



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

| | |
|---|---|
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| 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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| Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP) | Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP) |
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| 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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| Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP) | Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP) |
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| 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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Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Keisig: — To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, please join me in welcoming Rose and Barry Zimmer. Rose is the administrator of the rural municipality of Wolseley No. 155. She's also the executive director of the rural municipality administration association, the RMAA [Rural Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan]. Barry is the senior facility assistant at Viterra grain elevator at Grenfell.

They are both very well-respected members of their community, Mr. Speaker, even though Barry chooses to cheer for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Now please, I'm asking you to join me in welcoming Barry and Rose Zimmer to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Rose and Barry to their Legislative Assembly. Very grateful of the work that you do, Rose, in the RM [rural municipality] and around the province. And, Barry, I'm sorry to hear about your poor choices in football team; nonetheless you're welcome here in your Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I ask for extended leave for an introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you to the members for allowing me. I'd like to ask Devin Bernatchez to give us a wave in the Speaker's gallery. He's a councillor with Lac La Ronge Indian Band. And he was in my constituency for many years — don't blame him for that — but I just want to acknowledge him. He's here and he wants to, I think he's got some work he's doing. And we had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Highways and some of the officials, and I thank the minister for accommodating that meeting.

But I just want to talk a little bit about Devin. He has a heart of gold. He's very passionate about the people he represents, his community members. They have many struggles and challenges, but Devin tries to stay positive. He tries to motivate the youth,

how important it is to keep the youth busy. He's a coach of hockey. He does golfing. He's just amazing to watch.

The community meetings he gets going for people to look at sobriety and a better choice of living. He's constantly working with community members, different organizations to bring them into his community because he wants to make sure his community members have access to a healthy lifestyle, but to know they can make a difference. He's truly a leader. He's very passionate. He wears his, you know, his heart on his sleeve.

Devin is Devin. I've got to know him as a family friend. And you know, you wish you have people out there that truly care, and Devin is one that truly cares. He'll work with the people. He'll criticize. He'll give you a kick every now and then when you need it, but he'll also give you compliments and say, job well done.

So I have a lot of respect for Devin. He's earned a lot of respect from many people. He's a great speaker. He's an educator, a teacher. He's done a lot when it comes to youth. Whether it's volleyball, football, he coached it all as a teacher. Even in his leadership role he has now, he continues to work with the youth to make sure how important it is to community members. So I just want to pay tribute to him about his heart and where his heart is with the youth, the children of his community.

And I just want to ask all members to join me in welcoming him to the Legislative Assembly to say thank you for all you do for the youth that are troubled right now and struggling. I just want to thank you, Devin, your heart of gold. We know that the kids that you touch, you give them hope. And I just want to say thank you for doing all you do as a leader, but as a volunteer in your community and throughout the North. Thank you. I ask all members to join me.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you, I want to join with the member from Cumberland in welcoming Devin Bernatchez here. We had a meeting here earlier today with the member from Cumberland. My condolences also, Devin, for having to work with the member from Cumberland.

But, Mr. Speaker, he's very passionate about his community. I met with him last summer when I was up there. And he wants to get some stuff done, and I'm glad to see he's working hard at trying to do economic development up in that area. It's good for all of the province, but especially his community.

The one thing he did say, Mr. Speaker, was he was going to . . . He's coaching hockey, and he actually thinks he might be coming over to Carrot River to play Carrot River. So that's going to be an interesting game, and you know, I hate to see him come all that way and lose, but anyway, it's good to have him here. And thank you, Devin, for all the work that you're doing.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to welcome Rose and Barry Zimmer to their Legislative Assembly.

They're good friends and neighbours of mine. They live in the community of Wolseley. And there's a saying that says, "If you want a job done and done right, ask a busy person." Well these are two of the busiest people I know. They volunteer in just about everything in Wolseley. They're just pillars of the community. And I want all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. These individuals wish to bring to our attention that many rural health care disruptions are due to staffing shortages; that recruitment and retention of health professionals is a particular issue in Saskatchewan's rural health care facilities; the ongoing pandemic has created burnout and led to early retirements and resignations, which has rippling effects for small cities and towns; and that health care workers and their families are valuable assets in Saskatchewan communities and local economies.

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 fix the rural health care staffing crisis.

This petition today is signed by individuals from Domremy and Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet again today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for funding of in vitro fertilization treatments in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: that one in six couples in Canada experience infertility; that IVF [in vitro fertilization] treatments are prohibitively expensive for many, with one cycle costing typically upwards of \$10,000; that despite public health care being a right in Canada, there is no government financial support for Saskatchewan couples requiring fertility treatments; and that Saskatchewan people's ability to conceive should not depend on their socio-economic status; that investing in people determined to grow their families here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, makes economic sense; and that other provinces have created programs to financially assist in providing IVF treatments to those struggling to conceive.

I'll 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 at least two rounds of IVF treatments for Saskatchewan people experiencing infertility.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition have been coming in from across this province and today all signatories of this petition reside in Livelong, Saskatchewan. 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 again present a petition calling on this government to reverse cuts and changes under the new Saskatchewan income support program, or SIS.

As critic for the Ministry of Social Services, I had the pleasure of undertaking some consultations on SIS and heard from many folks who had the concerns that are outlined in this petition. These cuts are really impacting communities across the province. Minus 25 today, Mr. Speaker, and I shudder to think of those living in homelessness and, of course, the signatories of this petition wish to inform the government that these cuts have further aggravated that crisis in our communities.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will 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. I do so present.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Today I rise on my feet to present a petition calling on the provincial government to take real action to fight climate change. Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has declared climate change the defining issue of our time. The latest IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] report clearly establishes the role of human influence on the climate system, pointing to alarming evidence that important tipping points leading to irreversible changes in planetary systems may already have been reached or surpassed. Rapid and far-reaching transitions are required. Without drastic action now, adapting to impacts in the future will be more difficult and more costly.

Saskatchewan's total greenhouse gas emissions represent a disproportionate amount of Canada's overall GHG [greenhouse gas] inventory, with the highest emission intensity of all Canadian provinces. The government's failure to produce a credible climate action plan risks devastating impacts on the province's economic productivity and human and environmental health, some of which we're already seeing.

Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, call on the provincial government to enact a credible climate action plan and allocate appropriate funding to ensure real reductions in Saskatchewan's emissions, consistent with the scientific consensus to limit global warming.

The petition is signed by . . .

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Ms. Sarauer: — Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte, and Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz.

Mr. Speaker, these are the names of the 14 women lost to a senseless act of violent misogyny on December 6th, 1989 at École Polytechnique in Montreal. Today is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

This day provides an opportunity to remember these women, as well as many others who've been victims of gender-based violence. Even though it has been 32 years since this tragic demonstration of misogyny, gender-based violence continues to impact women across the country. Almost half of Canadian women will face gender-based violence in their lives. This reflects a deeply rooted pattern of violence against women, Mr. Speaker, but we are also aware much of this is rooted in patterns of racialized violence. The number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in our country and in this province is staggering.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to these 14 women to use this day to reflect on today's realities and fight to end violence against women. It is important to not only mourn and reflect, but to use these important days as springboards for action.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to recognize those lost at École Polytechnique and remember the lessons learned as we move forward.

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

White Ribbon Campaign

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to speak about the White Ribbon campaign. The white ribbon we wear today recognizes those impacted by gender-based violence and the pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women.

Thirty-two years ago, the massacre at École Polytechnique in Montreal occurred, a massacre that ended the lives of 14 women and which led parliament to designate December 6th as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

This year the commemoration of this event comes just after the end of Violence Prevention Week in our province. The theme was Reach Out, encouraging those who have witnessed or been impacted by violence, including gender-based violence, to reach

out and seek or offer support. The recognition of these important dates and the conversations that occur because of them is necessary to build healthy, resilient communities. While tragedies of interpersonal violence and abuse cannot be undone, we can come together to recognize our roles in understanding, preventing, and addressing it. We must face the issue and stop the abuse.

To learn more about what can be done to support victims of violence and abuse, I urge everyone to visit facetheissue.ca or call or text 211. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

New Tim Hortons the Latest Project for Cowessess First Nation

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Chief Cadmus Delorme and the Cowessess First Nation on the opening of a Tim Hortons on their urban reserve located in my constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

This partnership between a local, family-owned franchisee and Cowessess is the first of its kind and an important step towards the economic development of Cowessess. It's one in a series of truly trail-blazing initiatives made possible by the vision and hard work of Chief Delorme and his team, who are working tirelessly towards a sustainable and nurturing future for their community and particularly their children.

This comes on the heels of other exciting projects from Cowessess, including their recent decision to become one of the first Nations in Canada to assert sovereignty over their children and families, leading to the establishment of the new Chief Red Bear Children's Lodge.

A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of meeting with Chief Delorme to speak about this ongoing, important work, including future plans to establish an urban Indigenous health centre on the land adjacent to Tim Hortons. This centre will provide holistic care and support, much needed in our community of North Central, Mr. Speaker.

I call on the members opposite to support this important step, and hope that the Ministry of Health will play an active role in co-locating and enabling the Cowessess urban Indigenous health centre. Please join me in recognizing Chief Delorme and the entire Cowessess First Nation who are doing inspiring work to build a healthy, proud, and vibrant Nation for future generations.

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

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. December 3rd was the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This is a day to reinforce our commitment to improving supports and services for people with disabilities. This year's theme is Leadership and Participation of Persons with Disabilities Towards an Inclusive, Accessible, and Sustainable Post-COVID-19 World.

Mr. Speaker, about one in every four Saskatchewan adults identify as having a disability. Saskatchewan's disability strategy provides the framework for increasing accessibility for all residents, and we are making progress. We are creating new provincial accessibility legislation to remove and prevent accessibility barriers for people with disabilities. In '21-22 we are providing approximately 350,000 in new funding to enhance Deaf-blind community services. Last month our government expanded the autism spectrum disorder individualized funding program.

We believe our vision of an inclusive Saskatchewan is welcoming, responsive, innovative, accessible, and where everyone can participate and live the life they choose. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in recognizing the commitment and contributions of people with disabilities and the organizations who support people with disabilities that are working to make Saskatchewan inclusive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Announcement of Round Prairie Elders' Lodge in Saskatoon

Mr. Friesen: — Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to building strong families, strong communities, and a strong province. And a part of that includes investing in housing for people in need.

On Friday I was pleased to attend the announcement of Round Prairie Elders' Lodge in Saskatoon's Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. This is a three-storey building with 26 energy-efficient independent living units for Indigenous elders, 13 units intended for low-income women, including women with children and grandchildren, and four completely accessible units.

The design will help residents age in place. Mr. Speaker, there will be on-site support services to address mental health, promoting social inclusion and access to various counselling services. Central urban Métis foundation will look after the physical health of the elders by providing nutrition, exercise classes, and access to medical personnel.

Mr. Speaker, alongside the federal government, investors include the Saskatchewan co-investment partner program, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, and the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to continuing our work with our valued partners and finding more opportunities to develop housing initiatives that support residents in greatest need. I now ask all members to join me in congratulating everyone involved in Round Prairie Elders' Lodge project. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Concussion Awareness Day

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, concussions are a serious public health issue. Awareness helps us understand how to prevent, recognize, and manage concussions.

Early recognition, proper medical assessment, and appropriate care can make a major difference in the recovery.

This summer I experienced a head trauma and have been working through the treatment of concussion protocols that have assisted in my recovery.

Earlier this fall, the Government of Saskatchewan proclaimed Concussion Awareness Day. This was part of a coordinated effort across Canada to increase concussion awareness by sharing information and encouraging communities to community action and involvement. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, along with Sask Sport and the Sask sport medical science council of Saskatchewan, hosted a 60-minute webinar on concussion management and returning to play. That is why it is so important to follow the gradual stages for returning to school, work, and sport.

Mr. Speaker, our government would like to thank Sask Sport and the Sask Sport Medicine and Science Council for their support and hard work in helping raise awareness about this issue, and we look forward to continuing this work going forward. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Employment Numbers for November

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, Statistics Canada released the labour force survey for November, and the numbers for Saskatchewan look pretty good. Compared to October, the number of people employed increased by 1,400. However, compared to November 2020, there are over 10,000 more people employed, 7,500 of which were in full-time jobs.

Female employment was up 7,200; off-reserve Aboriginal employment was up 6,300; and youth employment was up 4,300. Sectors that saw employment growth included wholesale and retail trade, construction, and manufacturing. The private sector continued to gain strength, with employment up by 7,200.

The unemployment rate was 5.2 per cent, down a full percentage point from October and down almost two full percentage points compared to a year ago. 5.2 per cent is the third-lowest unemployment rate in the country, and Saskatchewan is the only province in Canada that has consistently remained in the top four lowest unemployment rates throughout this pandemic.

I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but these numbers yet again show that our economy is continuing to gain strength. Unfortunately the members opposite can't seem to bring themselves to say much of anything positive. Perhaps just once, the NDP [New Democratic Party] can look at what's happening in this province and drop their doom-and-gloom routine. We can all dare to dream, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Support for Agriculture

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An Education minister

meddling in public health decisions. A Health minister interfering with in-school vaccinations. A Corrections minister scrapping decades of precedent and eliminating the independence of the security in this Legislative Building, Mr. Speaker. And a premier who's shown no remorse, taken no responsibility for his actions that led to the worst fourth wave in the entire country. This is evidence of a government that's lost its way.

