



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

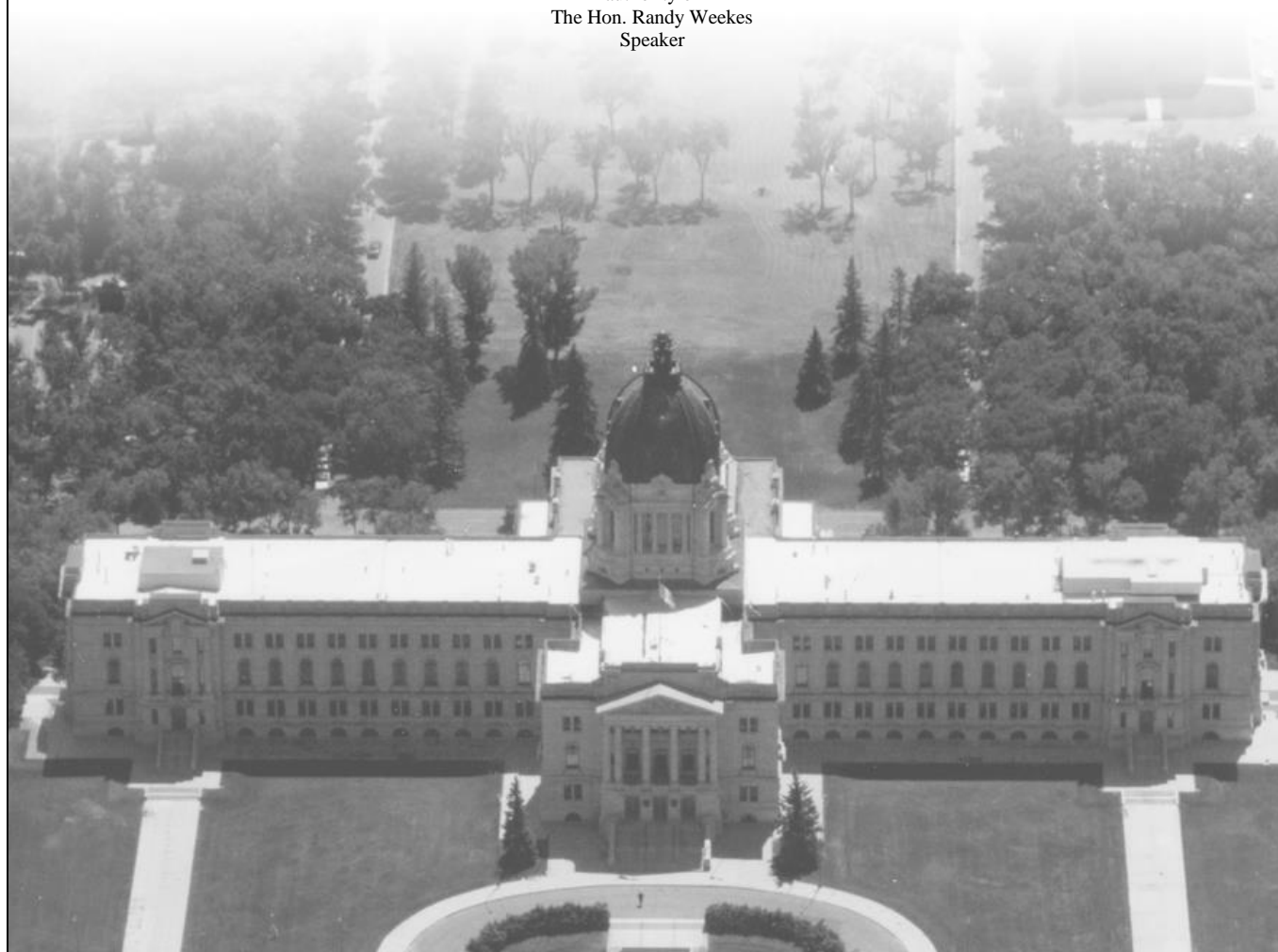
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd Session — 29th Legislature

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

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes

Premier — Hon. Scott Moe

Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)

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Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)

Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)

Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)

Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)

Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

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Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)

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Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

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Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

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Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP)

Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

Stewart, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Athabasca

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

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Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

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CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Makowsky.....	1525
Friesen	1525
Francis	1525
McLeod.....	1525
Nippi-Albright.....	1525
McMorris.....	1525
Meili	1526
Young, C.....	1526
Conway	1526
Grewal	1526
Young, A.	1526
Ross, L.	1526
Skoropad.....	1526
Fiaz.....	1526

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Young, A.	1527
Vermette	1527
Conway	1528
Nippi-Albright.....	1528
Ritchie	1528

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Wilkie Residents Fundraise for Childhood Cancer Research	
Domotor	1528
Member Receives Support After Being Subjected to Racist Comments	
Nippi-Albright.....	1528
Saskatchewan Residents' Experiences with COVID-19 Restrictions	
Wilson	1529
Former Cameco Executive Receives Saskatchewan Order of Merit	
Ritchie	1529
Serafina Energy Building New Crude-by-Rail Terminal	
Cockrill	1529
Recognizing Volunteer Fire Departments	
Keisig	1529
Value of Saskatchewan's Exports	
Nerlien	1530

QUESTION PERIOD

Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic	
Meili	1530
Moe.....	1530
Recommendations for Long-Term Care	
Love.....	1532
Hindley.....	1533
First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework	
Nippi-Albright.....	1534
McMorris.....	1534
COVID-19 Vaccinations for Children	
Wilson	1534
Merriman	1535

POINT OF ORDER

Harrison, J.	1535
Love.....	1535
The Speaker.....	1535

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 75 — <i>The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2021/Loi de 2021 sur les organisations sans but lucratif</i>	
Wyant.....	1535
Bill No. 76 — <i>The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021</i>	
Wyant.....	1535

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ROYAL ASSENT	1535
--------------------	------

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Ottenbreit	1536
------------------	------

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS
ADJOURNED DEBATES
SECOND READINGS**

Bill No. 44 — <i>The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Wotherspoon	1536
Harrison, J. (referral to Crown and Central Agencies Committee)	1537
Bill No. 45 — <i>The Health Shared Services Saskatchewan (3sHealth) Act</i>	
Mowat	1537
Harrison, J. (referral to Human Services Committee)	1537
Bill No. 46 — <i>The Legal Aid Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Vermette	1537
Bill No. 47 — <i>The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Bowes	1538
Bill No. 49 — <i>The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Wotherspoon	1539
Bill No. 50 — <i>The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Vermette	1539
Bill No. 51 — <i>The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Beck	1541
Bill No. 52 — <i>The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Love	1542
Bill No. 53 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2021</i>	
Beck	1543
Bill No. 54 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
<i>Loi modificative diverse (attestation instrumentaire à distance) de 2021</i>	
Love	1543
Bill No. 55 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)</i>	
Love	1544
Bill No. 56 — <i>The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine</i>	
Wotherspoon	1544
Bill No. 57 — <i>The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Young, A.	1545
Bill No. 58 — <i>The Securities Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Bowes	1545
Bill No. 59 — <i>The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur les juges de paix</i>	
Beck	1546
Bill No. 61 — <i>The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021</i>	
Mowat	1546
Bill No. 62 — <i>The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Bowes	1547
Bill No. 63 — <i>The Reviewable Transactions Act</i>	
Conway	1548
Bill No. 64 — <i>The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments Act, 2021</i>	
<i>Loi de 2021 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Reviewable Transactions Act</i>	
Nippi-Albright	1548
Bill No. 65 — <i>The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
Mowat	1548
Bill No. 67 — <i>The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)</i>	
Nippi-Albright	1549
Bill No. 68 — <i>The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
<i>Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires</i>	
Nippi-Albright	1549
Bill No. 69 — <i>The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
<i>Loi modificative de 2021 sur les ordonnances alimentaires interterritoriales</i>	
Conway	1550
Bill No. 70 — <i>The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021</i>	
<i>Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'Assemblée législative</i>	
Ritchie	1550

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks a lot, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce a group of grade 10 students from F.W. Johnson. There's 17 of them here this afternoon. They're in the west gallery to check out proceedings. Their teacher is Mr. Scott McKillop. It's great to see him again after a lengthy time of not being able to have guests here in the legislature. He, in the past and since I've been an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], has frequently brought classes down. So I look forward to have a chat with them after routine proceedings. I ask all members to help me welcome them here.

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

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce Dakota Retterath up in your gallery. This is her first time in the legislature, Mr. Speaker, and I'm honoured to be able to give her a little bit of a tour today. And she's down in Regina studying dental assistant, so she's down for another year. So it's my pleasure to introduce her today, and I'd ask all members to welcome Dakota to her legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Saskatoon in welcoming Dakota to her legislature. She's a constituent of mine. Her folks are still residents of Kindersley. Her dad's an oil field trucker. Her mom works at the dental office where I get these horrible things worked on every so often. And she went to school with my three kids, her and her siblings.

So I hear she's considering moving to the greener pastures of Rosetown-Elrose. I'm not sure why. I heard it's love, but I don't think it's love for the MLA. Anyway I'd like the members to join me in welcoming her to her legislature.

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

Mr. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it gives me great honour today to introduce in the west gallery, my parents Mike and Shirley McLeod. Mr. Speaker, my parents reside in Martensville where I was born and raised. And I'm delighted that they were able to make the trip down to join us here today and get a tour of this wonderful building.

Both of my parents, Mr. Speaker, devoted their careers to education in this province. My father was a teacher, a principal, and ultimately the director of education for Sask Valley School Division, which now forms part of Prairie Spirit School Division. He was also the former mayor of Martensville and has sat on

various boards and associations along the way.

My mother was a teacher and educational assistant for approximately 35 years, which is quite a feat in and of itself, but in addition to that she also raised my two brothers and I, which I believe qualifies her for sainthood. Mr. Speaker, my mom also volunteered for practically every community activity available while I was a child, and was named Martensville's Citizen of the Year, although I won't say how many years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming Mike and Shirley McLeod to their legislature.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I ask leave to make an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and all members, I would like to recognize and welcome the following guests: Chief Henry Lewis from Onion Lake Cree Nation along with his council, their youth, students, and elders; Chief Leon Crookedneck and his council members from Ministikwan Lake Cree Nation; Councillors Hugh Favel and Bryan Tootoosis from Poundmaker Cree Nation. Councillor Tootoosis is representing the chief of Poundmaker Cree Nation today; Cold Lake representatives from the Treaty 6 territory; and Fourth Vice-Chief Heather Bear with FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations].

These leaders, these First Nation leaders and their representatives drove almost six hours to come to Regina to their legislature to have their voices heard. They want meaningful consultation when it comes to the failed duty-to-consult process and the sale of Crown lands. They want their voices to be heard and respected, Mr. Speaker. Please join me in welcoming these folks to their provincial legislature. miigwech.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to, as soon as my mike comes on . . . My voice gets carried pretty good anyway.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming all our guests in the east gallery, Mr. Speaker, from a number of different First Nations. I didn't write them all down, but I know some of the faces are very familiar as I look up there, on different files that I've had in the past.

