of 10 per cent or more. Sounds like extraordinary numbers, especially given the period we've been through with relatively low CPI [consumer price index] increases, but something that we're seeing.

Just out of curiosity, I looked up the highest recorded consumer price index increases and decreases in the country, and it's rather shocking. We go back to 1920, Mr. Speaker, and in 1920 the increase was 21.6 per cent as the highest level increase. And in a shocking turn of events for those who were there for this change of fortunes in 1921, we recorded in Canada the highest deflation at minus 17, Mr. Speaker. So we certainly live in interesting times, but we are not the only generation to have done so.

But, Mr. Speaker, I say that only for interest with regard to the substance of this bill. I think there will be opportunity for the critic to enter more comments onto the record. I think it's fairly straightforward, but she'll be afforded that opportunity and will do her due diligence in that. I believe I've done mine here and am prepared to conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 65.

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. 67

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 67 — *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is again my pleasure to rise at this time to speak to Bill No. 67, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act* in 2021. As I just noted, Mr. Speaker, we certainly do live in interesting times and probably isn't a surprise to see some amendments coming forward with regard to *The Emergency Planning Act*. I think there's probably more familiarity with this Act than many would have hoped to see in their lifetime over the past 22 months. As I said, probably not a surprise that we see it here in front of us.

This particular bill proposes to provide enhanced protection from liability to individuals and organizations who comply with applicable public health orders. I just had opportunity in committee to speak to a bill amending *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, which sought to protect those employers who are following public health regulations from prosecution, although often — I'm sure members here get some of the same emails that I do — often threatened, Mr. Speaker, this litigation.

[19:30]

But this would afford some level of protection to those who are in good faith complying with those public health orders, those orders that I think we need people to comply with in order that we keep rates of transmission reduced and keep low rates of transmission, Mr. Speaker, and I think get to that goal that we all share, which is getting through this pandemic as safely and as quickly as possible, Mr. Speaker. But hoping and wishing will not make that so. We need to make sure that we're planning and encouraging that behaviour at every turn.

This bill also provides clarified liability protections for the Crown and its agent, again against COVID-related litigation, so I think something that is fairly straightforward. I wish there was not the need for this legislation frankly, Mr. Speaker, but here we are. We've all seen the increase in threats of litigation against health care workers and organizations, endless accounts of those who've been toiling on the front line in health care, you know, exhausted, working overtime beyond what they ever hoped or wanted to be, keeping people safe at risk to themselves and, I'm sure, with impact to their families.

And we see them being subject to abuse and threats of litigation by those who, often by those who they are actually actively providing care to, Mr. Speaker. Again, these are interesting times. I wish I didn't understand — I'm sure most of us — the reasons for this bill to be in front of us, but at the same time it is apparent why it's here.

In terms of doing the due diligence and making sure that the intended impact of this bill is indeed what we'll see, that will be left in the very capable hands of our critic, both in consulting with stakeholders and also in committee. So I am prepared at this point, Mr. Speaker, to conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 67.

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 Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 68 — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is again my distinct pleasure to rise this evening and speak in these second reading debates to Bill No. 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021*.

We have some new members in the Assembly and some more experienced members in the Assembly. I feel like I'm in the former category being relatively new, but already there are bills that we've spoken to this session updating legislation that we had seen, it feels like fairly recently, updated. The enforcement of maintenance orders strikes me as being one that we've spoken to. I know that there was a chapter in the Provincial Auditor's report in 2012 identifying some issues. There have been some changes to this Act before, and we see them here again today.

Mr. Speaker, maintenance orders of course are intended to provide transfer of income of funds from one partner to another. I worked for a number of years at a women's shelter, and certainly we were very familiar with maintenance orders, and also familiar unfortunately with maintenance orders that were outlined by the courts that were simply . . . that those funds, those orders were not forwarded to the intended recipient of them, Mr. Speaker. And sometimes that was the thing that brought women and their children, in part, into the shelter.

When we think of abuse, we think of domestic abuse, certainly physical abuse, sexual abuse, sometimes verbal abuse. But financial abuse, if not almost always, very regularly goes hand in hand with those other forms of violence and abuse with devastating impacts to women and to their children.