And, Mr. Speaker, in the latest display of arrogance, we have the letter from the ministers of Agriculture and Finance to APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan], this condescending, dismissive message to farmers, doubling down on this message that it's farmers who are to blame for the deficit, farmers who've just faced the toughest drought year in this entire century. Does the Premier want to take a moment, does he want to take this opportunity to apologize to the hard-working producers across this province for throwing them under the bus?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to answer a number of those questions as quickly as I can here. With respect to COVID, our numbers have greatly reduced. We're down some 87 per cent in our seven-day average, Mr. Speaker, thanks to what Saskatchewan people have done.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the . . . And we heard the member's statement on the unemployment rate here in the nation. We're third-lowest unemployment rate in the nation, again thanks to what the business community in Saskatchewan has done to recover from COVID-19 and to employ people in all of our communities across this province.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the investment that we see coming over the course of the next number of years, unprecedented investment means that the investment community has faith in what is happening here in Saskatchewan, going to employ more people in more communities in the years ahead, Mr. Speaker, many of them in the agriculture community.

Mr. Speaker, we most certainly have been a government that has listened to Saskatchewan people on all fronts. It continues to represent the interests of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to continue to do that as long as we have the honour to sit on this side of the House.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, there we see exactly what we're talking about on display. It's amazingly rich to see the Finance minister respond to fair criticism of her budget failures and communications. She responded to that calling it an attack on this government. This is the Sask Party that inherited an economic boom, blew every dollar. And now that they're having to face the heat for their own failures, they respond to criticism by saying, no fair, like a bunch of spoiled children.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier take some responsibility? Will he take his feet and apologize to drought-stricken farmers for blaming them for his party's decade of fiscal failures?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the agricultural community can be thankful that they have a government that has worked with them over the course of the past 14 years to increase the crop insurance coverage that we have in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we have the most robust coverage that has ever been experienced here in this province. It's a program that's 40 per cent funded by farmers, 60 per cent by two levels of government. The fund is fully funded, Mr. Speaker, and it was able to, yes, in what was a very challenging year in agriculture, bring \$2.4 billion to the people in this province producing our grains.

In addition to that, we provided just shy of \$300 million to our ranchers across the province to support them in what has been an extremely challenging year, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to continue to do that, as I said, as long as we have the honour to be government, to work with our agriculture community as well as the rest of the people in this province.

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

Leadership Changes at Saskatchewan Health Authority

Mr. Meili: — Well there you have it in a nutshell, Mr. Speaker: a Premier who will slap you in the face and expect you to say thank you for it.

Mr. Speaker, we learned last week that Scott Livingstone, the chief executive officer of the Saskatchewan Health Authority, has left that position. To the Premier: why has he left that job?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'll take the opportunity to thank Mr. Livingstone for his about five years of service at the Saskatchewan Health Authority; previous to that, time spent with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.

Mr. Livingstone was part of our Health Authority, as the members opposite know, as we brought 12 health regions together across this province into one provincially operated health region to offer services to Saskatchewan people. And I think we can be very thankful for the continuity of services that have been able to be offered across the province with that one health region versus 12 various health regions here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is, and I said this last week, Mr. Speaker, is the board, to my understanding, has accepted a letter of resignation from Mr. Livingstone.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question: why has Mr. Livingstone resigned?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[14:00]

Hon. Mr. Moe: — The board has accepted his letter of resignation.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the Premier trying to tell us that he doesn't know or that he won't say?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — The Premier is trying to say that he isn't going to inject himself in staffing matters at the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Mr. Speaker. What I will say on behalf of Saskatchewan people, what I will say on behalf of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, is thank you to Mr. Livingstone for his five years of service leading that organization through the merger of those 12 health regions into one. Mr. Speaker, we had the ability then to offer that continuity of service across the province to all Saskatchewan people.

And what I think Saskatchewan people want to know when there's a change in the leadership of any organization here in this province — and I can assure them of this — that there most certainly will be no disruption in services at the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Mr. Speaker. The board has moved quickly to appoint an interim CEO [chief executive officer] . . . [inaudible] . . . be operating the operations over there, delivering services to people in communities right across this province.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, we're not talking about a simple staffing matter here. We're talking about the lead of the Saskatchewan Health Authority in the middle of a pandemic walking away, walking away on the week of November 22nd. And yet we didn't find out about that until December 3rd, only after reporters asked about it. To the Premier: why did he choose to wait over a week to let people know about this extremely important change?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Health Authority let the people of this province know when they had appointed an interim CEO for the Saskatchewan Health Authority that is working hard to ensure that the services that people expect to be offered through the operations arm of our health delivery care here in the province, Mr. Speaker, will continue to do so. And what I'm here to do is to assure the people of the province it's the highest priority of this government. And that is what is going to happen.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In October, Mr. Livingstone described the overwhelmed state of Saskatchewan ICUs [intensive care unit]. He described a health system unable to offer non-COVID care. He described a situation pending where doctors might have to make the choice between who would receive life-saving care and who wouldn't. The Health minister, as he has at every stage of the pandemic, downplayed and dismissed those statements.

Mr. Speaker, did this government's decision to repeatedly ignore expert advice have anything to do with the departure of Mr. Livingstone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, just prior to those comments, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, there was a number of changes that were made to the public health orders here in the province. And thanks to the vast majority of Saskatchewan people's effort to follow those public health orders, we're now down 87 per cent in our seven-day average. We're down 85 per cent in our active cases. That's the lowest level that we've experienced since August the 10th, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly the measures that we have put in place in this province collectively under the advice and guidance of our chief medical health officer, Dr. Saqib Shahab, are working in Saskatchewan. Our hospitalizations are dropping. Our seven-day case counts are dropping. Our active cases are dropping. And for that I once again say, through you to all of the people in this province, thank you.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, once again the question was about the departure of Mr. Livingstone, a departure that takes place after months of growing daylight between the message from the minister and the Premier and the leaders in health, Mr. Speaker. On November 2nd, for example, Mr. Livingstone said that gathering restrictions would be required if we were going to return to normal surgical capacity. Did that message, so clearly offside with the Premier's aversion to any further public health measures, did that message contribute in any way to the breakdown of the relationship, to the eventual departure of Mr. Livingstone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, that was one of the public health recommendations that was put in place by our chief medical health officer in, I believe, the middle of September if memory serves me correctly, alongside a couple of public health orders around proof of vaccination, proof of negative test, as well as indoor masking mandate. Those numbers, as I went through, have not only helped drive down our case numbers substantially here in the province, drive down our hospitalization numbers which I think was the reference of the question, but it has also driven up the numbers of people that have went out and got vaccinated — about a quarter million more vaccines have been offered to Saskatchewan people.

We're about 920,000 people in the province have actually now went out and gotten their first shot. That is making our communities much, much safer. And with respect to the 5- to 11-year-old category that just opened up a number of days ago, we're at about one-third of that category, leading the nation today. About 32 per cent of the 5- to 11-year-olds have went out, gotten their first shot, Mr. Speaker.

So once again in this House, I say through you to the vast majority and all the people of this province, thank you for what you are doing. It is truly working. I'm going to ask you to keep it up for the foreseeable future.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's choice to ignore the modelling, ignore the experts, led to the worst fourth wave in the entire country, the highest COVID death rate in the entire country. On October the 7th we learned that the Premier had chosen to hand over management of the pandemic from the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] to the provincial emergency operations centre. SHA leadership discovered that on the same day. They weren't even part of the discussion. They weren't a part of that plan, Mr. Speaker. Did the sudden dismissal of the SHA from that primary role in pandemic management, did that have anything to do with Mr. Livingstone leaving his position?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I think that might be news to SHA leadership. The fact of the matter is, is the provincial emergency operations centre that was brought together, yes, with Mr. Marlo Pritchard, with the head of . . . the deputy minister of our Ministry of Health, the policy arm for health policy in government, and the head of our Saskatchewan Health Authority, that is what we brought together to ensure that we could provide a whole-of-government response. I think it proved to be useful in the weeks and months since that has been enacted, Mr. Speaker.

This is not uncommon practice for this province or any other province when you find yourselves in an emergency situation, Mr. Speaker. And I would just take the opportunity to thank all of those involved, from the individuals in the leadership areas of each of those organizations right through to the public service, each and every person across the public service that has been involved in our response to COVID-19. Thank you for what you are doing. Mr. Speaker, it truly is making a difference in this province.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've also learned that the chief operating officer at the SHA has left her position as well. Why did she leave? And has the discussion around her replacement or any changes in structure at the executive leadership team, has any of that had anything to do with Mr. Livingstone's eventual decision to depart?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding is the COO [chief operating officer] of the Saskatchewan Health Authority, over the course of the last number of weeks, has retired. And I would again, I would once again offer my thanks to her years of service . . . previous to the one health authority when we had 12 health authorities operating across the province. So thank you to this individual for her service, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding, I've been informed that she actually retired.

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

Mr. Meili: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's striking that he knows so clearly why the COO left, but he won't tell us why the CEO left. And it is a striking coincidence that within a month of each other, you've got the second in command and the leader at the SHA leaving the position.

Mr. Speaker, the question again: did the COO's departure, her replacement, or any of the structures of the ELT [executive leadership team] at the SHA have anything to do with Mr. Livingstone's choice to leave?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the knowledge I have is that the COO has retired, and the CEO has resigned.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The CEO has left the SHA, left our Health Authority in the middle of a pandemic, and the Premier does nothing to tell us why that happened, is refusing to let people know what's really going on. How on earth after months of ignoring the experts, how on earth after this incredible mismanagement of the fourth wave, how does this Premier expect to recruit anyone to fill the big shoes left behind by Scott Livingstone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to recruiting a permanent CEO, the board has approached us. They'll be discussing that process over the next short while, putting that process in place like they do in any other area of government when we have a change in leadership, whether it be a ministry, a treasury board Crown, whether it be a Crown utility here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

Credit to the board and thanks to the board for very rapidly putting in place an interim CEO, Mr. Speaker, an interim CEO from within the organization that will ensure that there is no disruption in services in communities across this province throughout the pandemic. As well as we put in place measures to ensure that we can, Mr. Speaker, not only operate at a sustainable level post-pandemic, but are going to be able to catch up on some of the wait-lists that we have, and not only here in Saskatchewan but across Canada due to the pandemic.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mental Health and Addictions Supports in the North

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, today we are joined by Devin Bernatchez, a band councillor from the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. He represents the community of Sucker River in my constituency. Devin has seen first-hand how COVID is making the suicide crisis worse. People in many communities and in his own family have died by suicide. He lost a cousin just five weeks ago. Supports people need aren't in place.

Since passing legislation in the spring, there has been no action on suicide crisis. When will this government take real action to address the suicide crisis, which is getting worse because of COVID, in communities like Sucker River?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I welcome Devin to his legislature today, and I thank him for making the

trip down to Regina. I thank Devin as well for the leadership he has shown in his community and for bringing this issue forward, which is one that is of utmost significance for us as a government. I know it is for the member opposite. He has been a strong spokesperson and advocate for this particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, it's something we take very seriously as a government, and we've invested a record amount of funding into both mental health and addictions across this province in this budget year. We know it's something that afflicts families across Saskatchewan — whether it's urban, rural, south or north, or First Nations communities as well — something that community leaders across this province, along with the government, are working very hard to try to address. And we're going to continue to do that to make sure we can provide as many supports as we can to families across Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — COVID-19 is also impacting people's mental health and making their addictions worse. People struggling with mental health and addictions before the pandemic found it hard to see a counsellor or a doctor. With the COVID pandemic, for many, getting an appointment has been impossible. It's a problem in the North, but it's also a problem all over Saskatchewan. What is the plan to help people struggling with mental health and addictions who can't access the care they need during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are focusing on a number of areas where we could make investments into this very important area for community members, friends, and families of ours all across this province. As I referenced in my earlier answer, there's a significant amount of funding going into this area by the government in this year's budget. We continue to make investments into a number of areas, for example, high-intensity treatment teams for youth with complex mental health needs, including a team in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker.

We have expanded and launched the mental health capacity building in schools project, one of which is operating at a school in Sandy Bay, Mr. Speaker. Additionally on top of that improved the harm reduction sites and programming across this province and \$750,000 towards the Roots of Hope community suicide prevention project which operates in Meadow Lake, La Ronge, and Buffalo Narrows.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there are other areas that we need to get to. We know that there are other communities that are requiring this support and we'll continue to offer that.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland House.

Mr. Vermette: — People across the North are struggling because of COVID-19, because of suicide, and because of mental health and addictions. Devin would like the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to come to Sucker River and to come to the North and to see the challenge and the struggles that people in his community are facing.

Will the minister accept the invitation? Will he visit the community with the councillor to see the challenges with his own eyes?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have had the opportunity to speak to a number of northern leaders across this province over the past number of months regarding some of these concerns, and I thank Devin for the invitation to visit his community. I will take Devin up on that opportunity to visit Sucker River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

Rural Health Care Staffing

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, the situation in rural and remote health care staffing is dire. Front-line employees know it. Patients and their families know it. And rural leaders know it, with 94 per cent of them voting last month to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. On Thursday the Premier didn't take any responsibility for this situation, telling media, "Those are precisely the questions the Rural and Remote Health minister and Health minister should be asking the SHA."

So what is the Minister of Rural and Remote Health going to do about chronic short-staffing of rural health centres?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue that is a priority for the government. I've had the opportunity to meet with a number of community leaders in recent weeks, recent days as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, and also hearing from some of our MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] as well with regards to some of the temporary service disruptions that we do have in a few communities right now.