So I'd like all of our guests to feel welcome in their Legislative Assembly. We look forward to further dialogue for sure, maybe right in the next half-hour in this House through questions

regarding duty-to-consult and treaty land entitlement and so many other issues that are kind of alive and face First Nations as we move forward on reconciliation. So welcome to the Assembly and look forward to seeing some of you after. Thank you.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join the member from Saskatoon Centre and the minister in welcoming folks to their Legislative Assembly. Vice-Chief Heather Bear, great to see you. Chief Crookedneck, Chief Lewis, Councillors Tootoosis and Favel, and all of the elders and young people and community members who have come here to send a message, to send a message that the sale of Crown land affects them, that there is a true duty-to-consult — it cannot be token — and that the future of Saskatchewan, the future of our land needs to be in the hands of the original people here, that those folks have to be at the table with every decision we're making about the use of our most precious resource beyond people, which is the land that is underneath all of us.

So thank you to all of them for joining us today, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming these visitors, guests to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Ms. C. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know I can't see everyone and they probably can't see me, seated in the east gallery, but I too want to take a moment to welcome these guests to their Assembly.

I actually ran into Chief Lewis in the hallway and had a brief conversation with him. And I want to welcome him and all the students here, as well as the other chiefs and council members from the Onion Lake Band council. These are very important topics, and I know that they're interested in hearing both sides and the work that's being done on duty-to-consult, as well as other issues.

And I just want to mention, I was honoured about a week ago to participate in a smudging ceremony to consecrate the new dream catcher space that will be part of Holy Rosary High School in Lloydminster, and the elders from Onion Lake were there. And I was honoured to be able to share that time with them. So I ask all my colleagues to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I want to extend a warm welcome to a young man that's seated in the east gallery, Style Stenberg. He's originally from Assiniboia and is a proud resident of the Lakeview constituency, was making his way as an actor, I believe, in Vancouver. But of course COVID had other plans, and their loss was our gain. He returned to Saskatchewan.

He's a student now studying politics, economics, and philosophy at U of R [University of Regina], and he's a strong advocate for LGBTQ2S+ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, or two-spirit plus] issues. He has

reinvigorated the NDP [New Democratic Party] campus club on the University of Regina. He worked as our summer organizer, and I snatched him up as a casual constituency assistant recently. But getting to know Style has just been wonderful. His energy is boundless; his commitment to the issues is wonderful to see. He's an example of the promise of young people across this province. And so I would ask everyone to welcome Style to this, his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Grewal: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it is my distinct pleasure to welcome my family friends, Neelu Sachdev, recent recipient of the 2021 Saskatchewan Multicultural Leadership Award, sitting with her husband, Sukhbir, in your gallery today.

We are both enthusiastic volunteers for our community and belong to the same dance group for the India Pavilion and Vaisakhi celebration, as well as being involved in the Sikh Society of Regina and India Canada Association. I also played field hockey with Sukhbir in Douglas Park when I wasn't busy in cricket. They have two grown children: a daughter, Sajmun; and a son, Arjunn.

Neelu has been the executive director of the Regina Immigrant Women Centre since 2003. Mr. Speaker, she has successfully grown the organization from a staff of about 3 to 38, and budget from 40,000 to more than \$2 million. They serve newcomers from more than 30 countries. There is a high demand for these kind of community integration, health, and wellness supports in our province. Neelu understands this well, as prior to this position she worked at the Regina Open Door Society. She has successfully fundraised through many governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in welcoming Neelu and Sukhbir to their Assembly.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to join with the member from Regina Northeast in welcoming such a force, Neelu Sachdev and her partner to this, your Assembly.

I don't pretend to have the same long-standing relationship as the member opposite does, but I had the privilege of meeting with a group that came through from the Regina Immigrant Women Centre, I believe just a week ago.

And when I was doing some research I crept you on LinkedIn, and I saw what I thought was 18 months of service. And I

remember being like, oh my gosh, I feel like it's been longer than 18 months. And then I did a double take, because of course it's been 18 years. And what a truly remarkable impact and record of empowerment and integration and education and true enrichment you've brought to this community and to the community that you serve.

Far too often women get left behind, and I just applaud the outstanding work that you continue to do and the service that you bring to our community here. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming you once more to this, your Assembly.

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

[13:45]

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would also like to join the members from both sides in welcoming Neelu to her Legislative Assembly. I had the honour of attending the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan's award ceremony where we proudly gave the award to Neelu. The work she has done in our community for women has been outstanding. And so thank you very much for attending, but also thank you very much for all your years of service to Saskatchewan, making Saskatchewan a better place. Thank you so much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Arm River.

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, seated in your gallery is one of Arm River's finest, Mr. Dan Cordick. Mr. Speaker, if you've ever wondered what positivity looks like, well it looks like that gentleman seated in the second row of your gallery. Actually, he is the personification of positivity, Mr. Dan Cordick is.

And you know, last year in my inaugural speech, Mr. Speaker, I shared a story about Mr. Cordick and his battle with a stage IV cancer diagnosis. In particular I shared one of the qualities that I most admired about Dan, that being his inspirational attitude that he displayed amidst a monumental challenge in his life. Well, Mr. Speaker, in addition to the honour of welcoming Mr. Cordick here today, I'm overjoyed to announce that he continues to beat back cancer, he continues to live with purpose, he continues to live with positivity, and continues to live with passion.

I ask all the members in this Assembly to welcome a constituent, a friend, and an inspiration, Mr. Dan Cordick.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all the Assembly, I would like to introduce sitting in your gallery, my wife, Attia, the most important person and a very hard-working person in my household, Mr. Speaker. We've been together about 22 years plus and definitely very busy. That's from her side mostly, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very busy and sending three kids to school and getting me ready for my work of course, and then she goes to her work after that. And thanks for doing all this.

I ask all the members to join me and welcome my wife to her Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, it's an honour to rise in this Assembly to present a petition calling for the funding of in vitro fertilization treatments here in Saskatchewan. The undersigned residents in the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention the following: that one in six couples in Canada, here in Saskatchewan as well, will experience infertility; and that these treatments are cost-prohibitive, if not entirely out of reach, for so, so many people.

The ability to conceive and to grow your family should not depend on your finances or your socio-economic status nor, I should add, Mr. Speaker, your sexual orientation, your gender identity. And investing in people who want to have families and raise them here in Saskatchewan isn't just the right thing to do, but it makes economic sense. Other provinces, Mr. Speaker, have programs to financially assist. Unfortunately, here we do not.

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 two rounds of IVF treatments for Saskatchewan people experiencing infertility.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of today's petition are from Saskatoon and Weyburn. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to reject the proposed Lambert Peat Moss development. Many good northern residents — local trappers, traditional land users, leaders — are opposed to the proposed peat moss mine here in La Ronge.

The Lac La Ronge Indian Band is opposed, one of the biggest bands within our province. They want this government to hear. You talk about reconciliation. You talk about consulting. Here the leaders, many, are telling you they do not want the government to move on this mine, so peat moss mining. So I'm hoping they're hearing our First Nations and our residents very loud and clear.

People have drafted a petition to let their concerns be known. More than 20,000 people have signed the online petition.

I'll read the prayer:

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

This petition is signed by many good northern people. I so present.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to again present a petition calling for a reversal of the changes and cuts brought about under the new social income support system, SIS [Saskatchewan income support]. This income assistance program represents further cuts to rates that were already inadequate. It removes the direct payment of rent to landlords. It removes coverage for utilities. It represents a cut to disability benefits, school supplies at a time when Saskatchewan is making headlines for having the highest child poverty rate in Canada. Mr. Speaker, these changes have disproportionately impacted Indigenous communities across the province, and that is why we saw the FSIN join the broad chorus of voices calling for these changes.

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 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 Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following: this government has been selling off Crown land with no meaningful duty-to-consult process. This failed duty-to-consult policy is also an infringement on our inherent and treaty rights. Indigenous people in this province must have the first right of refusal when Crown lands are being considered for sale. This government continues to ignore its own 1992 TLE Agreement [Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement], an agreement that is a constitutional obligation. This constitutional obligation has been breached by this government.

Without clear legislation in place for duty-to-consult in a meaningful way, it leaves little accountability for the province and leaves the taxpayers of this province footing the bill for this government's mistakes and losses in court. And the 10 per cent Crown land we still have must be protected for First Nations and Métis people so that they may continue to exercise their inherent treaty right to hunt, fish, and gather.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately stop the sell-off of Crown land and work with First Nation and Métis communities to develop a new duty-to-consult framework.

The signatories of this petition reside in Onion Lake Cree Nation. I do so present.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — I rise on my feet again today 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 points to alarming evidence that important tipping points leading to irreversible changes in planetary systems may already have been reached or surpassed. Without immediate action, adapting to impacts in the future will be more difficult and more costly.

Saskatchewan has the highest GHG [greenhouse gas] emission intensity of all Canadian provinces, and according to the Canadian energy efficiency policy scorecard, Saskatchewan ranks second last among provinces. The government's failure to produce a credible plan risks devastating impacts on the province's economic productivity and human and environmental health.

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 that are consistent with scientific consensus to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Wilkie Residents Fundraise for Childhood Cancer Research

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize the Bleier family and the program Silver for Gold, which collects the tabs from beverage tin cans to be recycled. The money is then donated to childhood cancer research in Canada. When constituents Wade and Robin Bleier of Wilkie were told their youngest son, Jace, was diagnosed with cancer, they were terrified. After enduring a long battle, Jace was able to overcome the disease and is now in remission.

Mr. Speaker, Jace was born a true fighter. The Bleiers are so grateful for the advancements in treating childhood cancers. The family decided to pay it forward and gathered beverage container tabs throughout the past year, and on September 11th participated in the Gold Walk in Saskatoon. Thanks to community support, the family was able to collect 75 pounds of tabs this year. Jace was happy and proud to deliver the tabs, as he knows first-hand what it means to kids such as himself who have experienced cancer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in thanking the Bleier family for paying it forward and helping other families through their cancer diagnosis and treatment. We wish you health and happiness in the years ahead. Thank you.

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

Member Receives Support After Being Subjected to Racist Comments

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I rise to

acknowledge and give thanks to the many folks provincially and nationally who reached out to support me through the racist comments and rhetoric I received. Speaking truth to power is never easy, even less so when you are a First Nations woman. Our province, our society must acknowledge and call out racism any time it rears its ugly head.

Mr. Speaker, folks seem empowered to engage in rhetoric, racist rhetoric, insults, hurling insults, and ugly comments at me because I've been vocal about the recent sell-off of Crown lands, the failed duty-to-consult, and the comments made towards me by our minister tasked with reconciliation. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to stand up and call out racism.