This bill proposes to give the maintenance enforcement office, the MEO, the discretion to commence enforcement proceedings after the payer is one month in arrears. I believe the current is three months. As folks would be aware, there are a lot of people in this province who do not have the luxury of, you know, losing a few days' pay let alone three months of income that they're relying on, income that their other benefits may be calculated upon. And too often those impacts, the negative impacts, are felt by children.

In our province right now we have the indefensible reality that 26.1 per cent of children in this province live in poverty. This is certainly one of the reasons why I commend Dr. Miguel Sanchez at the University of Regina in the Faculty of Social Work for putting this report forward year after year. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing those numbers move in the wrong direction.

It's certainly understandable when these orders have been

outlined by the courts that it would be the expectation that they be paid. Unfortunately, when they're not paid and they're not paid in a timely manner, and other benefits are withheld, the real impact is to those women and children that I'm speaking of and who are overrepresented in that 26.1 per cent.

Just a note, Mr. Speaker. The national rate of poverty for children is 17.7 per cent, so not only is the rate increasing here in the province, something that we should all be very concerned about and acting actively to turn around, we're well above, again, the national average here. And that's nothing to be proud of.

You imagine children in poverty. That represents their access to safe shelter, to food for their growing brains and bodies, Mr. Speaker. And a lack of those necessities at this age can have impacts across a lifespan for children.

I say that in the context of this bill. Anything that we can do to ensure that those supports that are owed to children get to them, the recipients of these maintenance orders get to them in a timely manner, I think is reasonable. The critic, I'm sure, will have questions about whether this bill meets the intended goals set out here. We are, I believe, largely in favour of this. The fact that it needs to happen in the first place, that people are not making good on these orders, is concerning.

I'm certain that other members on this side will have comments to put on the record and questions to have clarified. I believe I've come to the conclusion of my comments on this bill and will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 68.

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 Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 69 — *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur les ordonnances alimentaires interterritoriales*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter into debate on Bill No. 69, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021*. In a similar vein but separate piece of proposed legislation here, we're looking at amendments that will eliminate the requirement that copies of support orders from other domestic jurisdictions have to be certified before they can be filed in a Saskatchewan court.

So one of the things I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately this was not an uncommon occurrence working with women who had experienced domestic violence, that when a maintenance order was found in court and awarded to them, one of the things that often happened would be that their abuser would flee jurisdiction and made it very, very difficult to collect those funds, and again

was one of the reasons we saw women not only needing shelter but also in a situation of very serious financial straits.

So I suspect — I don't know, and maybe this is something to check in committee — the reasons that we're seeing these two bills in front of us would be someone was looking at the support perhaps paid to people who would otherwise be subject to these orders. Again I'm just speculating here, Mr. Speaker, which is reasonable.

But I would hope that we're not just looking at money-saving measures here, that we are looking at ways to ensure that these much needed dollars are getting to their intended recipients and in a timely manner and without, you know, too much undue hardship. Because as I said, Mr. Speaker, while those who have savings accounts and who have credit cards and who have other means might be able to weather a few difficult months with lower-than-projected or counted-upon income, there are many in this province who simply cannot. So again, I only ask the questions. Some curiosity about why we're seeing these bills here.

Attempts to improve the maintenance orders and enforcement certainly would be welcome to members on this side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. But again larger efforts to improve the system, to things like, you know, proactive measures to increase the pay paid to women so that they're not already financially dependent — I think of pay equity legislation, supports for housing — all of those things are also important ways if we're looking at the goal to ensure that the children in this province and people fleeing abuse in the province have these supports, the financial supports that they require to be healthy and to rebuild their lives. Of course not all maintenance orders occur in the context of abuse, but that was certainly my world view for many years at the shelter. So I bring my comments from that perspective.

I'm sure that there will be other perspectives, Mr. Speaker, and other opportunities for oversight of this bill. I know the critic has had time with it already and will continue to reach out to stakeholders. But I do believe that I have come to the conclusion of my remarks and will now move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 69.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 19:45.]

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