Mr. Speaker, we are engaged through the Ministry of Health and with the SHA as well with these communities and with community leadership across Saskatchewan to try to find ways we can improve some of the retention issues and attracting health care workers to fill some of these vacancies, Mr. Speaker.

We've hired a number of nurses and doctors across rural Saskatchewan in recent years. We know we've got some challenges in a number of areas across the province right now, Mr. Speaker, and we are committed to working with our partners to make sure we address these challenges and to fill these vacancies so we can restore these services as quickly as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Just because he says these are temporary disruptions doesn't mean that's the case, Mr. Speaker. This

problem existed before the pandemic and it's only gotten worse.

The minister said on Thursday, "... we're going to continue to try to address this challenge as best we can." I looked at the SHA job postings for CCAs [continuing care aide] this morning, Mr. Speaker. Among the pages and pages of vacancies, only seven full-time permanent positions are posted. The other 160 CCA positions are temporary or part-time at best. How can the minister say he's trying the best he can when they're only posting part-time or temporary jobs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working very hard to try to fill these positions as quickly as we can. Knowing that there are health care workers ... are highly valued across, not just across this province but across this country, Mr. Speaker. These are very highly sought-after individuals, and rightfully so, across the province and across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we have hired a number, as I've said before, a number of new nurses and new doctors. Just to point to some of the recent advancements, we have hired, this year alone, new doctors in a number of communities — Indian Head, Tisdale, Melville, Rosetown, North Battleford, Weyburn, just to name a few. We've expanded the residency training program in southeast Saskatchewan to offer more opportunities and number ... nearly a dozen communities in and around Estevan, Humboldt, Moosomin, Weyburn, Mr. Speaker.

We're working as well through a rural emergency hub stabilization project where we've invested \$10 million in this year's budget to help stabilize some of these rural areas and working in partnership with communities across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to do this to make sure we bring back health care workers and services to these communities.

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

Ms. Mowat: — We need a comprehensive plan in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to health care, it's either half-baked promises about the future or finger pointing about the past that we get from that minister.

When it comes to present day, they have no interest in defending their record on closed hospitals, closed health centres, and short-staffing in long-term care facilities. That is their record. Right now there are over 1,400 vacancies in health care. Again, what is the minister's plan to end short-staffing in our health care system today, here and now?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said previously, this is an area that we're going to address. We know we have a number of temporary service reductions around the province. But again, we are working very hard through the SHA, through the Ministry of Health, to come up with a comprehensive plan, both short-term and long-term, to make sure that we fill

these vacancies.

I could tell you, Mr. Speaker, what we won't do is we won't follow the NDP plan for health care across Saskatchewan urban communities and rural communities — 450 nurses lost, 173 doctors lost in the early 2000s.

We heard earlier in this Chamber, where the members opposite were criticizing the shortage of registered psychiatric nurses across this province, Mr. Speaker. You know why that is, Mr. Speaker? Because in 2001 the members opposite shut down the program. So you know how many registered psychiatric nurses we train in Saskatchewan? Zero, which is why this government is committed to making sure that we add more training seats and attract more health care professionals to this province to restore service across Saskatchewan.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 13.

The Speaker: — Question no. 13 is tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Clerk: — Committee of Finance.

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for Committee of Finance.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Motions for Supply

The Chair: — The business before the committee is an appropriation resolution. I recognize the Finance minister.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I move the following resolution no. 1:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022, the sum of \$573,127,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

The Chair: — The Minister of Finance has moved resolution no. 1:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022, the sum of \$573,127,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I would invite the Minister of Finance to move that the Chair report that the committee has agreed to a resolution and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Chair, I move that the committee rise and that the Chair report that the committee has agreed to a resolution and ask for leave to sit again.

The Chair: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that the Chair report that the committee has agreed to a resolution and ask for leave to sit again. Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of Committees.

Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Finance has agreed to a resolution and has instructed me to report the same and to ask for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall the resolution be read the first time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF RESOLUTIONS

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I move that the resolution be now read the first and second time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First and second reading of the resolution.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — At the next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. Pursuant to rule 32(1)(d), the Minister of Finance shall move first reading of the appropriation bill. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Bill No. 74 — *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)*

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I move that Bill No. 74, *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)* be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved that Bill No. 74, *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — With leave and pursuant to rule 32(1)(e), I request that Bill No. 74, *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)* be now read a second and third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has asked for leave to move second and third reading of Bill No. 74, *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 74, *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)* be now read a second and third time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 74, *The Appropriation Act, 2021 (No. 2)* be now read a second and third time. 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.

Clerk: — Second and third reading of this bill.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 73 — *The Animal Production Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will move second reading of *The Animal Production Act, 2021*. Mr. Speaker, it replaces four outdated pieces of legislation: *The Animal Identification Act*, *The Animal Products Act*, *The Line Fence Act*, and *The Stray Animals Act*. This current legislation framework for livestock production has not received a full review since the 1970s. The practices and technology used by producers has vastly improved and day-to-day operations look different than they did in the '70s.

Our legislation needs to reflect the realities of livestock production today and into the future. To achieve this, we are proposing one new Act that will bring together government oversight of livestock production in Saskatchewan. The changes encompassed in the Act are largely administrative in nature and

cover livestock and animal product inspections and related licences; rules for administrative agreements the province has with service providers to conduct inspections; authority for the handling of stray animals and animal liens; fencing cost-sharing rules and an arbitration process for settling disputes; and the ability for animal groups to create assurance funds for their industries.

To date, stakeholders have been supportive of this approach and have little to no concerns with this direction. Due to the administrative nature of the Act, no major impacts to the province's livestock producers or service providers are anticipated.

[14:30]

There are 11 regulations under the existing Acts. Some are very interrelated and can be combined to streamline future updates and efficient use by the public. Our intent is to create fewer, more relevant regulations. Ultimately we will simplify the legislation to paint a clear picture of what is required of Saskatchewan's livestock producers. Of particular interest are the processes and forms related to the handling of stray animals, fencing standards, livestock sales, and inspections. The ministry is ready to engage with stakeholders to further discuss these matters and bring forward regulations in 2022. It is anticipated that the new Act and regulations could come into force as early as January 1, 2023.

We have the long-term goal to grow the province's livestock sector by 2030. These goals include increasing livestock cash receipts to \$3 billion, doubling meat processing and animal feed value-added revenue to more than \$1 billion, growing Saskatchewan's agri-food exports to \$20 billion, and delivering on Saskatchewan's climate change strategy, Prairie Resilience. Part of reaching that goal is to simplify our regulatory environment. Simplifying regulations will ensure producers can easily access and understand the legislative requirements that apply to them.

The agriculture sector is rapidly changing, thanks to new research and technology. We need to ensure legislation isn't a barrier to innovation and growth for the livestock sector.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, *The Animal Protection Act*, 2021 is a much-needed update to the province's 50-year-old animal production legislation. This is simply a good piece of legislation that will bring Saskatchewan's animal production laws into the 21st century and position us for more growth in the livestock sector in the years to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 73 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 73, and I thank the minister for providing his opening comments, which I just had the opportunity to listen to.

From what I understand based on the minister's opening comments, this piece of legislation is the outcome of a review of the livestock production framework, which sounds like hasn't been done for several decades and was in need of some updating.

Based on the minister's comments, this bill is an amalgamation of what used to be several pieces of legislation, moving them all together. Based on what the minister said, the hope of the outcome of that would be to provide more ease in reference and usage. And if there are to be updates in legislation in the future, it's much simpler to amend one piece of legislation rather than several pieces of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated that the changes in this legislation are largely administrative and that some consultations have already occurred. I know that our critic, the critic for Agriculture, will be looking through this legislation with a fine-tooth comb and will be checking for any changes that may impact Saskatchewan's producers and will be reaching out to stakeholders for their feedback.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank Saskatchewan's livestock producers for all their hard work, especially in what was a very difficult year this year. And the legislation is interesting in that it shows the real diversity in livestock producers that we have in this province. And I wanted to highlight one particular portion of this legislation, Mr. Speaker — the definition of "animal," and how diverse the definition of "animal" is. I think a real testament to the diversity of producers and the diversity of this sector in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And I won't name them all, but this legislation will include animals that would include, of course, cattle and bison, but also alpacas, llamas, goats, deer, elk, horses, donkeys, quail, peafowl, pheasants, guinea fowl, pigeons, insects like bees — Mr. Speaker, I have a former colleague that would be very interested in that; sheep, swine, wild boar, chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese; ostriches, Mr. Speaker; emus. And also included: any inter-species hybrid of any of the animals mentioned above, Mr. Speaker, which sounds like a very . . . would make for some very interesting discussion points. And I hope the minister in committee explains exactly which sort of inter-species hybrids he's contemplated in this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I have several colleagues who are very interested in entering into the debate on this legislation, and in order to facilitate that work, I'm prepared now to adjourn debate on Bill No. 73.

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. 44

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 44 — *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 44, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2021*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill includes some basic housekeeping amendments as well as an amendment to the definition of a resource corporation, which will now include associated corporations and affiliated persons. The resource surcharge is an additional tax to the corporation capital tax. Both corporations and affiliated persons are included when determining if a corporation is subject to the resource surcharge. The purpose of this change, according to the minister's remarks, is to reduce the risk of litigation, level the playing field, and protect the revenue base, Mr. Speaker.

The housekeeping items and modernization of language are entirely non-controversial, and we welcome these changes. We do need to ensure though that small businesses are supported with any legislation that addresses corporations, and we know this government has not shown much of an interest in properly supporting small businesses throughout the pandemic, Mr. Speaker.

One thing this government could tangibly do to support small businesses here in Saskatchewan is to scrap the PST [provincial sales tax] that they brought in on restaurant meals and beverages back in 2017. They should also reconsider getting rid of the PST on construction labour that they brought in additionally in 2017. These are the kinds of things that would be pragmatic and helpful in showing support for small businesses.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that we adjourn debate on Bill 44, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment 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. 45

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Merriman that **Bill No. 45 — *The Health Shared Services Saskatchewan (3sHealth) Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — Order. Order, everyone. I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To join in on Bill No. 45, *The Health Shared Services Saskatchewan (3sHealth) Act, 2021*. They refer to some of the items in here are housekeeping items that they're referring to, that they need to do. But there was one that I'm paying a little bit of attention to. It talks about, oversight and accountability being transferred to the ministry is welcomed. And I think that's important. I know that they will have some questions.

And I don't know why this is being proposed, and it might be a simple reason. But this is sometimes where some of the information shared — I guess, changes, amendments that are being proposed — give us as an opposition a chance to ask some questions, give the members in committee but officially the critic on our side an opportunity to ask some questions about exactly what it is.

And I know sometimes they'll say it's housekeeping in nature, but then there's also some of the challenges that we see sometimes. And we wonder, who exactly has requested some of the changes? Who did they consult with? And that's always important to make sure, because so many times we see, unfortunately, some people it comes to a surprise that there's changes being amended, and we're not sure of the impact sometimes that's happening.

So having said that, I know that we'll watch this closely and I know we want to make sure that sometimes . . . and here's always our concern about privatization. And we're always watching that because when you start turning over the accountability and stuff, you're not sure what's the purpose of it and why are they doing it. So we want to keep an eye on this file.

I know we're going to have some questions in committee. And I know the critic will definitely want to go through this to have a good look at it and, if need be, ask the questions and get the answers that are going to be needed as this process moves forward. And the amendments, changes that are being proposed in this bill, how they will impact Saskatchewan residents and health in general — it's going to be some questions. So at this point I'm prepared to move adjournment on Bill No. 45, *The Health Shared Services Saskatchewan (3sHealth) 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. 46

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 46 — *The Legal Aid Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to offer my comments on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 46, *The Legal Aid Amendment Act, 2021*. This bill includes some housekeeping items and modernization of language within the Act. Nothing earth-shattering here, Mr. Speaker, but always good to see language being brought up to date.

Mr. Speaker, this bill confirms the powers of the Legal Aid Commission. The CEO of Legal Aid will now confirm or deny any lawyer who wishes to withdraw services to a client.

It is important to note that the need for the services rendered by Legal Aid only continues to grow. It is imperative that we

adequately provide representation to those of limited means, Mr. Speaker, which means that Legal Aid needs to be properly funded by this government.

There is also an issue with the fact that essentially only those on income assistance in our province qualify for legal aid. The income threshold is not appropriate, Mr. Speaker. Many people are denied access to justice simply because they cannot afford to pay a lawyer thousands of dollars to represent them.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, who herself served as a Legal Aid lawyer prior to her election in 2020, has already commented on this bill very knowledgeably and in an in-depth manner. Our critic will be consulting broadly around this bill with stakeholders, as well as with members of the public, to ensure the changes being brought forward here are appropriate. So for my part, Mr. Speaker, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 46, *The Legal Aid Amendment 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. 47

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Bradshaw that **Bill No. 47 — *The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And my thanks to the minister for his enthusiastic support as I rise here today to enter some comments into the record on Bill 47. And hopefully the member opposite is not withdrawing that support any time soon because I do, in fact, have what I believe to be some salient comments that are intended thoughtfully and constructively on this piece of legislation, based on some conversations that I've been fortunate enough to have with individuals and stakeholders pertinent to this file over the course of my brief service to the people of Saskatchewan.