It is vital, Mr. Speaker, that we lead by example. Leading by example is not ministers belittling the only First Nation MLA in this province. When the minister said, "Betty, you're a disgrace" and "she's an embarrassment," for speaking out against cultural appropriation, it opened the floodgates to the ugly side of our province — racism.

I would invite all members to join me in thanking all those who have reached out and offered encouragement to keep speaking truth to racism. miigwech.

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

Saskatchewan Residents' Experiences with COVID-19 Restrictions

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan are telling me government isn't listening to them. Maybe the members will hear these words today. These are their stories: "My grandmother told me this was how it started in the old country. I remember the hatred more than the hunger." "My doctor was great; too bad he was driven away." "My son cries himself to sleep every night for being bullied and isolated at school." "How does a government decide who is worthy in society?" "Our children will not know freedom with digitalization." "Vax the truckers and watch the supply chain shortage." "Why does the Premier let that lady speak for him?" "What happened to a transparent and accountable government?" "How high will inflation go with so many businesses failing?"

But what the government has failed to realize is that you cannot stop people from living and making their own choices. People are going to live their lives and assume the risks of living. The only thing being accomplished now is the mental and financial anguish of a people who have lost trust in the government, and they're in pain and suffering. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Former Cameco Executive Receives Saskatchewan Order of Merit

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to honour a former work colleague and constituent of mine in Saskatoon Nutana, Mr. Gerald Grandey. Jerry joined Cameco in 1993 as senior vice-president, was appointed president in 2000, and became CEO [chief executive officer] in 2003, retiring from

Cameco in 2011. Recently Jerry received the Saskatchewan Order of Merit for his role as an industry leader.

[14:00]

I first came to know Jerry during my time as an environmental professional at Cameco's head office roughly 15 years ago. What impressed me about Jerry was that he was always approachable, regularly joining us in the office cafeteria over lunch to engage in light conversation. His manner was cheerful and friendly, and he displayed an easygoing personality and truly believed that no matter what we were engaged in that we should have fun along the way. I've never forgotten that phrase and its importance when the work is hard and the stakes are high for people and for the planet.

Originally from the United States, he remained resident in Saskatoon since his retirement and continues to contribute to many worthy causes in our city and province.

I invite everyone to please join me in congratulating Jerry on receiving the recognition he deserves as a pillar of our community and model citizen of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Serafina Energy Building New Crude-by-Rail Terminal

Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to bring attention to an exciting new development in northwest Saskatchewan. Serafina Energy is just putting the finishing touches on their new crude-by-rail terminal at Hamlin, located just north of North Battleford along Highway 4.

Mr. Speaker, this terminal will take the crude produced at Serafina's nearby steam plants and fill railcars destined for refinery locations all across North America. And, Mr. Speaker, that's going to be about 100 railcars every two days.

Now my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford and I recently had the opportunity to tour this facility, and it is great to see companies producing oil in this province efficiently and sustainably. The crude-by-rail terminal also adds roughly 30 new jobs to northwest Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, we already know that Saskatchewan is producing oil using some of the most sustainable technologies on the planet. And with our growth plan goal to position Saskatchewan as the best place in North America to test, commercialize, and scale new oil and gas technologies, we look forward to further development.

Now unlike our federal government and some of the members opposite here today, our Saskatchewan government is proud to support this industry and companies like Serafina as we work to make Saskatchewan the best place to work and live. Thank you.

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

Recognizing Volunteer Fire Departments

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the spring sitting

I received a message, right in this Chamber, from my daughter. She informed me that her yard was on fire. Talk about a feeling of helplessness, being two hours away from her farm. Mr. Speaker, a person does not realize how truly valuable volunteer fire departments are in rural Saskatchewan until you need them. Fortunately Ituna and Foam Lake volunteer fire departments and many great neighbours were able to contain the fire and save the house.

As a father, I will forever be grateful to the volunteers from Ituna and Foam Lake Fire Departments for their assistance in keeping my daughter and her boyfriend safe when I could not physically be there for them. Volunteer firefighters are a cornerstone of many rural communities. They spend hundreds of hours training, servicing equipment, and attending fire calls. They deserve recognition, respect, and our gratitude for all the good they do for Saskatchewan and its people.

Mr. Speaker, throughout the summer I attended various fundraising events located in communities across the constituency. It was great to see the amount of support they received. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to ask all members of this Assembly to please join me in acknowledging all the good that volunteer firefighters do for the entire province, and wish them all a Merry Christmas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Value of Saskatchewan's Exports

Mr. Nerlien: — Mr. Speaker, it's pretty disappointing to listen to members opposite talk about the economy because they only seem interested in running it down. That's why it's so important to look at the actual numbers.

This morning Stats Canada released the merchandise export numbers for October, and not surprisingly, Saskatchewan's are at the top. Between September and October, exports increased by 25.5 per cent, the highest percentage increase of any province and well above the national increase of 3.6 per cent. Compared to October 2020, exports increased by 42 per cent, the third-highest increase of any province, and again well above the national increase.

Mr. Speaker, in 2020 Saskatchewan was the only province to see the value of its exports increase compared to 2019. And the momentum continues, which is why our government has worked to expand our international presence. Unfortunately when we announced four new international trade offices this spring, members opposite chose to execute a drive-by smear of the reputation of the professionals who staff those offices. Mr. Speaker, we know those public servants do incredible work representing our province.

And one thing is certain. If the members opposite were in government, I can tell you what our top exports would still be: doom, gloom, and people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the member that the members opposite need to get their act together.

You know, we've been hearing from Saskatchewan folks frustrated for months that they never hear back from this Premier. People have driven from every corner of this province to share their story, to get the help they need. Not only do they not get the Premier's ear, he turns his back on them here in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Why does the Premier have all the time in the world for Unified Grassroots, a group that teamed up with Mark Friesen of the PPC [People's Party of Canada] to take this government to court and try to stop proof-of-vaccination? Why does he have time for them but not for the people who have suffered from the consequences of his choices?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, over the course of this pandemic I have asked all of our government MLAs to continue to reach out to constituents that are contacting their office with questions and concerns. And I've done the same as an MLA in the Rosthern-Shellbrook constituency, Mr. Speaker. I've also at times reached out to other folks in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And yes, some of the folks that we have all reached out, and I think we're all in agreement, feel that maybe, you know, the government has gone too far with the public health measures. Others don't feel we've gone far enough. Some folks we talked to feel that we have gone too far with the vaccine, proof-of-vaccination system, Mr. Speaker. Others feel that we haven't . . . Others most certainly think that we haven't gone far enough, Mr. Speaker.

Just to answer the question in very short order, Mr. Speaker, I had a couple of MLAs request that I return a call in this case, as well as one medical health professional asked if I would return a call. So I made the call; it was one of a number of calls that I had made, I believe it was Friday evening, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to continue to get back to, as government MLAs, to the people that contact our offices across this province.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a constant refrain in our offices. People come to see the opposition MLAs because they won't hear from their MLA. They won't hear from the minister. They won't hear from the Premier.

This government hasn't listened to Dr. Shahab. They haven't listened to Scott Livingstone. They haven't listened to the hundreds of doctors who wrote letters. Hundreds of doctors wrote letters, and what did they hear? They heard from this Premier, not all doctors share that opinion. They didn't get a single call. They didn't get a single response. But he's ready to hop on the phone for somebody who puts rants on YouTube. Ready to hop on the phone for the latest anti-vax group. This tells us everything you need to know.

Why is this government willing to listen to those anti-vax groups and not listen to the medical experts working so hard to keep us safe?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, what we saw with the recommendations that came from our chief medical health officer here in Saskatchewan was action. We saw a number of public health orders that did go into place here in the province, Mr. Speaker. What we saw is, yes, there was some additional, some additional recommendations from a number of regional health officers, Mr. Speaker. First among those that we did not agree with and we did not implement, Mr. Speaker, was the policy around forcing vaccinations on children in order for them to attend school.

Mr. Speaker, you know, I actually thought that maybe the opposition would be happy that there's members on the government side returning many phone calls. Some of those, yes, are to people that are not vaccinated. Some of those feel we should go farther with the mandates that are in place, Mr. Speaker.

But on May the 21st of this year, the Leader of the Opposition said, what we really want to see is anybody who doesn't have a vaccine is getting a phone call from someone who knows the real information and is able to share that. Mr. Speaker, in this particular case, in many, many cases, Mr. Speaker, there are government MLAs that are making those phone calls to our constituents, Mr. Speaker. In this particular case, I also made a phone call too, because I had a request from a medical health professional as well as two MLAs on the government side.

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

Mr. Meili: — Laughable, Mr. Speaker. They were happy to not call people, not remind them to get their vaccines, not help address vaccine hesitancy, but he's going to spend an hour validating extremists, pandering to extremists, which is exactly what he's done throughout this pandemic.

Folks, we're joined today by folks from Poundmaker First Nation, among others. One of the most famous, well-known members of Poundmaker First Nation is Dr. Janet Tootoosis. Dr. Janet Tootoosis is a physician in North Battleford. She was one of the founding members of the board of the Saskatchewan Health Authority — great doctor, a real leader in medicine. But she's left that position on the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] board. And she spoke, she spoke of people being tired, of good people doing so much. She said, and I quote, "I didn't want a front seat to watch great, incredible people be taken out by whatever."

When Dr. Tootoosis was asked if the board was under any external pressure from the government, she said she could not say. Given all we're seeing here, given all we're learning about what's really happening within the SHA, it's hard not to read more into that careful response. Perhaps the Premier could be more clear. What external pressures has his minister, has this government brought to bear on the SHA board?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Well, Mr. Speaker, over the course, over the course of the last number of months we've seen, you know, a lot go on that we really haven't seen, our generation hasn't seen happen as we address the challenges of COVID-19, Mr. Speaker. And I would just say that, you know, our nation right now — and more so to our concern, our province — is pretty divided at the moment, Mr. Speaker.

There are great divisions in our communities. We see divisions in families. We see divisions between friends, Mr. Speaker. And I think what doesn't help those divisions, Mr. Speaker, is when the Leader of the Opposition yet again goes out and labels people as right-wing wackos or, as he just said on the floor of this Assembly, extremists. Mr. Speaker, that isn't helpful to the divisions that we have.

Mr. Speaker, yes, we implemented a proof-of-vaccination policy in this province because it was necessary, Mr. Speaker, and it's working, with a quarter-million vaccines that have been provided to Saskatchewan people. But it's also causing a lot of division in our communities, Mr. Speaker. And I think all of us should be working together on healing those divisions in our communities, in our families, among friends here in the province, Mr. Speaker. That is what the government is going to work on over the course of the next number of weeks, in particular as we lead into the Christmas season, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to do everything that we can to ensure that we are not, as Dr. Shahab says, stigmatizing the unvaccinated in this province. These are our family. These are our friends. These are people in our community, Mr. Speaker. We should not be labelling them with right-wing wacko terms like the Leader of the Opposition is. We should be, Mr. Speaker, engaging with them, taking the time to make a phone call to someone that maybe has a different perspective than you might have.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, that from the Premier who talked about creating two classes of citizens, who talked about segregation when we talked about proof of vaccination. This is a premier who has seeded that rhetoric — that dissonant rhetoric — for political reasons, who's put politics ahead of people's lives.