And you know, it's one of the things I enjoy the most about the opportunities that we have as members is that very opportunity to learn about all the different industries and the different aspects and avenues of life in this province of which we may have been previously ignorant. And, Mr. Speaker, my knowledge of our highways and certainly its legislation was fairly pedestrian prior to reviewing this bill. And it's one of those wonderful things about the jobs that we get to do here, representing people of the province and working to ensure good legislation is passed here in this Assembly, is that opportunity to learn so much about such a wide range of subjects.

And the subject at hand, Mr. Speaker, is of course Bill 47. And I understand from the minister's introductory comments that, I believe, there are four primary intents of this bill. And I do have some comments to enter in regards to, I believe, three of them

here today.

The first, and this is probably . . . I'm going by the order in which the minister spoke of them. And the first is, you know, he speaks about in the Act removing some of the . . . introducing, pardon me, clearer guidelines around roadside developments here in the province, intended to improve both safety and growth opportunities and ensuring that our highways, of which they are so plentiful here in this province, continue to meet the needs of, I believe, in the minister's words, ". . . travellers, shippers, local governments, and the province as a whole." And this is a laudable goal.

[14:45]

And I would note, just to enter for comments to the minister and for the record, that there are significant concerns to date of which I'm sure he's aware, specifically around rest stops and developments along many of our highways adequately serving the needs of those who work commercially driving these highways, whether as truckers, as farmers, those employed in ag transportation, and those shippers and couriers who provide last-mile services.

And while I'm incredibly proud to be from this province and of all the work that does go on, there are some comments that have been shared with me just around the state of some of the pullouts and, I believe they're called, blister spots and rest stops in the highways in the province. And the comments are as follows: "We as an industry are being scrutinized more and more for safety, and yet we have no place for drivers to rest."

The next comment I received says:

I think the rest stop situation in Saskatchewan is a joke at best. Can you even list five locations that have washroom facilities and room for oh, say, 10 trucks? We are so lacking in this province for safe truck parking and facilities that I don't even know where to start.

And the last comment I'd leave here is that:

We need commercial rest stops and facilities. How will you ever attract new drivers or female drivers to the industry if there are not adequate facilities on the road? You can't expect to attract good people with Third World working conditions.

And now, Mr. Speaker, these are obviously some critical comments of the situation in the province right now, you know, shared by those who drive commercially. But you know, as a province that is well aware of the risks and the tragedies that can so instantly occur on our highways, efforts should be made.

And I look forward to see more and more coming forth from this ministry and from the minister to ensure that those who are travelling long days and long distances across the province of Saskatchewan have adequate facilities to stop and rest; they have places that they're able to pull over and access basic services like washrooms; safe places to park to ensure that they're compliant with the maximum number of hours that they're able to drive; and to make sure that this is a place, when people are lucky enough to be driving in this great province, they're not just

driving through it. It should not just be a province that you drive through.

You know, I've always thought, Mr. Speaker, that . . . I'm not sure what the members opposite are heckling, but I can . . .

An Hon. Member: — Flying J.

Ms. A. Young: — Pardon?

An Hon. Member: — Flying J.

Ms. A. Young: — Flying J? What about it? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, no that's good. I look forward to more. I'm not sure what the member from Yorkton is taking so personally about these comments . . .

The Speaker: — You know, you're breaking some rules here, members. You can carry on that conversation later, but the member from Regina University has the floor.

Ms. A. Young: — Please, please . . . Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let the record show that I am, I don't know if I should say, giggling on my feet. That's probably not particularly professional. But if the member from Yorkton wants to continue to list rest stops, I'm here for that conversation following.

I was going to say, Mr. Speaker, that in a province like Saskatchewan, where we have so many, so many kilometres of highways, we should not be encouraging folks to simply drive through it. These rest stop opportunities are huge potentials for economic development, certainly in rural and remote parts of the province.

And in addition to that, in a province like Saskatchewan, it shouldn't just be the destination, Mr. Speaker; it should be the journey. And in addition to that, those opportunities for roadside developments, which I look forward to being encouraged by this legislation, are a needed component in highway safety, which I believe all members, heckling or not, appreciate and deeply understand in this province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the second piece identified by the minister that I'd like to enter some comments into the record on is the example that he gave ensuring that the collection of VIN numbers, or vehicle identification numbers, will help prevent the trade of stolen vehicles. This is an important change in the piece of legislation being discussed here today, and I look forward to feedback from stakeholders on this as the critic for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance]. And just as a flag for the minister and for the record, this is a significant challenge here in Saskatchewan, as it is I'm sure across the nation, Dominion of Canada, in terms of stolen cars being resold.

And this is something I've had as the critic for SGI, a significant amount of casework cross my desk in regards to, is good people in Saskatchewan purchase a vehicle second-hand and they do what we believe they all should do. They take their vehicle to SGI. They have it plated. They have it insured because they believe they have purchased this vehicle, and then they discover after the fact that it is in fact stolen.

And oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, and to the minister, there is a

significant gap. We're not talking about, you know, somebody hot-wiring a car, selling it two hours later, and then the poor victim of that transaction going just a few hours later to try and have it registered. But we're talking about the span of days and weeks that transpire and ultimately, ultimately leave the purchaser without a vehicle and at a loss of thousands and thousands of dollars. And this is hugely impactful on the financial situation of that family.

And it is to me perhaps not a simple solve but is a real opportunity to enhance consumer protection in the sale of second-hand vehicles and in reducing the trafficking of stolen vehicles. So I look forward to continued feedback from stakeholders on that as the critic for SGI.

The third amendment in this legislation that I would like to enter some comments into the record on is related to what I believe the minister described as — pardon me, this is the fourth key amendment — to enable commercial vehicle enforcement through automated technology such as weigh-in-motion. And this is great.

And I would further encourage the minister to continue to consult with those in his sector who feel quite strongly, as I understand — speaking specifically about the trucking industry certainly provincially in Saskatchewan but also across Canada — to further consider or perhaps reconsider his position on electronic logging devices, or ELDs.

As the minister will know, ELDs are mandated for all federally regulated trucking companies. And this mandate has been working its way through and now ensures that all ELDs are certified by an approved third party to ensure that these devices are tamper-proof. And these are an easy, low-cost, low-administration way to ensure that trucks and vehicles can automatically record driving time in compliance with the rules and regulations around whatever commercial motor vehicle that they're operating.

This ensures that drivers are compliant with the hours-of-service regulations, resulting of course in things like reduced fatigue for drivers, significant administrative efficiency, and ultimately safer roads for all who travel them and certainly for us, with all of our loved ones and many of the members in this Assembly driving back and forth to Regina. I appreciate the hours and the windshield time that so many of you log. And this is a simple, simple solution.

It is federally mandated, and my understanding is that we are one of the few provinces who has only really recently indicated that we will not be pursuing this requirement for provincially regulated drivers here in Saskatchewan. And I would urge the minister to reconsider, and I would urge all members to just do a little bit of research on that. It's simple. It's efficient. It saves companies a huge, huge amount of administrative burden.

I understand that there are some concerns that it may reduce the windshield time, that folks who drive provincially, many of whom would be producers or farmers or folks driving grain, it reduces it by one hour I believe, from 15 hours of allowable service time to 14 hours. And I recognize that one-hour reduction may be significant. I don't know. I've done many things. I've never driven a commercial truck or a big rig hauling grain or

cattle. But I . . .

An Hon. Member: — I have.

Ms. A. Young: — You have?

An Hon. Member: — Yes.

Ms. A. Young: — Which member is that? Oh, okay. It's the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow. So it's I imagine a significant job requiring lots of attention and a significant amount of work and care and diligence. And I do understand that one-hour reduction in allowable windshield time may be concerning for some.

But going down from 15 hours to 14 hours and being compliant with all drivers across Canada I think is certainly the right thing to do when we look at some of the challenges that those in commercial transportation industries, such as trucking, have as well as some of the many accidents that occur and the tragedies of which we are all too aware that can occur when those safety standards are perhaps lacking. And I believe and I hope that there is a commitment from all members in this House to ensure that driving laws and regulations, certainly as they pertain to commercial vehicles, should be the strongest in Saskatchewan of anywhere in Canada.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, the last point I want to just touch — and I promise I will be brief — I want to touch on is the consultation period that the ministry has undertaken as it related to the development and the writing of this bill and some of the proposals and changes. And I would be remiss if I didn't note for the record the many concerns held by constituents of mine in the great state of Regina University, who do have some concerns around class D vehicles and the . . . I believe it's the urban highway connector program.

For any members here in Regina who have a constituency that borders on the Ring Road, or any of the major highways in or out of the city, this will be of particular interest to you. I have constituents in University Park who have seen, as we've seen the province grow, they've seen increased traffic, certainly increased noise, and increased disturbance in their properties that happen to back onto connecting connectors here in Regina, such as Arcola Avenue would be geographically relevant for my constituency.

And these people assure me, these fine folks assure me that no less a person than former Premier Wall came to them when the Regina bypass was being developed to discuss their concerns around increased traffic, around increased heavy vehicle use through the city and on connectors, important connectors such as Arcola. And the commitment was made then to my constituents that unnecessary heavy truck traffic — and I want to emphasize that word “unnecessary” — unnecessary heavy truck traffic that had no cause to be going into the city or using those connectors would be diverted using the Regina bypass.

Of course there are a huge, huge number of vehicles that are incredibly important to our economy here in Regina, whether they're bringing goods and services in or out. Of course those vehicles should be allowed access. However, for those specifically class D vehicles that are heavy vehicles, Mr.

Speaker, and for those members who may not own houses backing onto Arcola or the Ring Road, let me assure you it's not just the noise, but the houses actually shake. Things will fall off the walls.

[15:00]

And for those residents of mine in my constituency which borders that important connector of Arcola Avenue as well as a significant portion of the southeast Ring Road, this consultation process specifically related to the urban highway connector program was of a deep interest to them. And I would be remiss if I did not express their frustration and their disappointment with the continued presence of that unnecessary truck traffic on those roads.

They're good people. They're pragmatic people. They appreciate the need for some traffic on those important roadways. However, they're concerned about their quality of life. They're concerned about cracks in their foundation. They're concerned about being able to sit in their backyard and enjoy the beautiful and all-too-brief summers that we have here in this province without significant noise from unnecessary truck traffic on those roads.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate and I want to recognize the minister for his engagement with my comments here as well as the many other members, whether their interjections were constructive or otherwise. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on this highly fascinating and deeply important-to-me Bill No. 47.

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. 49

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 49 — *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to weigh in on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 49, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021*. This bill creates the ability for revenue sharing between the Government of Saskatchewan and the First Nations Trust. This revenue sharing will involve net profits being split 50/50, Mr. Speaker. There are amendments being made to the gaming framework agreement and amendments to this Act that will allow the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority to operate a new online gaming platform. SaskGaming will be responsible for providing conduct and management oversight.

Mr. Speaker, Indigenous leaders have expressed that they are glad for this partnership, and we as the opposition are glad to see it too. This partnership represents an important step in the right

direction in terms of economic reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. I joined the Leader of the Opposition last week in a meeting with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the key takeaways from our meeting was the desire, explicitly expressed by the chief and vice-chief, for economic reconciliation. Not just nice words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but tangible action. These tribal council leaders also spoke about the need for duty-to-consult protocols that go beyond mere tokenism with respect to consultations with Indigenous peoples. They want and have every right to demand true nation-to-nation relationships.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I sincerely hope that this bill will be one of many to come that will serve to promote meaningful economic reconciliation. I encourage the minister and this government to continue in consultation with Indigenous leadership to evaluate and pursue further ways of achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, including further revenue-sharing partnerships. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 49, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 50

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 50 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pinch-hitting on this one for my colleague while he's out doing some media, so I'll probably be more brief even than usual.

I'm happy to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 50, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021*. In summary, this bill provides the authority to immediately suspend driver's licences and impound vehicles for drivers charged with stunting, racing, or excessive speed. It also allows suspended drivers to legally partake in driver evaluations while in the company of an authorized driver instructor, and will ensure that they are legally able to partake and have coverage to do so, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It also brings all road signs, including municipal speed and road signs, into the legislation. And all road signs erected will be considered lawful. The purpose of this bill as stated is to keep roads and residents safe, a goal that I'm sure that we all can easily agree to.

In terms of our take on this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do hear a lot of concerns about racing and stunting on highways as well as city roadways. It's very important that people are safe and that the standards for driving are met. So we will be very curious to

hear from the public, as well as stakeholders, on their thoughts, including the police who will be enforcing these changes.

I think, you know, without going any further on this, I'm comfortable at this time for my part to adjourn debate on Bill No. 50, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 51

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 51 — *The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter in with respect to Bill No. 51, *The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021*. Of course in 2019, government first amended this legislation, made changes around making sure we're addressing something that's a horrendous act with such horrible consequences, Mr. Speaker, a horrendous crime, which . . . Those changes created a tort for the non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

This bill expands some of the remedies to address non-consensual distribution of intimate images including requiring the defendant to return any copies of visual recordings — it's certainly important — including threatening to distribute to the tort. So threatening itself now is added to inclusion to the tort, including the depiction of an individual in the definition of protected images to address fake or altered images as well, Mr. Speaker.

And it requires the defendant and an internet intermediary to make every reasonable effort to remove all visuals of the victim, Mr. Speaker. I also understand this puts the reverse onus on the distributor to prove that they have had consent to share the images. Certainly this is a horrendous act with horrible consequences, that we need to make sure we have an effective law and we need to make sure we have the tools that will allow enforcement. Victims of course face horrible consequences. We hear all too often of the situations where the victims end up with, you know, years of mental health issues, so many stories of anguish. We've heard stories of suicide, Mr. Speaker.