And now we've seen an exodus of key people in the Saskatchewan Health Authority. The COO [chief operating officer] is gone. The CEO is gone. SHA board members are leaving. What is going on for real?

Under this Premier, we're seeing the SHA fall apart. Is this because the minister put pressure on the CEO to change the structure of the executive leadership team?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, in light of the comments that the Leader of the Opposition made yesterday — around, Mr. Speaker, with respect to referring to a Saskatchewan citizen as a right-wing wacko; more recently comments around labelling a group as extremist, Mr. Speaker — what I would say is I would refer the Leader of the Opposition to Dr. Shahab's comments where he indicates that unvaccinated people should not be

stigmatized, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Shahab goes on to say, “I think there’s been a lot of finger pointing and certainly feel that we need to empathize with people who are not vaccinated,” Mr. Speaker.

So my question to the Leader of the Opposition is, why is he ignoring the advice of the chief medical health officer in this province?

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question was very straightforward. Why did Mr. Livingstone leave? Did he leave because the minister tried to force changes to the executive leadership team? Did he leave because the minister tried to force in his own appointee as chief operating officer? What external pressures from this minister led to the departure of Scott Livingstone?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — As I’ve said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we thank Mr. Livingstone. We thank all of those that have served, not only in the Saskatchewan Health Authority with our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Speaker, but across government and across the province, that have responded in our battle against COVID-19 over the course of the last 20 months, Mr. Speaker. What we have seen through that response, Mr. Speaker, and what we are seeing today most certainly is, you know, great divisions in our community.

Mr. Speaker, the government and the government members, Mr. Speaker, have been reaching out to constituents that have been contacting their office. We’re going to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. We’re going to continue to ensure that we’re following the advice of our chief medical health officer, not stigmatizing those that may not agree with the position or view that we may have personally or even as a government, Mr. Speaker, but we are going to engage them.

It’s actually the advice of the Leader of the Opposition as well, is to engage those that are unvaccinated, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we’re talking about all of the opportunities that we have to keep people safe, keep people out of hospital. And paramount among those is vaccination.

But there are other opportunities that are available today, Mr. Speaker, and more coming in the days, weeks, and months ahead. And we’re going to ensure that we continue to talk and represent the people of this province. We’re not going to label them, Mr. Speaker. We’re going to engage them in our conversations. In particular, we’re going to engage them in the lead-up to the Christmas season here in this province.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, when there’s smoke, there’s fire. And it was very clear that the Premier didn’t want to answer that question. The minister certainly doesn’t want to admit to what he’s done, the interfering with the SHA, his choices that have led to the departure of the CEO. We deserve answers on this, Mr.

Speaker.

In fact we deserve answers on a whole lot. Whether it’s the decision of this Premier to ignore the modelling. Whether it’s the decision to call around to a bunch of US [United States] states rather than get help from the federal government that was available. His decision to ignore Dr. Shahab’s recommendations, to keep those recommendations silent. His minister’s decision to meddle in school divisions’ choices around vaccines. This minister meddling in school divisions that wanted to keep their people safe.

Mr. Speaker, it’s question after question after question, but no answers. The only way we’re going to get to the bottom of this, Mr. Speaker, is if we have a full public inquiry into the failings of this government on COVID-19. To the Premier: will you commit today to a full public inquiry, get to the bottom of all of the ways you failed this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — There it is, Mr. Speaker. In the dying days of every session, we see the Leader of the Opposition stand up in desperation and usually what he calls for is a do-over of the session, Mr. Speaker, which is what I was expecting here today.

But, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the government’s response to COVID-19, we have always made the decisions throughout that response with the information that ultimately we have, Mr. Speaker. We have worked closely with our chief medical health officer to implement public health measures when necessary, Mr. Speaker. We’ve worked closely with the Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Health Authority to not only care for patients, Mr. Speaker — an inordinate number of them are unvaccinated — but to deliver our vaccination program here across the province in community after community, and to provide options for testing for Saskatchewan residents as well, Mr. Speaker.

It’s been a very challenging year. What we see today, as I’ve said many times here today, Mr. Speaker, is many divisions across our province. And the Government of Saskatchewan is going to be working to ensure that we’re able to bring people back together in this province, Mr. Speaker. This province is a strong one and we have everything to look forward to, Mr. Speaker. And the government’s going to be working very hard on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan to ensure that we are unified as we move forward and we are able to achieve everything that we believe we can over the course of the next decade.

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

Recommendations for Long-Term Care

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear. Let me be very clear. The topic of a full public inquiry, it is a shame that this Premier would deliberately choose to hide the facts, deliberately choose to avoid transparency, and deliberately choose to avoid accountability to the people of Saskatchewan.

Now throughout the pandemic, Mr. Speaker, this government has ignored experts. We’ve known that this government has been ignoring experts for years, and this is especially true in long-term

care, Mr. Speaker. Report after report from oversight bodies like the auditor and the Ombudsman provide a road map of how to make long-term care more safe in Saskatchewan. Their recommendations were ignored. We still are not inspecting or reporting on conditions in long-term care as our independent officers began calling for six years ago.

Mr. Speaker, hundreds of seniors have died in deplorable conditions in long-term care and this government hasn't learned a single lesson. They have not changed a thing. To the minister: why not?

The Speaker: — I'd just like to remind the member to watch your language. You're getting to make some personal remarks. Please be careful. I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue that's a priority for the Government of Saskatchewan in terms of making sure that we're making continuous improvements. When it comes to long-term care across this province, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of guidelines and assessment processes that are in place right now.

Members of the Assembly will know that there have been assessment tours since 2013, Mr. Speaker, the results of which are posted publicly and online. Since the beginning of those, Mr. Speaker, the SHA has reported improvement in a number of areas when it comes to capital investments, resident and staff safety as well, Mr. Speaker, increased staffing, engaging with residents and families as well, Mr. Speaker, and making sure that they are part of this process as we're looking to make improvements across the board, Mr. Speaker.

And that's something that this government will continue to do. We're committed to making sure that we continue to make improvements in long-term care across Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are joined today by Rose Botting. Rose's mom, Frances Sander, passed away in April of 2018 following a preventable fall in long-term care. She's fought for years for answers, and the Ombudsman has concluded her investigation into Frances's tragic death. The investigation report released shows that long-term care in this province was broken long before COVID. She even notes that this isn't the first time that she's had to investigate a death like this one, nor is it "the first time we have found that an adverse event should have been deemed a critical incident and investigated much earlier than it was."

The Ombudsman is now calling for an overhaul to critical incident reporting. Will the minister commit today to implementing all outstanding auditor and Ombudsman recommendations, and ensure that no one else is injured or dies unnecessarily in long-term care?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I welcome Rose to her legislature today and extend my condolences on the passing of Frances.

Mr. Speaker, we take these sorts of concerns, all concerns, very seriously, Mr. Speaker. I won't comment on the specifics of the case, but I'm aware of what was reported publicly in the media, Mr. Speaker. There is a process in place for patient and staff safety concerns to be reported within the SHA, as we know. There are quality of care coordinators that are involved in this process as part of the established network of professionals in the province to investigate these sorts of incidents to make sure that they report it and investigate it in a timely way, Mr. Speaker.

And as I said in my previous answer, we are committed to always trying to identify and find ways to make improvements when it comes to long-term care, when it comes to critical incident reporting and, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we can prevent incidents like this from ever happening again.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the pandemic only exposed what has been broken for a long time. For years this government has refused to act, despite hundreds of COVID-related deaths in this province.

Many lives, looking back before the pandemic, including Frances's life, could have been saved if this government had acted on a decade of calls made by independent officers. They've known for years, and they have decided not to act.

To the minister: how are Rose and all of the other families supposed to believe this government's empty promises, when they haven't acted in the past? Will the minister meet with Rose, hear her story, and ensure that staffing and oversight in long-term care will be fixed?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will meet with Rose here this afternoon at the very earliest availability.

Mr. Speaker, further to what I said earlier, I would note that in 2020-2021 the Provincial Auditor audited the critical incident reporting process. This past June report identified 10 recommendations for improvement related to the reporting process. It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Health has commenced work with the SHA and other system partners in order to implement the auditor's recommendations by the end of the 2023-24 fiscal year. And work is in progress to standardize provincial processes impacting patient safety teams, clinicians, and operations, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we can make the necessary improvements where they are required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. We are joined today by many First Nations who are fed up with this government's broken duty-to-consult policy. The government says it is looking at revising that policy, and people have many questions.

Which First Nations and Métis communities has this government consulted on with the new policy that is in the works? And has the minister actually considered asking Indigenous people how they would like to be consulted?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the duty-to-consult policy really facilitates a relationship between the Government of Saskatchewan and First Nations and Métis communities, as well as business and First Nations and Métis communities. Mr. Speaker, the reason for duty-to-consult is to consider actions that may be taken that may impact First Nations on their treaty rights to hunt, to fish, to gather, or to carry out ceremonial practices.

This policy has been in place in Saskatchewan for well over 10 years, Mr. Speaker. We have committed as a government that we'll certainly look at that.

I will say though, as a government over the last couple of years, we've put money into a fund so when First Nations are in a position for duty-to-consult, that they can access dollars. Over \$200,000 was given out last year, Mr. Speaker. This year we're on a record pace. I think \$230,000 has been given out to First Nations so that they can consult and develop a consulting process with industry and government, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First Nations and Métis leaders I talk to are concerned that this government is using COVID-19 as an excuse to sidestep those consultations. Registered letters, emails to band offices, and one-off meetings aren't consultation.

Can the minister share with the folks who are here today from Onion Lake, Poundmaker, Ministikwan, FSIN, and other leaders watching today, when will this government start a collaborative process to overhaul their failed duty-to-consult policy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, last spring in this House we had a discussion with that member opposite, Mr. Speaker, on this very issue in estimates, where we told that member the process that would be taking place. And I would have hoped that she had relayed that process to the people that she's been talking to. But we have worked within the ministry first of all, to look at the processes and policies in place for the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now we'll be venturing out, Mr. Speaker, and talking to First Nations, Métis communities, but not only First Nations and Métis communities because they're not the only ones impacted, industry as well — all the stakeholders that are impacted on this duty-to-consult process. As I said, it has been in place for 10 years. We need to look at it and see how we can improve it so that it works best for all people in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've spoken to leaders from your list that you've given me, and they say that the consultation you have done is not consultation. So I ask you, has this minister actually considered asking Indigenous people how they want to be consulted? And which of these communities has this worked in?