The tort is designed as a tool that victims can use to gain some retribution, so you know, we need to make sure that we have all the tools available that are as effective as they can be to address this issue. We'd be curious to know the success and the number of cases that have been brought, the effectiveness of the changes in 2019. So that's an important question, Mr. Speaker.

And on this front, I know our Justice critic is . . . Well this is an area that she's been a real leader. She's been directly involved

with stakeholders on this front. We, as the official opposition, will continue to listen on this front and look for ways to strengthen this piece of legislation, make sure we understand all intended and unintended consequences of this legislation. Ultimately what we want to be is as constructive as we can be on this front to make sure that we have the effective legislation and effective tools to address the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. With that being said, I will adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 51, *The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 52

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 52 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet this afternoon and speak to Bill No. 52, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*. I think, as been already discussed by both the minister in his introductory remarks and my colleagues on this side of the House during the debate, that these are some fairly straightforward amendments intended to clarify and ensure that those whose licences have been suspended maintain adequate insurance coverage when they're attending SGI-mandated driver evaluations.

And I understand that the current Act was unclear as to whether that was necessary and may have led to some situations where drivers were not covered potentially in the case of some sort of accident situation. So as I say, it appears largely to be a housekeeping bill. And as always, we want to make sure that our roads are as safe as possible and that any kind of remedial training drivers are required to undertake, that that proceeds and that there aren't any barriers to them doing that. And of course we welcome that.

I did though, as always, have some observations that I wanted to make in reviewing this amended Act. And I question the reason of these kinds of amendments. You know, we've got some pretty serious issues to be addressing. I spoke to them earlier in the petition that I read around the need for a credible climate action plan, and certainly legislation that encourages individuals to transition towards more sustainable forms of transportation, that government is providing opportunities for greater access to active transportation, public transportation, and less of a reliance on vehicles that are emitting greenhouse gas emissions.

And so that really is the overriding concern in my mind right now as I look at a very minor amendment to an Act to address an issue that is debatable in terms of whether or not it would have been misinterpreted by the courts, while at the same time we have

policy gaps and legislative gaps. We know that there is an important need for legislators to be implementing legislation and the appropriate funding mechanisms as well, to see ambitious action taken on the climate crisis, and yet it seems as though we're fiddling while Rome is burning.

That is how I see these kinds of amendments. And I implore the government opposite to take more ambitious action when it comes to legislative amendments that will help to move Saskatchewan in the direction that it needs to in order to ensure that we have a healthy environment, a healthy society as we approach 2050 and the need to retain temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

This is a collective action problem. It requires legislative action. It requires ambitious action, and I'm frankly very disappointed that bill amendments such as this are a distraction and are not allowing the legislature to focus on the issues that matter here today.

[15:15]

So with that, I will conclude my remarks. I'm sure that the critic for this area will have more to say and will be consulting as needed on this bill. And with that, I will conclude and adjourn debate on Bill No. 52, *An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 53

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 53 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Proud to be on my feet to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 53, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act* of 2021. You know, I'll just give a brief summary, and I think that, as many members have already canvassed, this is just another one of those pieces of housekeeping and a little bit maybe even modernization, that this Act is used to repeal outdated, obsolete legislation from the past. And so the pieces this year that are deemed no longer in use by this government to be repealed here, I include: *The Agricultural Safety Net Act*, *The Pastures Act*, *An Act to incorporate Additional Municipal Hail, Limited*, and *An Act to Incorporate Sisters of St. Martha*. These are all the casualties this year being repealed.

And I guess that I'll just start with a little bit of a hope that these have all been thoroughly considered and stakeholders consulted to a level that is responsible for this government to repeal these Acts. Certainly I would invite any stakeholders, if they feel

otherwise, to reach out to the official opposition and let us know if they were not consulted to, you know, at a level that would be appropriate when repealing these Acts.

And you know, I understand that, as we have heard lots during this fall session of 2021, focus on modernization, clearing out old and unused and . . . You know, I did take time to review the minister's comments here, which took just mere seconds. And of course I took time to review the comments made by my colleagues, many I was present for and if not, was definitely able to review those. That took much, much longer as my esteemed colleague next to me went into great detail to examine some of the ideas around what it means to be, you know, old and unused and as well as examining what it means for a government to modernize. I thought that those comments were insightful and enjoyable.

But I don't really have a lot to add so at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will voice favour for this legislation and support for the process of modernizing old, outdated, and unused pieces of legislation. But with this I do want to continue listening to my colleagues and will be interested to see what our very competent Justice critic has to say when this reaches committee. But I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 53, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act*. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 54

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 54 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative diverse (attestation instrumentaire à distance) de 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into debate here with respect to Bill No. 54, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Act, 2021*, with the encouragement of my good friend and colleague from Canora here today.

And I understand that this bill amends three Acts to allow lawyers to witness powers of attorney, wills, and health care directives remotely via electronic means. I believe this is a provision that's become widespread during the pandemic, and it makes sense, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure that justice is accessible to folks. There's actually so much more work that can be done on that front, that needs to be done on that front.

We understand that there were temporary and permanent regulations passed during the pandemic to allow for this, as I mentioned, and now this would become the standard in the Act moving forward. We understand that the bill provides that lawyers must follow any rules established by the Law Society of

Saskatchewan. Lawyers of course are already subject to oversight by the Law Society. It seems to me that this bill largely codifies what was made practice during the pandemic, and certainly it's important for folks to be able to access legal services regardless of their location or their ability.

The changes made to this bill would improve access to justice. Of course again, there's so much more that needs to be done with respect to access to justice. And with respect to that, certainly our very able Justice critic will be engaging with stakeholders on this front. I know she'll be engaged with respect to this piece of legislation in a constructive way, and I know she'll continue to champion change that makes justice more accessible for many in Saskatchewan.

I'd say that there's, you know, this is something that the official opposition cares about, extending access to justice, and I know there's two lead members in the benches of the official opposition that have undertaken work on this front. That's something that they're passionate about.

I think of the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, who certainly worked as a lawyer for Saskatchewan Legal Aid and gives a lot of voice to the barriers for justice for many in this province. And our deputy leader, the critic for Justice, the member from Douglas Park, this is something that she was active in in her work as a lawyer before being elected in this Assembly and something she's been committed to as an MLA as well. She worked as a lawyer and ran the Pro Bono Law society, Mr. Speaker.

And so I know that access to justice is something that these two lead members of our caucus take seriously, and certainly these are issues that we care about advancing in a constructive way.

With that being said, I would adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 54, the miscellaneous statutes (remote witnessing) Act, 2021.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 55

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Mr. Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 55 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this just follows up with respect to the bill that I spoke to, so all of which I said about Bill No. 54 stands for Bill No. 55, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*.

This bill amends *The Electronic Information and Documents Act, 2000*, implements similar amendments to those set out in the

miscellaneous statutes (remote witnessing) Act, allows for electronic witnessing of documents such as wills, power of attorneys, and health care directives, Mr. Speaker. Certainly these are, you know, these are very important documents, and these changes are always very important when you're talking about one's will, when you're talking about health care directives, when you're talking about power of attorneys. And the accessibility to those sorts of changes and to that justice is something that's real important.

It's important that people have access to justice. COVID has certainly prompted modernization in the legal world, and it's important for people to have these sorts of directives being able to be made when they need to. So we see these as common sense and extensions of what's being practised during this pandemic. As I've said with respect to Bill No. 54, the official opposition Saskatchewan New Democrats will always constructively push for and fight for improvements to access to justice.

I talked about the lead champions in our benches on this front, the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre and the member from Regina Douglas Park. Not only are they lawyers — don't hold that part against them, Mr. Speaker — they're MLAs that are committed to improving access to justice. And in their life, in their profession before coming to this service, that was their service. That was their work. That was their pursuit in extending legal services, extending justice to the many. And I know they're passionate about reforms and change to improve access to justice in our province.

Certainly our member from Douglas Park, the critic for Justice, will be engaged with stakeholders to make sure that these changes make the kind of sense that they seem to, that consultation has occurred, that we understand any unintended consequences brought about by this legislation. And as always, Mr. Speaker, the official opposition will look to be as constructive as possible to make sure that this piece of legislation meets the needs. And if there's areas for improvements, we'll be there to suggest that path.

Mr. Speaker, with that being said, with respect to Bill No. 55, I'll adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 56

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 56 — *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and to speak to Bill No. 56, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2021*. This is an Act that establishes criteria for

the operation of the superior court, and the amendments are required to reflect the current makeup of the court and to modernize the court's ability to assign residency.

I think that's kind of somewhat a vague way for me to describe it, and I apologize for that. I guess maybe more in a layman's kind of term it's, as I understand it, allowing for judges to work and move about within different parts of the province as might be needed. And I'll maybe speak a little bit to that in a moment.

But it also includes some updates to the number of judges who comprise the Court of Queen's Bench and contains some new provisions that will allow the court to make . . . In order to allow changes to beneficiary designations for people without capacity, decision makers for those without capacity can make an application to the court to make changes.

Anyways, all that to say that I think this is the kind of amendments that are intended to allow for some updating and modernization of the superior court. We welcome that, of course. And I thought it was interesting to note that, for instance, the number of family law judges has been increased within this legislation. I don't have the number right in front of me right now; I think it was somewhere in the order of from 6 to 10, if that number sounds about right.

Anyways I did have some questions about that particular amendment and wanted to understand a little bit more about why there was a need for that adjustment and what sort of changes within the kinds of cases that might be coming forward would necessitate it. And it started to sort of tweak in my mind anyways, you know, the fact that perhaps these aren't so, you know, inconsequential in their nature in terms of amendments, because you know, certainly we know that here in Saskatchewan we have the highest rate of domestic violence among all provinces: 519 per 100,000 in population. Nearly 10 per cent of women and girls killed in Canada in 2020 were from Saskatchewan, and we have one of the highest rates of domestic homicide in Canada as well.

And so as that relates to the kinds of cases that might be coming before a family law judge, I think it really speaks to those disturbing trends and the unflattering record we have here in Saskatchewan — and that's putting it lightly, I suppose — particularly on a day when we are all wearing our white ribbons and acknowledging the need for targeted plans to reduce the rates of violence against women, much of what is happening within a family setting.

[15:30]

And so I must say that I find it deeply, deeply concerning that we are seeing a trend here in Saskatchewan where we need to have more judges who are serving in these kinds of areas, and it is really quite representative of these deep societal issues that our province is facing currently. And so I do hope that as we're putting forward these kinds of amendments, that we're not sort of glossing over the real pressures seen in our court system and the forces that are driving them forward.

I could also mention the fact, as I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the Assembly here today are aware of and has been reported much in the news of late, around the number of overdose deaths: 363 overdose deaths as of November 3rd. Again, another

matter which my esteemed colleague, the member for Cumberland, also was speaking on earlier today. And these are the kinds of issues affecting families and contributing to, you know, these roots of crime and poverty that are leading to the number of cases we're seeing in our justice system.

And then last but not least, of course, we have the highest child poverty rates in Canada. Twenty-six per cent of children living in Saskatchewan live in poverty — and that is the crime, I suppose, that is in front of us — compared to the national average of 17 per cent.

And so, I mean, part of my initial questions when I was starting to review this bill were like, well why do we need to increase the number of judges in family law? Why is there a need to shift their residency?

And I know that our critic for this area will be canvassing widely, consulting widely, and asking questions in committee to get at the heart of the matter here as to what is going on that is leading to these kinds of changes being necessary. And I know that as someone who has worked in this area and is very much in tune with the files in her portfolio, will certainly have a much stronger grasp on the reasons for this. But as always, I'm looking to the government to be providing those justifications and those reasons for why these amendments, and a full, full description of the pressures that are leading to these changes.

And so while of course we always welcome these modernization amendments that are going to improve system capacity and ensure that resources are in place where they're needed, it's certainly the case too that we continue to see a backlog of cases in our justice system. We continue to see far, far too many people in remand, and it's a very disturbing situation when we have to be building dedicated remand facilities in order to house people who are waiting to come before the courts.

And I see Bill No. 56 overall . . . And admittedly this again is not my area of expertise, but what appears to be occurring here is that we continue to have almost like a frog-in-boiling-water set of conditions and a growing program that continues to get worse and worse gradually over time. And we almost become desensitized to the severity of the issue.

And that's really what concerns me most about this Act. It's not that I'm not in favour of it. It's just like what it indicates more broadly speaking about how well we're doing as a province and as a society to ensure that all Saskatchewan citizens are moving forward and having the best quality of life, and they're not subject to crimes of intimate partner violence or family breakdown and so forth that are brought about because of, you know, financial pressures and other kinds of issues that are lacking in adequate government policy to prevent. And this really has been the sad consequence of that lack.

And as I say, I know our critic will have more to say on this and will be consulting widely on it. And I'm prepared to at this point adjourn debate on Bill No. 56, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 57

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 57 — *The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I rise this afternoon to enter into second reading debate on Bill No. 57, *The Land Titles Amendment Act* of 2021. I have some premature reviews of my comments already. We'll see if I can live up to the hype, Mr. Deputy Speaker, here.

But it's certainly an interesting bill that we have in front of us here. It was presented by the minister back on November 22nd. And sometimes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have your questions answered, or some of them at least, when you read the second reading remarks by the minister. Sometimes it leads you to have further questions, and certainly that was the case with this introduction, although quite thorough.