The Speaker: — I just want to remind the member to speak through the Chair. I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I would say is we're very early on in this process. This process has just started out. It will be a fulsome process, Mr. Speaker, where First Nations, people from the FSIN, as well as a number of First Nations that have showed concern, will definitely be contacted.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment and I and the Minister of Justice were just on a phone call with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council as well as the P.A. [Prince Albert] Grand Council were on that phone call. It was an hour-and-a-half-long phone call this morning, Mr. Speaker, where some of these very issues came up.

We certainly understand the concern that First Nations have on the duty-to-consult, Mr. Speaker. And I think there is still a bit of an education process that needs to be conducted around that, Mr. Speaker, for both First Nations and industry as well as government, Mr. Speaker. And that's why there will be further consultation and engagement with as many stakeholders as we possibly can so it's a fulsome engagement, Mr. Speaker, so that the result coming out of this engagement is best for all.

[14:30]

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

COVID-19 Vaccinations for Children

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan children deserve to have a safe and free childhood. The benefits of the societal lockdowns and restrictions have been exaggerated, and the harms to our children and society have been severe. We have lost a generation. The harms to children and the undiagnosed illness that will result in years to come will impact them in many ways — depression, anxiety, experimental drugs, and suicides — due to lockdown policies.

Can you guarantee these parents their child will be 100 per cent safe after the COVID vaccine? What will you say to the parents

when not? Who will be accountable? Now we hear whispers again of new lockdowns and restrictions. Can the Premier answer these concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad to report to the House that we do have the highest vaccination rate of our children right now. And it's very important that the families — as I've said in this House and I've said in the public, Mr. Speaker — have that discussion around the kitchen table of the importance of vaccines, how this could protect themselves, their children, their grandparents, their friends, and their community, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very pleased to say that this is working, Mr. Speaker. We have had great conversations. We've seen huge uptake. Almost 250,000 people have got their vaccinations since we've implemented the measures in the beginning of September, Mr. Speaker. Those measures are working, and we continue to make sure that everybody has access to a vaccine that is eligible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader. State your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A point of order arising out of question period. During question period the member for Saskatoon Eastview said, and I quote, the minister deliberately chose to hide the facts. Mr. Speaker, that's clearly unparliamentary. I would ask the member to stand in his place and withdraw that comment and apologize to the House.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't engage in any commentary on the veracity of my comments, but I will apologize to the Assembly for making a claim that another member was hiding facts from the public. I do so apologize.

The Speaker: — What's being asked is you withdraw and apologize. You shouldn't elaborate and repeat everything you said wrong. Just withdraw and apologize, please.

Mr. Love: — Okay, I do withdraw the comments and I do apologize to that member.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 75 — *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2021* *Loi de 2021 sur les organisations sans but lucratif*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 75, *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2021*, which is a bilingual bill, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

that Bill No. 75 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Next sitting.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 76 — *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 76, *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 76 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

[At 14:36 His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne. His Honour then gave Royal Assent to the following bill.]

ROYAL ASSENT

His Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly has voted the supplies required to enable the government to defray the expenses of the public service.

In the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour:

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

to which I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

His Honour: — In Her Majesty's name, I thank the Legislative Assembly, accept its benevolence, and assent to this bill.

[At 14:38 His Honour retired from the Chamber.]

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 14.

The Speaker: — Table. No. 14 is tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

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 Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to weigh in albeit briefly here today with respect to Bill No. 44, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2021*.

Certainly any time this government's making tax changes, we want to make sure that we understand the full implications of those changes: what that process has looked like, who's been consulted, what the consequences are, what the aims are, Mr. Speaker. So you know, we'll be prepared to do that at committee. We certainly invite stakeholders that are impacted by this legislation to share their perspectives. It's important we make sure that any changes like this are in the best interests of the province and done so in a thoughtful and considerate way.

And we particularly have to take that approach as an opposition with this government, Mr. Speaker, because Saskatchewan people and small businesses have come to know this government as one that hits them time and time again with tax increases, Mr. Speaker, without consultation, without being straight up with the businesses of the province or the people of this province.

We think of just a few years ago, Mr. Speaker, when shortly after an election — of course this Sask Party government had suggested that they weren't going to be making any tax hikes; in fact that had been their commitment — and of course shortly thereafter, it was something completely different, the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker, with the doubling of the take of the PST [provincial sales tax], an incredibly hard hit to construction labour, to construction companies, to industry and jobs across Saskatchewan, to our economy, Mr. Speaker.

Of course we saw permits plummet as a result, Mr. Speaker. We saw thousands of tradespeople, skilled tradespeople in this

province that had to leave their professions. Sadly far too many of those had to leave the province, Mr. Speaker, and now here we are with a shortage of labour once again, Mr. Speaker. A government that acted in a short-sighted way, Mr. Speaker, that took the jobs of Saskatchewan people away from them, and sadly drove hard-working people outside of Saskatchewan.

And here we are looking at some important projects for our province, important economic projects here in our province, but what do we hear? We hear that we have a shortage of workers when so many of those workers in the construction trades were shorted of the job that they deserved during those times and have been forced outside of Saskatchewan.

We also recognize that Saskatchewan people are facing significant increases to the cost of living. Inflation that's eroding their economic security at home, that's taking away their paycheque, Mr. Speaker, that's putting many in a very precarious situation, many families, many workers working hard but struggling to keep afloat, Mr. Speaker.

And we think of those impacts of those tax increases. I think of the hike around the PST on used cars, Mr. Speaker. That hits the purchaser every single time that vehicle is sold, Mr. Speaker. We've got a lot of folks out there working hard, Mr. Speaker, trying to make ends meet, and I'll say with the lowest, the worst minimum wage in Canada, Mr. Speaker. Then we've got a government that actually thinks that they got to go in for an extra hit on those that are looking to purchase a used car. And that used car is taxed every single time through its sale, possibly 8 or 9 or 10 times through its life, Mr. Speaker. An unfair tax hike for the average worker, the average family in Saskatchewan.

And folks can heckle from the other side, you know, on this front. But it just tells me they're out of touch with the average hard-working household in this province who's looking for the kind of job opportunities that can pay the bills. And certainly sticking them with a hit by way of the PST on used cars is one of real hardship, Mr. Speaker.

We saw of course that government break its promise and stick Saskatchewan people with the PST on children's clothing as well, Mr. Speaker. And again, you think of those families. You know, I think of so many good folks and friends that are grinding so hard in life and working so hard piecing together often two and three jobs to pay the bills. And what does this government reward them with? Well another hit, another cost with respect to PST being imposed on children's clothing, Mr. Speaker. Of course we could talk about the impacts of that being imposed on insurance as well and the impacts for a household budget, Mr. Speaker.

But I said I'd be brief as I entered into debate here this afternoon. Certainly we'll explore the process of how this legislation was derived, at committee. I'd invite stakeholders that are impacted by this piece of legislation to engage with us as the official opposition to share their perspectives.

It's our goal, as always, to make sure that we are as constructive as we can be, focused on the best interests of Saskatchewan people as the official opposition, always looking for opportunities to strengthen legislation or address gaps or of course to fight against bad legislation, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

And that's the approach we'll be taking forward as we work with Saskatchewan people and small businesses that are impacted by this piece of legislation. So, Mr. Speaker, we'll deal with this bill in committee moving forward, and we invite stakeholders to engage with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member that Bill No. 44 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

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: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 45, *The Health Shared Services Saskatchewan (3sHealth) Act*, 2020. Mr. Speaker, I've had a chance to go through the bill. I know a number of my colleagues have spoken to it in adjourned debates already.

We don't have any explanatory notes as it's a new bill, and there's no existing legislation, which almost feels bizarre sometimes to be starting from scratch. Yet despite that, there's quite a bit of heft to it. It's a long read, Mr. Speaker, at least for those of us who don't have legal backgrounds. Maybe some of my colleagues would disagree with me.

In the minister's second reading speech, he assured everyone that this legislation would not impact the public, that 3sHealth [Health Shared Services Saskatchewan] would continue to operate as a non-profit corporation — I do see that outlined in the bill — that it would still be publicly funded by the health system. Of course we know that 3sHealth administers a number of services to our health system in the province, so it's important that we get this right.

In this legislation it will become a public agency subject to *The Financial Administration Act* of 1993, and its financial statements will be listed as a separate government reporting entry in public accounts so that there will be no impact on the

government's financial position and it remains separate and independent. According to the minister, "... this Act is required to properly authorize the relationship [that exists] between the Ministry of Health, the SHA, and 3sHealth."

We will certainly be engaging with stakeholders to ensure that any of their concerns are addressed. I understand that there are some changes to the board that are associated with this legislation, so we'll want to check for unintended consequences there as well as to ensure that there aren't additional attempts at privatization here. As we know, government has clearly stated that that's one of the ways they plan to get out of this pandemic as we move forward with health, which is deeply concerning, Mr. Speaker.

I think I'll save the rest of my remarks and questions for committee. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to let this legislation move on to its next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 45 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Human Services.

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

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 Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in adjourned debates on Bill No. 46, *The Legal Aid Amendment Act, 2021*. Initially I guess my colleagues have talked a little bit about ... and some of them that have referred to and made some comments actually, you know, and their professional work was lawyers. And I noticed some of their comments about legal aid and the legal aid services that are provided to many residents who qualified.

And I've noticed that even in my own office, we've had more people who are struggling with, I guess, needing legal counsel that can't afford lawyers but don't qualify for legal aid. And I don't know, to be honest with you, what the income is that a person has. But I know some of my colleagues have referred to it saying it's either you're almost on assistance and you're at the very end of income, and you don't have any income. So how do you spend this money if it's going to cost you hundreds or even

thousands of dollars for legal counsel if you have no money? You're barely making ends meet. And if you have a family, and yeah, you've been charged with an offence and it has to be dealt with.

And I just, I know watching legal aid system and watching the people that I know even in different communities that I've been in, you know, they do all they can. They do the work that they need to do to represent those individuals who don't have the resources to have legal counsel. And they go through Legal Aid, and Legal Aid tries to deal with them. It goes through the court system with them, deals with the prosecutor, deals with the charges. And it's a process that many people, I think, utilize.

But I'm not sure exactly the changes that are being proposed here. And again, like I said, sometimes we want to . . . It's important to have legal counsel to individuals who can't afford it. So having legal aid, it is so needed. But we have to make sure that those individuals that need legal aid can afford it, that it's provided for them. And I guess it's looking at income. It's making sure that they have representation. And some of my colleagues have previously talked about that.

I'm not sure who all government has consulted with, talked to, asked. And maybe these are housekeeping items as we say, some of them are referred to as housekeeping. But I think at the end of the day it's crucial that citizens, and I realize, you know, have made the wrong choice and do what they do, that they have access to legal counsel if they qualify. And that's exactly what it is — if they qualify.

And I've heard people come into my office or, you know, talking to them saying they're going to court and Legal Aid is going to represent them if they qualify. They have to fill out some papers and there's questions asked, I guess. I don't know the process. I'm just going with what I maybe have heard from people. And they fill out some papers that I . . . There must be in there about your income or something from previous year. I don't know how they do it, Mr. Speaker, but I do know they've said it depends on your income, so there must be some type of threshold on income. Do you qualify? And if your, you know, income's too high, you don't qualify.

But having said that, it's important that we have legal counsel for individuals when they're going before the court. And I know I've seen some people represent themselves in court, and I've heard them say that they've had to because they have no money and they didn't qualify for legal aid.

So that's the challenges, and no one wants to see somebody stuck in a situation where you don't understand what's going on. And sometimes it might be a barrier of languages. Maybe someone doesn't speak a certain language and they need someone to help them and assist them. And maybe that's, you know, a part of the process, to understand the justice system. I know there's many different . . . There's Legal Aid; there's also court workers.

I've heard of people, community people, who help people go try to manoeuvre through the justice court system to move things along. These individuals all do great work, and I know they try to help and resolve on the system and on the courts. The courts are busy enough as it is. I know that. You know, justice people in our communities want to make sure justice is dealt with,

people face the justice when it needs to. But they also say that they should have representation, legal, whether they afford it or not, and I've said that.

I don't know how much more really I have to say. I just, you know, know that there's some people out there who try to do their best, legal aid lawyers and different groups that help people go through the justice system and get through it. And you know, it's up to the courts to deal with the outcome of that. But it's good to say that there is . . . And I'm hoping that when someone is needing assistance it's there for them, when they're going before the courts to make sure they have services, whether they can afford it or not.

So I don't know if I have much more to say on this. I know my colleague and the critic for Justice will have an opportunity in committee to ask questions and understand this file better than I will ever do and give justice to it. But I do know that there is some good work done out there by legal aid lawyers. I've known some of them and they're very professional and they try to do their best. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I have much more to say. At this point I'm prepared to move adjournment on Bill No. 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 Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to join into adjourned debate here on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 47, *The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021*.

The stated objective of this bill is to modernize the operation and management of highways. The bill creates a freedom of passage provision which requires municipalities to obtain consent to close access to public highways. The bill also gives the province the power to clear obstructions in order to improve safety at intersections, and it further enables commercial vehicle enforcement through automated technology. For certain violations of the Act, Mr. Speaker, monetary fines have also been introduced.

The opposition would like to hear in greater detail about why these amendments have been deemed necessary by the government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We would also like to know what level of consultation has occurred with municipalities, community groups, landholders, and Indigenous peoples in particular, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What will likely be of great interest to the public is the section that gives the province the

power to enter private property in order to clear obstructions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've been hearing concerns from First Nations leadership around this bill already. Specifically there are concerns relating to the ability of the province to expropriate land, and furthermore the ability for the province to have the authority to take down roadblocks or disperse gatherings that deny public access.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no acknowledgement in this bill of the duty to consult Indigenous peoples in relation to their rights and interests. This is unacceptable, and it has been noted with displeasure by First Nations leadership. That's what we've been hearing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Just earlier today my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre, presented a petition calling on the government to develop a new framework around duty-to-consult. This bill is a prime example of why this government very much needs to do so.

With that, Mr. Speaker, at this point I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 47, *The Highways and Transportation 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. 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rochdale.

An Hon. Member: — Rosemont.

The Deputy Speaker: — Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real pleasure to enter into debate here this afternoon with respect to Bill No. 49, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021*.

This piece of legislation really draws on the expertise and experience of Indigenous leaders with respect to gaming in our province. Certainly they have exceptional, proven exceptional abilities on the gaming front, Mr. Speaker. SIGA, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, is recognized regularly for its expertise and for the type of organization that it is, its success at doing what it does, Mr. Speaker. That's a tribute to so many of the Indigenous leaders in Saskatchewan, those that have been involved in the development of SIGA over the years and the exceptional administration of SIGA.

[15:00]

This piece of legislation creates the ability for revenue sharing between the Government of Saskatchewan and the First Nations Trust, Mr. Speaker. And it addresses a challenge in the current gaming agreement that would have, in essence, sort of clawed back additional revenues that were being generated by SIGA on this front with the new online platform, Mr. Speaker. And those things are important.

Certainly I note that Indigenous leadership has led the way with respect to this piece of legislation. I want to thank folks like FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron. I want to thank others as well like Chief Reg Bellerose, Chief Darcy Bear, Zane Hansen of course, and the team over at SIGA. I want to recognize Tribal Chief Edmund Bellegarde, I guess former Tribal Chief Edmund Bellegarde, who brings a lot of expertise and leadership to this portfolio. He's taken on some new opportunities, and we wish him well and we thank him for his leadership. We welcome new Tribal Chief Fourhorns to his role and to that leadership.

But, Mr. Speaker, certainly, you know, I recognize that Indigenous leaders appreciate this partnership. And it seems this legislation will consult and listen with Indigenous leaders and with stakeholders on this front to make sure that this legislation is as effective as it can be, to make sure that it's in the public's interest in all the ways that it can be, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we would urge this government to make sure that they walk the path of reconciliation and partnership and consultation, recognize that obligation with respect to duty-to-consult for what it is on so many other fronts, Mr. Speaker.

It seems to me that this piece of legislation reflects, in a better way, the way that a province should undertake changes to legislation, the way that they should undertake economic projects in Saskatchewan. And that's hand-in-hand and together, starting with its legal obligation on the duty-to-consult and working together as partners towards economic opportunities, towards reconciliation, and towards that better future for everyone in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in on adjourned debates, Bill No. 50, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021*. Of course when we talk about safety for residents of our province, it's crucial. We want our residents, our children to

be safe. That's important, and I think it's something that we all take serious in our province and needs to be taken serious.

I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was on a Traffic Safety Committee that we went around and did some work on traffic safety. There was a joint — on both sides of the House — committee that went around and had hearings and listened to a lot of professionals, different organizations, different leaders, community members, families, anyone who wanted to present findings or situations to the Traffic Safety, you know, I guess committee that had went around the province to do some good work. And the member back then from Saskatoon Riversdale joined me, Ms. Chartier, on that committee as well as other members on the government side. And we were the opposition members, a part of that committee.

And they did some good work. And I know we did some good recommendations on different things when it come to I guess safety. And we heard a lot of concerns and families and people that were impacted with impaired driving, different other situations that came up. And we made some good recommendations I felt. And we had our own I guess thoughts, we thought. And a minority opinion I think is what it was at the time — we didn't agree. We wanted to go further on some of the stuff when it came to impaired driving and some of the enhancement that needed to be in and some of the impounding and stuff like that.

There was a lot of discussions back and forth, but I think at the end of the day, the work that was done from both sides was done and meant about safety to take care. And I hope, you know . . . We've seen different things. And I think there was a certain minister that was in charge of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] that got an award for some of the good work that was done. And you know, I'll butter that member up a little bit just to explain. So there has been some good work done, and I want to thank him for his work on that.

But there are serious times that I know we don't want to see anyone loss of life, whether it's someone stunting, speeding, hand-held devices. The list went on of things we wanted to make sure Saskatchewan residents save lives. And SGI, our Crown corporation SGI, pays out a lot of dollars in loss of life, loss of injuries . And it was large, and we wanted to . . . and they wanted to work with I think with the province, with government, to make sure awareness and make sure safety was crucial. And I give them, our Crown SGI, it is a gem. And I want to thank them for the good work that they do, because sometimes we forget about that.

I know these bills, you come in and we look at them, we go through them really quick. But we should also acknowledge some of the good work that's been done, whether it's opposition members, whether it's our Crown corporations. And I've said this before: sometimes we have to make sure when we come in here, for me I guess I want to criticize, but I also want to make sure, when there is good work being done and things that are taking care of Saskatchewan residents, you give credit where credit is due. And I'm not afraid to do that. And I've been taught, and I get guidance to be respectful and try to do that. It's not a perfect . . . I realize that.

But this is a situation where I think we can talk about some of the

good things that can come forward to save lives. And you know, I have many grandchildren, like I said, 17 grandkids. I want to make sure that provisions in there, we do what we can to protect them, but we protect all citizens of course. As they're getting younger, they're driving. I want to make sure that there's laws in place for them as well. If they do things that are against the law, we all need to be held accountable, and whether we're family, friends, it doesn't matter. Residents, citizens, neighbours, everybody has to be held accountable, and that's the system we live in.

So there's some stuff that's being amended in here, and it's about speeding I think, stunting. There's different things that they're referring to. But I wanted to give credit to SGI and some of the work that was done previously. And because I'm on this bill, I want to keep to the bill, and I know it's important to do that, but I also wanted to take the time to reflect on some of the good work that was done.

And again as I said, you know, there's many different reasons that we had came together to make some good recommendations. I say this. You know, there's different speeding, distracted driving. You know, it happens. And if the police see you, they give you a ticket, and there's a process to go through. There's penalties. And you know, we used to get points and merit points, and maybe you're taken away your points. Some try to keep their points up, and you'll get a discount on your insurance and stuff like that, and that's good on your registration, and that's very important to try to keep people going.

But people still, Mr. Deputy Speaker, still go against, even though they know, okay? They know. And they . . . It happens. I understand that. They forget. They just do what they do at the end of the day. But to me, somebody . . . And I've seen commercials with SGI, somebody using a cell phone and a family member, and you see it on the road, and the commercials are, well . . . And I think that awareness about safety is so crucial, and you know, and I've seen the commercials.

And whether it's SGI, government, at times like Christmastime, we're coming into Christmas. We're going to be seeing ads on there where individuals get pulled over. They're doing checkpoints to make sure people have valid driver's licence, wearing seatbelts, you're not drinking and driving, and that's crucial. The drinking and driving is so dangerous when people are getting the wheel. And whether you're under the influence of drugs, alcohol, if you're impaired, there's provisions.

And I say that that's important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we make sure that the citizens are protected. And I thank the police and all those that do the good work to protect and try to keep our roads safe. But if you see an impaired driver and you see somebody driving not right, if you suspect they're drinking and driving, whether it's a friend, you know, somewhere, tell them that . . . stop them. Try to do all you can to stop them from doing that, telling them, you know, you don't want to see them get hurt or anyone else get hurt. I think we all have an obligation to try to do that. And if you see somebody that you see staggering and getting into a vehicle, phone. Report them. Do that.

It's about safety and I mean this is what we're talking about — traffic safety amendments. And these are things that can be done, and I just want to say that for part of the process and how crucial

it is. Christmastime is coming and we want to see families be safe. So there are some changes that they're going to do in here.

The other thing I looked, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in here is talking about municipalities. We know that they put up signs: speeding, different signs that you want in the communities, you know, that the municipality will put up. And it's some rules that they want citizens to follow, but not just citizens of the community. It's rules for everyone that's coming, visiting, because they want to keep their community safe, you know, whether it's speed, different things, no U-turns, and all kinds of different things.