The minister noted that the reasons for these changes that we saw in front of us, specifically around assurance compensation through land titles, was to provide a balance and to, I think, reduce the liability of the public purse for assurance claims in the province, which led me to a whole bunch of other questions. But in his comments, he noted that these losses — certain losses due to error in registration or real estate fraud, particularly, are the two instances that he noted — are subject to compensation under these assurance payments.

The minister pointed to particularly the mining sector and the rapidly, I think, increasing value of minerals as one of the reasons for these changes. Certainly something we see . . . investment in the mining sector in the province and a source of revenue and revenue into the future. Source of jobs, this sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think of the good work that's gone on at Northlands College. The member for Cumberland was kind enough to make sure that we had a tour of that facility, and it was really a fascinating facility. I don't know if everyone's had a chance to go see it, but I would encourage folks to go check that facility out, the mining school there at Northlands College. So most of what I know, or some of what I know, at least, Mr. Deputy Speaker, comes from my time there.

At that point, there was concern about the lack of jobs in the mining sector, certainly something that we see increased interest in as the value of those commodities increases. But unfortunately, when we see that sort of rapid rise in value, we also see some other concerns. And I think that's what we're looking at here, although again, I'm only guessing and have my curiosity piqued as to why we are looking at this.

As I noted, the minister was quite thorough in his second reading comments. As I said, talked about the increased value in minerals in recent years and the need to reduce the use of public funds for compensation. So immediately the question becomes, how many

of these claims are we talking about, be it either on the fraudulent side or the errors at land titles? And what are we looking at in terms of the outlay? How much has the public purse been on the hook for, for these assurance claims?

The minister talked about three things that he intended with this bill, to increase the balance being the goal of this bill. First to clarify that loss should be valued at the time the loss occurred, so you can't sit on a loss for an extended period of time and watch the value of that claim increase.

I do have some questions about that. It would already be subject, I would think, to that two-year time frame to file a claim, but I guess that's a question perhaps the critic will be asking. It also, you know, suggests that there has been this practice going on, where people are sitting on claims or there are claims that are left, and watching the value of that claim increase. This bill, I understand, would seek to amend that. There's case law to support this, I understand. The minister spoke specifically of *Hermanson v. Martin*.

A second goal would be to put a cap on compensation. The cap that's noted in the bill is \$50,000. The minister noted that this is a cap that exists in other jurisdictions. So again the question would be, which other jurisdictions? Has that held up? And those are the type of questions that we will get to, the critic will get to in committee.

The last piece is the registrar's caveat, speaking of a time back 20 years ago when these transactions were filed in paper. Put some clarification around that, that those aren't eligible for assurance if the mineral claim was beyond 20 years ago. So some, as I said, detailed comments by the minister in his second reading comments, but does raise a number of other questions, as I've noted. This was an issue I didn't realize existed and now have some questions about exactly how much of a liability this has been for the people of Saskatchewan and how many of these claims exist.

The ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] website does note some existing instances outlining the current state of affairs when registrar's errors are made around land titles.

Some things that I again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, wasn't aware of happened, but apparently they happen frequently enough that they've made their way onto the fact sheet by ISC. When a former owner is deprived of title when someone falsely files title, so someone who believes that they own a piece of property and then goes in some way to find out that someone else has filed claim for that property. Not something that I would imagine going on, but I guess I live a fairly sheltered life, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But obviously something that does go on, and there's some aim to rectify some of these situations.

Other instances that currently exist: two or more competing titles to the same land. You might be eligible for compensation if you're found to be the rightful owner of that land, but the other owner who was expressing interest did something like took out a mortgage on that land and that lien was still assigned. You might be eligible for compensation. Again things that you didn't realize happened, but obviously do and have now made their way into this fact sheet by ISC. And further, some situations that aren't covered under existing legislation that need some more

clarification.

So again it's very interesting to look at legislation and think about why it's here. Sometimes what isn't said is as interesting as what is said, Mr. Speaker, and leads to further questions which I unfortunately do not have the answer to. But I know that the critic will seek to find those answers in committee.

[15:45]

I think though I have come to the end of my comments on this bill, *The Land Titles Amendment Act*, and with that will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 57.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm quite happy to be on my feet today to enter into adjourned debate on Bill No. 58, *The Securities Amendment Act* of 2021. It's my understanding this is amending an Act originally from 1988, the year of the Calgary Winter Olympics. I was eight years old. It was an eight-year-old's dream to have that right in my own backyard.

Got to think a little bit about the changes that have taken place in the world since that time. And glad to see that this government's commitment to modernization and looking at some of this older, perhaps outdated legislation signals the work that needs to be done in bringing things up to date.

Maybe just a few notes on some of the things that I see included in this bill. You know, that there's some new changes, amendments here, including prohibiting the aiding and abetting of those who contravene security laws, kind of clarifying some specific aspects of the legislation, what plaintiffs are allowed to do. And of course I think one I'll kind of focus a lot of my comments on today is prohibiting false and misleading promotional material and activities as they relate to capital markets, and especially online and through social media. And that's of course very important in this day and age.

As well as this law introduces the amendments here, introduce the ability for electronic filing and delivery of documents that are required under the Act. So you know, in some way it's kind of surprising that it took this long to allow that electronic filing, being that it is the year 2021 and this is a previous Act from 1988, as mentioned. A little surprising, but better late than never I suppose, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, I did take time to review the minister's comments as well as comments from my colleagues in the official opposition. I just want to quickly give credit and maybe expand a little bit more. The member from Regina Rosemont in his comments weighed in on perhaps who might be targeted by, you know, predatory behaviour as it relates to the spreading of misinformation and did indicate that, you know, what we're talking about is protecting people's hard-earned dollars.

And I took some time to reflect on those comments, and I kind of put that through the lens of my job as critic for Seniors. And certainly we know that seniors can be vulnerable to misinformation, to scams, to bad actors looking to get after their retirement savings. And you know, I want to be careful. I don't want to paint seniors in any way with some of those like ageist tropes that have us think that seniors are, you know, unaware. But I want to make sure that I do comment that many of these . . . This misinformation that targets seniors is very complex and very much the work of bad actors aiming to exploit.

I want to take a minute to also commend the work of some of the great stakeholders in the world of seniors in Saskatchewan, particularly the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, the seniors association of Saskatchewan, and the Saskatoon Council on Aging. Many of them do provide resources to help Saskatchewan seniors and their families if financial exploitation is taking place. And they've got great resources available on their website.

But one other thing that I want to point out when it comes to protecting seniors from misinformation as it relates to this legislation, mister deputy deputy speaker, would be the significance of appointing a seniors' advocate in the province, I think, would be something that could go a long way to helping to protect our seniors from this type of exploitation.

And I want to maybe just throw one more thought in here, that I'm not even sure if these organizations or if seniors were specifically considered when it comes to this. And I know we're talking about misinformation as it relates to capital markets and online info, but you know, again I'm talking about protecting those hard-earned life savings, retirement savings, hard-earned dollars that . . . You know, and my job as critic for Seniors is just to make sure that their needs have been considered in all legislation, not just those that are maybe brought forward by that minister. But again, that is my job as the critic for Seniors, and I hope that seniors were considered in this as well.

You know, with that I also want to point out some comments made by the minister. Here the minister, in discussing this in his second reading speech, certainly talked about prohibiting false or misleading promotional activities or information. And since this is amending a very old piece of legislation, a lot of this is focused on that online activity. And I think that's, you know, really important, good to see this government is considering.

And I'm going to do this . . . You know, as the member from Saskatoon Eastview, and we definitely saw the significance of sharing misinformation online reflected in the campaign from just over a year ago in Eastview, as the candidate representing the governing party was sharing misinformation online as it relates to the pandemic, on the source of the pandemic, proposing that perhaps the pandemic comes from outer space. And you know, that has real consequences for people. That has real

material . . . Sharing misinformation can be deadly.

And in the case of this bill, we're talking about misinformation that might be related to financial investments. And so there's a lot of work that needs to be done in thinking about how the internet can be misused, how social media can be misused by those looking to profit off the spread of misinformation.

And so I think, you know, like in that regard, I'm not just talking about QAnon conspiracy theories that got this candidate in some hot water and led to his resignation. You know, it's all types of misinformation. It's not all laughable, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that there's real material consequences for people. In the case of our health, obviously the consequences lead to greater spread of COVID, misinformation on how to keep each other safe. But in the case of this legislation, that might have to do with protecting someone's hard-earned life savings from bad actors and misinformation that circulates online. So I think that's important to note. Good to see some modernization here.

I will be interested to continue to listen to my colleagues in opposition as they share their own insights. And with that I do move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 58, *The Securities Amendment Act*. Thank you.

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 Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Deputy Chair of Committees. It is a pleasure to enter into debate on Bill No. 59, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2021*. I understand this is a bill that mainly deals with housekeeping items, although there is a bit of substance to it as well. It creates two new positions. Sorry, I should add that it amends *The Justices of the Peace Act, 1988*, creates two new positions of relief Justice of the Peace and administrative Justice of the Peace.

It goes without saying that justices of the peace across our province do important work. They handle a variety of duties, Deputy Chair of Committees, from administrative issues to conducting remand and release hearings or bail hearings, issuing search warrants. And this piece of legislation is most welcome.

The thing I would say about this Act, Deputy Chair of Committees, is, you know, we tend to have a little bit of issue in terms of how we resource our justice system, our legal system. It always struck me, coming up through my articling and as a junior lawyer, how few resources we really commit to some of these

more “administrative tasks,” even though they have significant impacts on people’s lives.

You know, when we think about whether or not someone is granted bail or the decision to issue a search warrant, which has consequences for people’s Charter rights and law enforcement, we really, you know, we really see very few resources go into some of these lower level courts, be it Provincial Court. They have less. The judges in these courts have less support from, you know, clerks and research staff. They’re really overburdened when you compare that with sort of the upper level court system where you have, you know, one-on-one clerks or even several clerks working for just one judge.

It really begs the question, you know, why we’re not putting more resources into some of these lower level courts and administrative bodies that are dealing with the majority of the volume of issues that come before the court. And again I can’t stress enough how these decisions have real impacts on people’s lives.

So with that, Deputy Chair of Committees, I just wanted to speak to that on the record. And I know that the critic will have more to say about this bill. In general, these changes are welcome and I have no doubt that she’s reaching out to any stakeholders and will propose any additional changes that would improve this piece of legislation. With that, it is a pleasure to 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 Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yes, it is a pleasure to be on here with the encouragement of my colleagues and enter into debate on Bill No. 61, *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*.

I’ll note first of all that this bill is a full repeal and replace of an Act going back to the year 2000, intended to provide legislative oversight for post-secondary education and skills training institutions here in the province. It provides the minister with tools to oversee and account for public funds, as one would expect. And concernedly though — and I’ll get into more of this in a moment — it centralizes the minister’s authority to provide grants, articulates what they can receive money for, and outlines the process for providing money . . . and then also establishes reporting requirements and new data reporting abilities.

Now I get that, as I was starting to mention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it’s . . . I’ve read through the comments from the minister introducing the bill and I thank him for that. But again, as always, I’m always looking for some explanation as to why such reforms are being undertaken.

[16:00]

And I note in their comments they talk about creating sort of a base level of oversight and accountability and I think perhaps consistency. And it raises a number of questions in my mind concerning, well what was the case prior to the previous bill being repealed? And what were the nature of those inconsistencies and the level of oversight and accountability? Because of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we certainly want to avoid issues of overreach.

Certainly, I mean oversight is the role of government. To a large degree that’s done through the board function, the board of governors and similar governance structures put in place to oversee our publicly funded educational institutions at the, you know, post-secondary level. And I’m sure the members opposite will agree with me that we always want to be guarding against overreach. And I think it’s particularly concerning at this point, and we’ll be having a very close look at section 4 where it outlines the powers of the minister.

But we’ve certainly seen in recent history — it’s not even history; it’s like live in the making — where you have government ministers who are very much at the working level of publicly funded institutions and the meddling that has gone on, particularly as it relates to oversight with the pandemic. And I certainly wouldn’t want to see that same kind of meddling occurring, rather intended or unintended, with respect to this new legislation.

It seems to me also rather ironic that a governing party that prides itself on less government, not more government, that in this instance here we seem to be seeing some very prescriptive kinds of measures that some might say are delving in too deeply. Of course we want accountability when public monies are at play. But I think that when we have ministers interacting and overextending their reach, that it doesn’t necessarily result in better outcomes. It creates oftentimes more confusion, more conflict. We have senior leaders who end up resigning their positions when they become frustrated with the level of meddling that’s occurring. And certainly that is the kind of thing we don’t want to see this legislation leading to.

So with respect to section 4 of this bill, I’ll maybe just highlight a couple of things. So section 4 outlines the proposed powers of the minister to, “establish priorities and associated evaluation systems for the post-secondary education sector.” I’m sure that our Advanced Education critic will be asking many questions about that provision, to understand its meaning and its intent. You know, we’ve certainly seen in neighbouring jurisdictions how, when we have an over-exuberant government meddling in educational affairs, it creates quite a bit of issues and problems. And certainly I hope that’s not the intent of that provision. But that one, you know, is a bit of a red flag for me.

I would also look at item 4(c). It talks about, the minister may “develop and implement accountability measures for grants or

funding provided to post-secondary education institutions by the Government of Saskatchewan.” And to me, I can’t imagine how the post-secondary institutions would feel about these measures because it seems to be, you know, really not respecting their expertise and their work.

And certainly in my professional experience, I have always found that when we empower those who are accountable to us in decision-making capacities to define the work, outline the plans and be innovative, knowing because they know the landscape better than us, that we don’t want to be putting those kinds of impositions or controls on them that is going to impede their ability to achieve the best outcomes. And I’m concerned about how that provision may stymie innovation and lead to a very heavy-handed kind of an approach.

I mean, certainly I can appreciate how, on the government’s side, they’d be interested in ensuring that our advanced education institutions are being responsive to the needs of our province right now. We definitely have the need for better labour force planning, and advanced education feeds directly into that. But I think we really have to be careful in the way we go about it because I think if we’re being . . . I’m struggling for the right words here but it’s like we’re taking the power out of these institutions who know their sector best and how to get the results that we need. And I think that these kinds of provisions are going to have the opposite effect.

And worse yet, it has the look of a power grab. And I think that that is going to be really detrimental overall to morale within these organizations and have serious unintended consequences as a result. Obviously of course, particularly with universities, they are governed by academic freedom, and it’s that freedom to undertake research and think broadly that allows them to get ahead of the curve and be innovative. And I think if we put them in too tight of a box, that’s going to impede their ability to do that.

So I would also note that I think that there is just a lot more that needs to be discussed and understood, compared in contrast with the previous legislation to make sure that this is indeed the right approach to be taking. We seem to be going from one extreme to the other in terms of sort of housekeeping amendments now over to wholesale changes. And that always really concerns me when perhaps some sort of moderate course corrections might be what would be more prudent in this case as opposed to wholesale change. And it’s hard for me to say which it is in this case just with the lack of information that’s been provided so far.

As I say, I’m sure and I expect that once this gets to committee, there’ll be that opportunity to provide a more fulsome explanation as to the need for this new legislation, what problems it’s intended to solve, and what other alternatives might have been looked at, and the potential for some of these unintended consequences that I’ve mentioned already.

Just one final point on this particular bill, of course as I mentioned already that, you know, certainly as we move forward and towards a more diversified economy, we know that there are a number of forces, global forces at play that are really changing the nature of our economy here in Saskatchewan. We need to get in front of this issue. We need to ensure that we have good planning around our labour force, and our post-secondary

institutions certainly play a pivotal role in that process. And I want to acknowledge that and make sure that we have that clearly in our sights as we’re looking to see how we can modernize in an effective way and an efficient way so that we’re prepared for that economy of the future and the vital role that advanced education institutions play. Certainly accountability for public finances is paramount as we do that, but we also need to make sure that we give appropriate levels of freedom in terms of those institutions’ ability to respond, be nimble, and not have a heavy-handed approach from government in doing that.

Those are really the important points I want to get across as we’re considering this bill. And with that, I’m prepared now to adjourn debate on Bill 61 for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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. 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 62. I guess to make some comments, there’s going to give an opportunity, I think, in here for dental hygiene, dental therapists, dental assistants.

I know and we know how important it is for people’s health to make sure they have good dental care. It’s promoted. I’ve heard different people say it’s so important; it’s vital. You’ll hear dentists, you’ll hear those in that profession, how clear it is to make sure your teeth are clean, you take care, you’re brushing and all that, flossing, and they go through the whole list. But usually that’s taking place in a dental office. Where I’ve gone, they’ve always had, you know, the . . . You had your teeth cleaned, they helped the dentist’s office do all the preparation. Dental therapists, assistants, they do that.

It’s sounding now where they’re changing from doing that, where they work in a dentist’s. They can go, and if I’m clear on this, it sounds like they can go as an independent and do some of the stuff independent from a dentist’s office. And I’m curious to see.

Then I did notice in part of the comments that were made is other jurisdictions have gone that way and that’s the way they operate, you know, in this area as dental care that they do in other provinces’ jurisdiction.

So I don’t know really who’s all being consulted and how this is going to impact the industry, how it will impact the dentists’ office. And maybe they’ve got support and, you know, the minister has consulted with the dentists, with the organizations that represent both groups, and maybe this is something they requested. I don’t know this, and we’ll have to do the work as our critic finding out exactly how this process works and, you know,

get a chance to ask questions in committee to flush out exactly where did this come from. But I guess if its other jurisdictions are doing it already, and I don't know how many of them, that's going to be interesting to see. Is it, you know, how many? Is it all of them, or is it just a number of them? Are we last to jump on board? Are we in the middle? Those will be things that we would like to ask in committee, and I know our critic will get a chance to ask those questions.

So having said that, I don't know on this bill if there's more that I need to say on it other than when the good work that will be done in committee by our critic, and do the work finding out exactly who supports this, who recommended this to the minister and to those that brought legislation forward to make the amendments that they're doing. And I don't have any further comments at this time on this Bill 62, and I'm prepared to move adjourned debate on Bill No. 62.

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.

[16:15]

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to be on my feet to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 63, *The Reviewable Transactions Act*, 2021. I understand that this bill is seeking to replace outdated laws — a bit of a theme here with many of the bills that I've entered in on today and on previous days — but specifically looking at laws that govern fraudulent preferences and conveyances in Saskatchewan, recognizing that the current laws fail to address modern commercial transactions, and in fact, the existing laws may be causing confusion. You know, it's good to see some modernization coming in. Hopefully the intended consequences of this piece of legislation will in fact take place, looking to bring in some changes in terminology, creating a review process, will work to protect all parties involved.

In particular, you know, I did take time to review the minister's words as he spoke to this bill during second reading and one thing kind of stuck out, and you know, I think it's always going to be this way. And I'm just going to, and I'll lay that down right now for the members opposite, that there's a word that when I hear this government use that word I get concerned. I get concerned. Maybe they'll spot it. You know, the minister said that, "The bill reflects a careful balance between creditors' rights to challenge unlawful transactions and the protection of debtors' legitimate interests where clear rules have been followed."

The content of that statement, I support — I hope that that happens too — but it's the use of this word "balance," and it's

always going to trigger some suspicions from me, Mr. Speaker. And I think that that is a reputation that this government deserves. When they claim that their goal is balance, I'm not sure that I have enough evidence from their actions to believe that they understand the definition of the word "balance."

This is a premier that has never balanced a budget. This is a premier that promised to balance a budget with no foreseeable path to do so, I think a statement in an election that was certainly aimed at winning votes and trust without certainly any path to following through. That is a statement that I would consider to be irresponsible.

Then we have a government that pats itself on the back for a COVID response that they call balanced — balanced. So how can we claim that this government understands the use of the term "balanced" when this COVID response from the fourth wave led to the worst COVID death rates in the country, the worst jobs' performance in the country, the worst ICU admissions in the country? All of this costing us, you know, upwards of a \$100 million. How do they understand the use of the term "balanced"?

So while I support the intent of this bill and the modernization, the processes, all of those are things that are good. When I hear the word "balance" I get suspicious because I have not seen a track record from this government that proves that they understand what balance is, Mr. Speaker.

You know, with that in mind, I think that this is probably time for these changes to come in. I think that, you know, most of the minister's comments provided a reasonable explanation along with examples of what the intended consequences of this legislation will be. And I think I will continue to listen to my colleagues and especially to our esteemed critic as we continue to share our thoughts on Bill No. 63.

But for me the suspicion again rises with the use of the word "balance." I simply have not seen actions to prove that they can balance the needs of people in Saskatchewan. I hope that this bill can do that, but hope isn't good policy, Mr. Speaker. With that, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 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 Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — I'll be very brief on Bill No. 64, *The Reviewable*

Transactions Consequential Amendments Act, as the minister's own comments I don't think exceeded more than two sentences before he begin to wrap up, and so I'm not sure that I have much more to add. I think that I said my piece with the bill previous, and certainly that's what this bill is, looking to just work alongside of the legislation in allowing for bilingualism in the legislation, which we all agree is important.

And in the interest of not taking up extra time, I certainly raised my concerns with Bill No. 63. And I don't want to use up the time of members on either side of this House, so I will simply conclude my remarks there, voice support for this bill. We'll continue to listen to my colleagues as they speak to both of these bills related to the reviewable transactions legislation. But right now I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 64, *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments 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. 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 Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be up on my feet to join in debate on Bill No. 65, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2021*, a fairly straightforward bill mainly dealing with the salaries and administrative functions of Provincial Court judges. This bill implements recommendations of the 2020 Provincial Court Commission to set the salaries of Provincial Court judges as a fixed percentage of the salary of Queen's Bench judges. And I understand that this legislation will now set the salaries of judges, forward looking, for now three years.

This piece of legislation, it is said, will reduce costs, complexity, and uncertainty around the commission process, and of course this opposition welcomes these administrative changes. I know that the critic will be asking any questions about this legislation if she has concerns. Certainly our justice system is extremely overburdened, something I had the opportunity to witness on a daily basis as a trial lawyer with Legal Aid. Anything to create less administrative work will hopefully allow for judges to focus on the substantive law and the cases that come before them.

Lastly I'll just say, you know, it's so important that we have judicial and police independence. And this opposition remains extremely concerned that the changes that the government is proposing under legislation, Bill 70, which will alter the Sergeant-at-Arms, reduce him to a merely ceremonial role. He won't have jurisdiction over the galleries, and the legislative district will be overseen by a partisan police force selected by this

government.

This opposition remains very concerned about this piece of legislation and this clear vanity project, a clear overstep, a clear power grab. We have many questions about what this will look like, and we will continue to raise the alarm around that piece of legislation, particularly in light of the importance of the independence of all branches of government and these various services that serve us across the province. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to adjourn debate on Bill No. 65, *The Provincial Court Amendment 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. 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 University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to rise today and enter some comments into the record on Bill 67, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021*. Much like the last bill I had the opportunity to speak to during adjourned debates, I do have some comments on this bill that I would like to read into the record here today, although the feedback has been that I spoke too long for the taste of some of the members to my left here. So I will endeavour to enter the same volume of comments but speak much more quickly.

This bill of course is providing enhanced protection from liability to individuals and organizations who comply with applicable public health orders, and it will clarify liability protection for the Crown and its agents against COVID-related litigation. On that last point, Mr. Speaker, I am curious and I am confident that the critic will get into what risks and what actions, if any, were undertaken against the Crown and its agents prior to this bill, when it does come into force. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, with the state of affairs in the province, and certainly within Canada and even internationally, as we see increased protests and demonstrations against public health orders and COVID-related rules and restrictions, it seems this bill is necessary.

And let the record show, Mr. Speaker, I believe firmly that no one should be protested at for seeking or providing health care here in this province. And I would hope that a bill like this could be introduced with no tail . . . with no hard end on it, Mr. Speaker, because prior to this the main people who would protest those seeking or giving care at hospitals of course would be those protesting against women seeking abortions or those providing them.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, in that case and in this case as it relates to COVID restrictions, the appropriate people to protest

and to demonstrate against are those of us in this building. It can be an uncomfortable part of this role. However it's what we all signed up for. And while I am personally well aware of the increased rhetoric and threats that accompany these public roles and offices that we hold, Mr. Speaker, no citizen in this province, no resident in this province should be protested at or against when they're seeking health care. And I think all members in this House are united in their belief that protesting outside of hospitals during a pandemic is absolutely abhorrent.

When you think about the small and the great tragedies and crises that happen within the brick walls of those facilities, to add that unnecessary cruelty on top of those very real struggles that we all experience in our lives is unconscionable. It's low, it's common, and it is absolutely abhorrent to those of us who believe in supporting our neighbours and our communities through tragedy, not making it worse.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, no one — no one — should be protested seeking health care, whether it is COVID-related or related to abortion and reproductive rights. And, Mr. Speaker, in relation to this Bill No. 67, I think the last two points that I would like to make are that we need . . . I believe, as I said, this bill is an important step. I wish it had been introduced in the spring. It should have been introduced in the spring, and I question whether it was discomfort from some members opposite around that abortion piece that led to this bill not being introduced in the spring when it was called for and led to it being introduced today.

[16:30]

And again I'm in favour of this bill. I think it is good. However again, Mr. Speaker, no person should be treated differently for seeking health care services in this province. And since I have the opportunity in the context of this bill to speak about this issue . . . Because again the people who would protest outside of hospitals prior to COVID were people protesting against women seeking abortion. And, Mr. Speaker, for any members who may not know, the surgery that you receive getting an abortion is the same that you get if you've had a miscarriage, of course depending on when that happens, that loss happens in your pregnancy.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to note for the record because this is important. I think this is disgusting and I hope this changes. But here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, if you receive a D & C [dilatation and curettage] electively, you are not offered general anesthesia. If you receive a D & C because you have suffered a miscarriage, you are offered general anesthesia. If that is not playing politics and making moral choices with health care, I don't know what is.

It is a painful and uncomfortable process at — I hesitate to say the best of times, Mr. Speaker — but at the best of times it is a terrible procedure to go through. And the fact that right here in Regina, in Saskatchewan today, the policy is that depending on your reason for getting that surgery, you are offered a different level of pain management.

So, Mr. Speaker, I bring those comments to the record today because again this is a government that dragged its feet on introducing this bill in the spring, and I believe that is because of a discomfort with the politics of reproductive choice and freedom

amongst members opposite. And, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House are clear in that belief. And we hope, as it relates to Bill 67, that this government is more clear and concise and focused in their messaging.

We need more focus on education, and we need a government that will not drag its feet. Because when this government drags its feet, it makes it harder for all of us, Mr. Speaker. They dragged their feet in the spring, and businesses here in Regina and people had to live through a third wave. We've spoken a lot about the fourth wave recently, Mr. Speaker. But let's not forget, in the spring businesses and restaurants here in Regina were shut down because public health orders weren't introduced earlier. And that hurt businesses, Mr. Speaker.