What I'm getting in here — and I know we'll be able to ask questions about this and our critic will when they're in committee — but I think and what I'm getting from them it's saying . . . and I'm not sure if it's good. Now I'm going to be asking this: is it all signs that a municipality puts up, this legislation? When it comes to traffic signs, will it be law and protected under this legislation? I want to look into that and I think I'll get our critic to look. Does that mean exactly that if it's speeding, it's U-turns, whatever, they put up signs that's to do with safety? And I want to be clear on that and get clarification in committee to make sure that it's saying that it's covered.

This legislation will make that where law enforcement can give tickets, can provide . . . even though it's a bylaw or something in a municipality it's enforcing. And I know I've seen that part in here, and I'm not going to say that I truly understand it. And I'm going to be talking to our critic to make sure she can ask in committee, you know, what exactly it is and what it ain't.

So with that, you know, I guess the one thing — it's important — it talks about stunting. You know, and there's a lot of young people, and it's not only young, I guess, it's everyone. I want to be careful. There's even guys, you know, older, that think they want to be young again, so they're going to go and stunt to try to pull some off. It's not a good thing to do, so I'd discourage them to do that. But this is going to tighten up some things where it will hold people accountable if you're seen doing that.

And maybe that's speeding, going over the speed limit. Some people like to travel, and I know, you know, some are guilty of getting speeding tickets, because you think you're in a hurry. You don't keep an eye on the speedometer because you're busy, thinking you've got to get to a meeting or something. Well you know what? You get pulled over, it's a reminder that hey, you've got to pay attention to what you're doing.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again you know, I wanted to go through a little bit of stuff and talk about it. But again it was an opportunity to give the Minister of SGI a little of credit back there that I think he deserved, and I did that.

So with that point, I'm prepared to adjourn on Bill No. 50, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021*. Let my colleagues talk later on it.

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 Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into this second reading debate. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened to various of my colleagues speak to this bill already and have taken a bit of time to collect my thoughts on the bill. I want to thank the minister for the introduction of this bill as well as the comments that he put into *Hansard* on November the 16th when he spoke at second reading.

As has been said already but I'll just summarize, this bill provides additional remedies to a bill that was introduced in 2019 in this Assembly — which I think was very well received by members on both sides of the House — providing remedies, a tort for the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. What we see here are some additional measures that have been introduced I think to strengthen that piece of legislation and also to address perhaps what were some areas that were either missed or have subsequently come up since that bill was passed back in 2019.

[15:15]

The original 2019 privacy Act created a tort that was available even when a person had consented to the original image being taken or had taken the image themselves. Certainly those who have taken those images or have consented may have done so, but not consented to the distribution of those images. And as we've canvassed very well here I think and anyone who takes a second to think about themselves or someone in their family or a loved one — what that would feel like to have those intimate images distributed — I think can understand why this is so very, very important.

Certainly you know, those of us who grew up can remember a time before the internet. You know, this was something that I'm sure did happen. But the advent of the internet and the rapid ability to distribute images right across the globe I think probably — well I'm certain, Mr. Deputy Speaker — has made this problem worse. Unfortunately we even have a term for this. There are websites dedicated, if you can imagine something that vile, Mr. Deputy Speaker, revenge porn sites as they're sometimes known. It really, really causes a lot of damage to the victims of this crime.

Unfortunately there are instances of . . . They're not difficult to find if you search this up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of victims committing suicide, you know, having all sorts of impact in their lives. And for those who don't, you know, perhaps even the threat of those images being distributed, as we can imagine, can bring fear, concern, wondering when the next shoe is going to drop for someone who's had those images distributed or the threat of.

So one of the things that this bill does is expand the remedies and expand the definition to make it clear that not only the actual

distribution of these images, but also the threat of distributing these images, is considered something that a victim can seek remedy for.

It also provides remedies for those who have not only the original image but an altered image. So we've seen instances again I'm sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where perhaps the victim's head is super transposed onto another body or another image even in video. And that's made clear with these amendments that that is something that the victim can seek remedy for.

I was looking at some of the information that's available in Canada, specifically around this offence, and I found a website from the British Columbia transition houses. And unfortunately this is not a rare threat or a rare instance when intimate partners might use this as a tool of coercion. We know financial coercion, physical, sexual coercion, but also as a way to control their victims, either actually distributing or threatening to distribute these intimate images. And as I've said, this is, I'm sure, something we can all imagine could be devastating.

It's noted on their website "Perpetrators may also send, or threaten to send, images directly to friends, family, and others in the community who know the victim via email or texting," or as we've said, uploading to websites that exist for this purpose, which makes me incredibly sad, but I know it does exist.

I'm going to read into the record, also from this website, "The effect of this violence can be devastating, impacting every part of one's life and future." As I said, these words being my own, the knowledge that these images exist would leave the victim to always wonder when the next shoe is going to drop when, you know, they're applying for a job interview, if these images will come up on a search, Mr. Speaker. And they really can be devastating to someone's life.

One of the other pieces that's introduced here is the ability to go back and try to remove some of these images. I'm just going to refer to the November 16th second reading comments of the minister again: "... declare images unlawful and require defendants and internet intermediaries to remove online images." It goes on further to say, "The research indicates that this may facilitate victims' efforts to have images removed." And the minister noted that that is why these changes are coming, to assist victims of this unlawful behaviour in removing these images as quickly and completely as possible. And I think that is the right thing to do, and I commend the minister for adding that piece.

I will say though, and this is where I wanted to spend a little bit of time, just around the importance of prevention. Of course I suspect there could be a thorough scrubbing of these images but that worry, that threat would always exist. And I guess maybe this is an illustration of the law needing to be updated, and this is one form to address this issue.

But I think the other piece is prevention, talking not only to victims about how to avoid having these images taken or distributed in a way that certainly can be construed or is actually victim blaming, but talking to our friends, talking to our children, talking to our families about consent from a young age, talking about the importance of requiring consent.

Talking about empathy, one of the things that's really strongly

suggested here is thinking about the other person's perspective. I can't imagine someone, as I started my comments here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who had the other person in mind, who could put themselves in the other person's shoes, would be able to do something as heinous as distribute these images. So teaching our kids, talking about empathy, talking to our peers about empathy I think is really, really important, having them understand that they don't control other people. This can be used as way to coerce and control. That is extremely important.

And when I think of, you know, some of the online content that I've seen in recent days, you know, even as recently as yesterday, the othering, the dehumanizing of people who share opposing views, dehumanizing of women, treating women as objects really does contribute to that lack of empathy. And I think we have to call that out time and time again regardless of, you know, if these are young people or these are peers, or you know, people in positions of power. Because I think that tendency to treat others who don't share the same views as you, who are not the same gender as you, who have different sexual expression than you leads us down a road to where we can do terrible things to people, such as posting intimate pictures of them or videos of them without their consent.

That starts early. Children as young as one can be taught about consent, about empathy, about their bodies, about being able to express the proper nomenclature for their bodies, and to treat their bodies without shame. And I think again the legislation here, the remedy in the courts is important, but I would also like to see, and I think it would be very effective to also look at prevention and how we encourage behaviour in humans around us where they wouldn't even contemplate doing something like this to someone they've been in an intimate relationship with. I think that there will be others of my colleagues who will want to enter their comments into the record on this.

Again, I largely, you know, think this is important, and I'm glad to see the minister bringing these changes forward. But when we have civil options we should also be looking at prevention here. And I put that out there that I hope that's something that we do see contemplated by others on the government side. With that, I am going to conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on this Bill No. 51. 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. 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 Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Looking forward to weighing in on Bill No. 52, *The Automobile Accident*

Insurance Amendment Act of 2021. You know, I did take time to have a look at the amendments here, the comments from the minister as well as those from colleagues in opposition. And you know, it's one of those situations here in the Assembly where I think there's just a lot of agreement. And I don't think that my comments today will venture from that, so I'll keep it pretty short.

You know, looking at this, this amendment has the goal to ensure suspended drivers maintain insurance coverage when they're attending SGI-mandated evaluation or training. I think it seems like a really good idea, you know, for the sole reason that the current Act is unclear. And you know, I think for all it's worth, that this is worth clearing up. I think we all agree on that.

This is worth having clarity on what is allowed, how these drivers will be covered when there's another instructor or evaluator in the vehicle with them. And it just makes a lot of sense, especially in reviewing the minister's comments to keep our roads safe by ensuring that insurance is in place. And while this might be seen as a kind of housekeeping bill, I think that, you know, I'll stand here and put on the record that I think clarity is really important. And I'll share just a little example of why this might be significant.

Several years ago, I'm not even sure when, maybe 10 years ago or so, I just bought a new-to-me vehicle. It was a used Nissan Pathfinder. I really liked it. I was excited about it. I think it was \$2,000. It was older, had some kilometres on it, but I was happy to own it, especially with the winter drive to school some days being tough on the bus or on a bicycle. It was exciting for me to get this used vehicle.

And I think I had it for less than a month. It was maybe somewhere in the area of three weeks. I was sitting at a red light intersection. And I didn't see it coming in the rear view mirror, but out of nowhere I was rear-ended. And the gentleman who hit me was very apologetic. The next car that pulled over, they knew him from their town. I can't remember what town it was. They knew each other. You know, he apologized, but the vehicle I was driving was totalled.

And I just can't imagine going through an experience where there isn't clarity, where there isn't that certainty. Now this isn't exactly what's included in this legislation, but I guess I'm just speaking to the need to make sure that in situations like that that it's very clear, that the legislation is clear, and that when we recognize elements where it's not clear that we work to resolve that.

And with that, I will say that I am in favour of these amendments. I think that they bring that needed clarity. But I will continue to listen to my colleagues as they share their own insights throughout adjourned debates. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 52, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment 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. 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.]

[15:30]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am happy to rise again. I think my comments will be much briefer this time. I note that my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana, on her second reading speech, referred to making “a silk purse out of a sow's ear” on this one. I'm not sure I can even manage that, but you know, important nonetheless.

This, as the title would allude to, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act* is proposing to repeal a number of statutes that are outdated, no longer useful to the people of Saskatchewan, specifically, Mr. Speaker, the repeal of *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*.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the bill speaks rather for itself. I'm not sure if there's any person out there listening who has a particular attachment to any of these bills being repealed. I would encourage them, if that were the case, that they would reach out to the opposition and let us know. I know that the critic will be doing her due diligence, and I believe that I have done mine here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I will conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on Bill 53.

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 Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet to share some comments on Bill No. 54, the miscellaneous statutes remote witnessing Act of 2021. You know, I think that as we look back at the last 20 months, it'll get to two years here pretty soon, and what the pandemic has been like in Saskatchewan and around the globe, we're going to uncover a lot of things that we do differently now that we could have been doing before but, you know, maybe we didn't have the world that we live in now.

And so I think this bill falls into that category. I think I have said previously about a different piece of legislation, is you kind of learn about like meetings that could be Zoom calls, and Zoom calls that could be emails, and emails that could be a text. You know, we kind of learn easier ways to communicate and do things. And I think with this bill it's about making sure that all folks can be included.