Vaccinations in school. Most recently we've seen the government making it harder for those children to get vaccinated in schools. Mr. Speaker, just make it easy. Make it as frictionless as possible, whatever the option is. Why would we be putting impediments? If parents are making that choice, make it easy. Why add to the administrative burden? Why add more to the plates of parents who are already tired and working incredibly hard? Why add one more thing?

Vaccine passports, Mr. Speaker, this government dragged their feet. They're happy to point to it now. They were called for early this summer, and the government dragged their feet well into September. And again where did we end up? In the worst fourth wave in the country with the highest COVID death rate. They dragged their feet on public health restrictions. They dragged their feet on what the modelling told them in June. And, Mr. Speaker, again, where did it get us? The worst fourth wave in the country. And again, Bill 67 — this government dragged their feet in the spring — we see it being introduced now.

So again, Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that there is so much polarization, but this government has a responsibility for that and they have a role for which they need to account. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will 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 Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into debate on Bill No. 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021*. This is a piece of legislation that would give maintenance enforcement the discretion to

commence enforcement when they have a support order, a month after that support order is issued. That's my understanding and that's, of course, when a payer has defaulted. These changes are in response to some withholding payments for up to three months and only making minimum payments to avoid enforcement.

I had the opportunity when I was with Legal Aid to work first-hand with maintenance enforcement orders. And I think that, you know, my colleagues have done a good job of canvassing this piece of legislation. I know the critic will be reaching out to stakeholders and proposing any changes to improve this legislation.

But there are a number of fronts that we could be improving the way we do maintenance enforcement orders. And I want to speak about one that impacts my critic areas just for a moment here, and that is the fact that we are a jurisdiction that claws back maintenance orders from social assistance. My colleague earlier today spoke about how Saskatchewan has some of the worst child poverty rates in the country. I believe she quoted 26 per cent of children in Saskatchewan live in poverty. That's one in four. That is atrocious. That is unacceptable, well above the national average of 17 per cent. Many, and I would say the majority, of those children reside in single-parent households, and the majority of those single-parent households are presided over by women.

And when these individuals get maintenance orders from the other parent, the parent that is not the main caregiver for the child, if they are successful in getting, if they are successful in getting a child support order — and there are many barriers to doing that, Mr. Speaker — that money is then clawed back dollar-for-dollar from their social assistance. God forbid we give these single-parent households a little bit of a leg up, Mr. Speaker.

And the reason I want to point out this issue is because there have been changes in other jurisdictions, changes where, you know, if a parent goes out and is successful in getting the child support order, they will get that child support in addition to what they're eligible for in terms of social assistance. And that makes sense because that's money that is intended for the child.

This is one of the examples of the short-sighted, penny-pinching policies of this Ministry of Social Services that continues to cut off its nose to spite its face. One in four children living in poverty, what chances do those children have? The downstream impact for education, for justice, for health are exorbitant, Mr. Speaker. And this would be at no extra cost to the government, allowing these child support orders to be collected from other private citizens, to just give people a little extra at the end of the month. To just give children in Saskatchewan, one in four of whom are living in poverty, a little bit of extra cash at the end of the month.

This is a small change but it would have a significant impact, especially for the most vulnerable — that is, lone-parent households with children living in poverty.

This government often accuses this opposition of being critical without proposing tangible alternatives. Well this is a very tangible policy that would go a long way in assisting the low-income children across this province. And I would add that, despite the fact that much ink has been spilled on this issue, our

child poverty rates continue to worsen. We have more people per capita on social assistance now than ever before. So over the last 14 years, this Ministry of Social Services has not made gains. It has not made gains. And so we need to look at how we support low-income families. And this is one small change that would be of no extra cost to the public purse, that would allow families to have a bit more in terms of making ends meet.

In the context of the changes and cuts under SIS, which are heartless, the living allowance does not increase whether you have one, three, five, or ten children living in your household. This is an unspeakable policy, Mr. Speaker. In the context of those changes to SIS . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Exactly. This is, you know, one small change that could go to mitigating that disastrous program.

So with that, I'm pleased to move to adjourn debate on Bill 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment 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. 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 University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to rise today and enter some brief comments on Bill 69, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act*.

Mr. Speaker, as has been noted I believe by the member from Regina Rosemont, this amendment eliminates a requirement of copies of support orders from other jurisdictions will have to be certified before they can be filed in a Saskatchewan court. Mr. Speaker, the bill, by my understanding, aims to increase access to justice for families filing support orders in other jurisdictions, to ensure that that process is efficient. And timely changes, Mr. Speaker, we are happy to see, especially that provision which I believe has been noted, allowing for court discretion if there is concerns about the authenticity.

As has been spoken to extensively over this past sitting, access to justice is a significant issue in Saskatchewan and, Mr. Speaker, any who have gone through family law matters often experience these crises. Sometimes it's domestic abuse; sometimes it's just utter, utter poverty.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, unfortunately the poorest people in this province are women with children, which regardless of where you sit in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, is a deep shame and something I hope every member thinks about when we come to work here every day. The poorest people in this province are

women with children. And again, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's a legacy that any government should be proud of, regardless of what colour that government is.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I believe I have said all that I wanted to say on Bill 69, and I move to adjourn debate on *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment 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. 70

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 70 — *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'Assemblée législative*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege and I'm pleased to engage in this Bill No. 70, *An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007*. And I'd like to apologize in advance to the Sergeant-at-Arms and the security guards, as I'll be talking about them.

My question is, who have they consulted? Who has the government consulted, and why? And what is actually asking for the change? There's some questions that we're wondering. How does it impact the people of the province, as this change will move nearly all the security staff, the detail, and replace them with a non-partisan or a government sheriff?

[16:45]

And usually the security was non-partisan. They did room checks. They walked people to their car if they wished, and generally they would be very, very helpful. They were former law officers, retired RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], some from the Army. And, Mr. Speaker, I thought they were doing a very, very good job, so I'm not sure what needs changing.

But what effect will go on in the Chamber? That's part of the questions we're asking, and the people are asking me. How will schoolchildren get in? They're worried about wedding photos outside, grads, youth playing football. Are they allowed? And what will change here? Will there be more control? Has the government reached out to the people?

Apparently there were some threats, but none of us know about these threats. Everyone I've talked to, nothing has been disclosed to us. So that's another red flag. Why all of a sudden with these sheriffs?

There used to be a separation of state protecting the integrity and the sanctity of this fine institution, of this building. It's unusual to have Chamber duty for just ceremonial duties. If the security guards need more resources, let's give them some more. For our

current security, they've been very solid. It's been close to 40 years, I believe, that they've been working here. Their past careers, their experiences have given the security here valuable insights and education to profile personalities and whatever other red flags.

I have personally nothing but admiration and respect. They have been so decent and respectful and kind to my guests, to the schoolchildren that come in, the seniors. All the staff, I have not heard one word of discredit, not one word of any bad behaviour. And I am so sorry that this is happening to our beautiful Legislative Assembly, just another erosion of rights and freedoms.

I think it was 1985 that there was the Ottawa attack. It was 2014 that we had the Ottawa attack with Kevin Vickers, the Sergeant-at-Arms. He protected everyone — everyone. And he was presented with the Star of Courage in bringing that incident under control, Mr. Speaker. Now there is a hero, and I believe all these men and women that are in this building to protect us would be heroes as well.

I do not support the change in this legislature, and I'm so sorry that we have to be discussing the debate right in front of these fine men and women. I have a former RCMP friend so I reached out to her. By the way, her name is Nadine, so the two Nadines chatted about the security of the state, the security of the province, and what is happening. And I wanted to know Nadine's views on what exactly is happening to our government and to this fine institution. So we did have a very good chat.

Back to the bill. Legislative Protective Service or LPS means the Legislative Protective Service established. "Member of the LPS" means a member of the Legislative Protective Service. It includes weapon, a firearm, anything that could be used to "cause death or serious bodily harm to an individual; or threaten or intimidate an individual."

As I was further reading the notes on this Bill No. 70, another explanation. New section 76.1 creates new definitions for a director, legislative district, legislative precinct, police officer, sheriff, and special constable. New section 76.2 provides for the appointment of a director of legislative security and sets out the responsibilities and powers for this office regarding the security of the legislative district. New section 76.3 sets out the individuals who are authorized to possess weapons in the legislative district and legislative precinct.

So apparently we are setting new precedents for Saskatchewan, new precedents for this building, new precedents for the MLAs and the citizens of Saskatchewan. I personally have never been threatened, but once there were some hooligans outside and the security said, "Ms. Wilson, would you like me to walk you to your car?" And they did, and I thought that was very kind of them. Will these new sheriffs be doing things like that? Once my door slammed shut in my office, and of course my keys were in it. So again I run out to the security guards and they come and they unlock my door. Lots of kindness is shown.

Will this new government-mandated martial law, whatever it's going to be . . . because we don't know. Nothing has been given to us. Nothing has been given to the stakeholders. It's an embarrassment to Saskatchewan what is happening, Mr.

Speaker. So I am not for this Bill 70. I would like to hear more about it, and perhaps some other colleagues will be asking questions so we know exactly where we are going in Saskatchewan. It's a bit of an overreach of power, but apparently that's becoming the norm.

So I will conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker. I move to adjourn debate on Bill 70, *An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act*. Thank you very much.

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. 71

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 71 — *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to spring to my feet to speak to Bill No. 71, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*. I understand that these amendments codify a recent Court of Appeal decision respecting the limit on the amount of funds that can be held in side accounts for life insurance policies. Limiting the amount of money that can be deposited into side accounts associated with life insurance contracts protects both insurers and consumers.

Mr. Speaker, it's important, of course, that the courts inform legislation. That's what we see happening on this front. The courts have a very critical role with respect to legislation, and so we appreciate the justification for the changes that have been brought with respect to this piece of legislation.

I know our critic will be engaged with stakeholders on this piece of legislation, making sure that there's not a set of unintended consequences, that in fact it's the court decision that's causing these changes, and that we're acting in the best interests of Saskatchewan people. With that being said, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 71, *The Insurance Amendment 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. 72

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 72 — *The Life Leases Act*** 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 and enter into debate on Bill No. 72, *The Life Leases Act* of 2021. I believe that I can have the floor until 10:30 tonight, but I don't think I'll need that much time. . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I've got some support to see if I can do it. I don't back down from a challenge, so let's see where this goes.

So you know, I think that it is a piece of new legislation, kind of breaking the trend of the housekeeping modernization — well I suppose it could be modernization — looking at some of the challenges that folks are facing if they're interested in engaging in a life lease. We know that this new legislation does require life lease operators to disclose entrance fees, keep all that information upfront, other financial obligations for potential leaseholders, you know, before a lease is executed. That just sounds like a lot of common sense to me, Mr. Speaker. I couldn't imagine entering into a lifelong lease without having all the financial obligations right upfront where it should be.

So very good to see that included here, as well as this clause where leaseholders will have 10 days after the life lease is signed to cancel for any reason. So a little bit of an escape clause to make sure that they know what they're signing on to, if it's a long-term agreement. Great to see.

You know, a few other things included here — the establishment of a reserve fund. I did have a chance to read the minister's comments on that and the intended purpose. Hopefully that . . . Well I'm not going to quote the minister's comments, but certainly did provide a thorough explanation of all the clauses, different things considered here, including the presence of an AGM [annual general meeting] to be established to ensure that there's . . . I believe the word that the minister used was "transparency." So transparency for this Act is key so that all leaseholders and all those signing to this agreement know what they're getting into.

You know, I think that that makes this an important piece of new legislation that the government is bringing forward and one that was recommended, I will note, by the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan as something that is needed to be brought forward by this government. So good to see.

You know, I hope that all stakeholders were thoroughly consulted as a piece of new legislation. We've seen a couple in this session with amendments being made very quickly, you know, within a couple of years after the legislation's brought forward. And I've said with those, like you know, might as well make those changes as soon as they're identified that that's needed here in the future. I hope that the same thing takes place here.

You know, maybe just one thing that I will key in on here from the minister's comments is, in introducing this piece of legislation, the minister used the word "innovative," "an innovative housing solution." You know, I think that that is a little bit troubling to me at a time when we've seen in Regina . . . You know, it's not my home city, but I did have a chance to visit Camp Hope. And we know that there's really serious housing crises facing this province, especially when we have heard it noted time and time again, the 26.1 per cent of children living in poverty.

You know, I can't imagine the housing crisis facing our youngest citizens. You know, we're soon to be back at the bottom of the country again in terms of the lowest minimum wage in the country. The housing crisis is not just about those who are unemployed or on social assistance. It's those underemployed or the working poor, working two or three jobs at a time, struggling to afford. Those are the folks who I think need innovative housing solutions.

I would like to see, you know, some government party focus on those folks, you know. I hope that the next time that we hear "innovative housing solutions" being used in this Assembly, it's talking about folks who maybe were living in a tent for a number of weeks in a tent city in the heart of Regina. That's, I think, where I'd like to see the term "innovative housing solutions" applied by the Government of Saskatchewan.

With that, I will not take up the challenge from the members opposite to talk until 10:30 this evening. I will say that I'm interested in hearing follow-up comments from my colleagues in opposition, including the critic. And you know, as with many pieces of legislation, there's still much to be heard, much debate to be had. So at this point I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 72, *The Life Leases Act* of 2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader 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 17:00.]

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