And I think that's what's happening here, is kind of changing some of the legislation that's already in practice. In this case it has to do with remote witnessing and making access to legal services, you know, maybe breaking down some of those barriers that might exist — whether that's geography or maybe that's access or transportation or means or income — for someone to get into the same room as their legal representation to get something signed. I think that this hopefully improves and increases access to legal services.

You know, I think that when I look at the changes here, you know, the bill amends three Acts to allow lawyers to witness powers of attorney, wills, and health care directives remotely by alternate means. This is the kind of thing in a few years, it will be hard to imagine that there was ever a time that that didn't happen. We're already into doing digital signatures other ways that are safe. They're secure. And in this case, you know, I do appreciate the minister's comments that this should hopefully improve access to services that folks need.

You know, with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think I'll say a lot else. You know, I think that there's always a recognition that for me is ... This isn't something that I've ever really encountered, but I think that when we look at new legislation brought forward we have to imagine, well who will be better served by this?

While it might not be my own experience in life, I think it's incumbent on us in this Assembly — all members — to consider who will be affected and to have that in mind, you know, to be mindful of the other, of our neighbours, our folks all around the province, and think, is this good for those folks, not just me and my needs, but ensuring that everyone's needs are met. And I think that that's kind of how I would approach my understanding of this bill.

And so I'll express appreciation for, you know, codifying of something that's already in practice and is already being done in an effort to improve access. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll voice support for this bill, but want to continue listening to my colleagues in opposition, to our very capable critic, as we consider this bill through adjourned debates. But at this moment I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 54, the miscellaneous statutes remote witnessing 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. 55

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the 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 Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be brief today with my comments on Bill No. 55, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act (No. 2)*, as I think I got most of my comments on the topic out in response to the previous piece, Bill No. 54.

Again I think I see a very similar approach to this bill in wanting to ensure that all people have access to justice and legal services in our province. If that's not a value that we all share then that would be news to me. I think that's shared by all members here.

And also just, you know, again reflecting that these are changes that I think in the future when we get to a post-COVID world — and I know that we're all hungry for that — I think that we'll look back at this as something that is just a normal part of life, something that, you know, becomes the norm, allowing for this type of safe and secure remote witnessing to take place. I think we're all looking forward to that day.

I won't delay the discussion on this bill any further other than just indicate that I'll continue to listen to my colleagues in opposition and our critic, and look forward to questions that come out in the future in consideration of this bill. But I will move that we adjourn debate at this time on Bill No. 55, the miscellaneous statutes remote witnessing Act, no. 2. 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. 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 Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter in briefly here with respect to Bill No. 56, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2021*. I've read the minister's remarks as to the justification for this bill. I understand it establishes criteria for the operation of the superior court. Amendments are required to reflect the current makeup of the court and to modernize the court's ability to assign residency. I understand that it updates the number of judges who comprise the Court of Queen's Bench and that it contains new provisions that will allow the court to make an order to allow changes to beneficiary designation for people without designation.

Decision makers for those without capacity can make an

application to the court to make changes regarding beneficiary designations. I think that's an area certainly, Mr. Speaker, that we'll be looking for more information and I know our Justice critic will be following up directly on this front, seeking some clarity, understanding the impacts, trying to make sure we have a full understanding of who's been involved in deriving this legislation. Just certainly that change in itself is, you know, huge in one's life and, you know, has significant impacts. We need to make sure we get it right, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly we welcome the modernization within the Act to reflect the superior court as well as that the reflection of the number of family judges is important. You know, certainly this area of law receives many, many, many cases and it's a very important aspect of our courts. Our critic will be reaching out on this front, as we do as critics on every piece of legislation.

At this point we'd invite any stakeholder, any person who has concerns or questions or comments or insight with respect to this piece of legislation. And it'll be our aim as the official opposition to be as constructive as we can be with this piece of legislation, making sure we're representing the best interests of Saskatchewan people and looking for every opportunity to strengthen this piece of legislation if those opportunities address, and of course to oppose any changes that aren't in the best interests of our people and our province, Mr. Speaker.

With that being said, I will adjourn debate with respect to 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 University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to enter comments into the record on Bill No. 57, *The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2021*. While the minister's comments were quite extensive in the introduction of this bill, I do have a few brief remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

While the minister has noted that it is rarely called upon, he also notes that there were certain losses due to errors in land registry caused by those errors, or perhaps caused by real estate fraud. And, Mr. Speaker, while I know the critic is incredibly well placed to ask these questions in committee, it's of note what errors have occurred and the prevalence of this, and the use of public funds to compensate those claimants, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In addition to some questions around the prevalence of this and the necessity of introducing this amendment Act, Bill 57, I would

be curious to learn whether the prevalence of these errors occur predominantly on the real estate side of transactions or on the mining side. I believe the minister spoke at length about the complexity as it relates to mines and minerals. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my personal experience with this is quite limited, just as a homeowner who's purchased an older home in the past and received certainly both title and mineral rights, right smack dab in the centre of the city.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister also noted in his introductory comments that this was an effort to align Saskatchewan with other jurisdictions in Canada. And I believe, as was questioned by my colleague, the member for Regina Lakeview, it would be of interest to this Assembly to learn which jurisdictions. My experience with legislation and regulations as it relates to the subsurface, Mr. Speaker, is certainly out of date, but — oh, probably about 10 years out of date now — but at that point it was certainly my understanding that Saskatchewan would move changes, whether to regulations or programs, largely following the lead of our neighbour to the west in Alberta.

So, Mr. Speaker, as noted I am by no means the best-placed person to ask questions or do the engagement on this. That would of course be the critic who will do good work and do this bill justice in committee. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to move to adjourn debate on *The Land Titles 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. 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 University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am glad to offer my comments on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 58, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2021*.

[15:45]

This bill includes several updates to our province's security legislation. It prohibits aiding and abetting those who contravene security laws, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This change in particular comes as a result of a recommendation from the Canadian Securities Administrators, and I understand these provisions have been adopted by several jurisdictions already across Canada.

The Act is also amended to clarify that the limitation period is suspended while the plaintiff is seeking leave of Queen's Bench. This change, same as the one before, is resulting from a recommendation from the Canadian Securities Administrators, according to the minister's remarks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the bill further prohibits false or misleading promotional activities in capital markets industry. According to the minister's remarks, securities regulators are increasingly concerned with the effect of electronic communications in relation to the integrity of the capital markets.

The bill also allows for electronic filing, delivery, deposit, or a receipt of documents required under the Act for the sake of efficiency. This sort of modernization is pragmatic, certainly welcomed. We've seen this in some other bills that have come forward as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the changes around promotional activities are interesting, including banning the sharing of the value of an investment as part of promotion. We're going to definitely need to hear more about the regulations that will be accompanying this proposed legislation, as many of the finer details are often contained in those regulations, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We know that misinformation through social media is of growing concern. A prime example of this, we've all seen throughout the pandemic how there's been a real concerning rapid spread of both misinformation, disinformation in regards to the science behind the COVID-19 virus and vaccinations. So we do know and we acknowledge that preventing misinformation is crucial. And so it is positive to see further rules being brought forward in that regard in this sector.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am comfortable to move that we adjourn debate on Bill 58, *The Securities 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. 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise again this afternoon, this time to enter into second reading debate on Bill No. 59, which is *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2021*.

Again referring to the minister's comments on November the 22nd in his second reading remarks, fairly straightforward I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This bill proposes to create relief justices of the peace and administrative justices of the peace, allows justices of the peace to continue until they are 75 years old. That currently sits at 70 years old, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the minister provided some of the reasons for that change, including allowing these relief justices of the peace to continue working and managing court volumes, which certainly I think that there is consensus in this Assembly that is worthy of addressing those court volumes.

The administrative justices of the peace, this bill provides some extra compensation to those who are in this case taking on those additional administrative duties. I believe the minister said in his comments that this mirrors what is done for other . . . I'm just looking in his comments here: ". . . a similar position [rather] available for Provincial Court judges who assist with administrative duties . . ." So it's paralleling that compensation structure.

It also brings in a new transitional section, and this is explained in the explanatory notes with this bill, that this section's required to cover the period between when those amendments come into force and the next commission process which determines compensation is due to be held. And that is not until 2024, so there's need for this transitional period to address those issues.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had just, as it happens today, had opportunity to speak with a community group talking about the aging population in Saskatchewan and the vibrancy of older citizens. And certainly, you know, we can all point to people within our circles, within our neighbourhoods, our constituencies who are not ready to be done at age 70. And I think this reflects, again, the vibrancy of those citizens, of the people doing this very important work, but also is a way to address that backlog, as the minister noted in his second reading comments.

I think that I've probably canvassed all that I have to say on this bill. I don't think that there's much more that I can see here that needs my scrutiny. I know that the critic will touch in and ask her questions in committee, as perhaps will some of my colleagues in their second reading comments on this bill. But I am prepared to conclude my comments and adjourn debate on Bill No. 59.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into the debate today on Bill No. 61, *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*. This is a full repeal-and-replace legislation for previous legislation that was written back in the year 2000, which doesn't feel like it was that long ago, but is actually quite some time ago now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a whole host of changes in this legislation. In the minister's second reading speech, he said that there was extensive consultation with the post-secondary institutions. I understand that this has wide-reaching impact on post-secondary institutions across the province, so I certainly hope that that is the case. I do know that the critic has her work

cut out for her in contacting all of those post-secondary institutions to have those conversations as we always do, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We know that there are, like I said, a number of changes that are being proposed here, which is usually why there is a full repeal-and-replace instead of just amendments that take place. So some of those are providing legislative oversight for post-secondary education and skills training institutions; providing the minister tools to oversee and account for public funds in the sector; centralizing the minister's authority to provide grants; articulating when they can receive money or what they can receive money for, and outlining the processes for providing that money; and establishing reporting requirements and new data-reporting abilities.

We're going to keep a close eye on section 3, "Responsibilities of minister" and section 4, "Powers of minister." I am curious to know why these changes are being made. There are a lot of nods to bureaucracy in this. So I certainly hope that it's not going to make the whole system less efficient, and is certainly something that I hope that the post-secondary institutions are looking for, and is not going to create an administrative burden for them. Because when I read this, I think bureaucracy, bureaucracy, bureaucracy.

So we'll need to make sure that these changes are being made in a good way. We know that our post-secondary institutions are vital to our economy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in our ability to be trained for the workforce. And we need a strategy to increase post-secondary education seats. We talked a lot about just a strategy within health human resources as well. And we know that this is a piece to that puzzle, is making sure that folks are trained, and then we can recruit them and retain them as well.

So we will be taking a close look at this legislation. I know the critic will have a lot of comments and will have many questions in committee. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 61 for today.

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. 62

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

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to offer some brief comments on behalf of the opposition with respect to Bill 62, *The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act, 2021*. This bill allows for dental hygienists, dental therapists, and dental assistants to practise independently. The focus here is on increasing public access to dental care, something that of course the NDP is very much in favour of. These amendments will bring

Sask in line with other jurisdictions across Canada, also something that is important for us to be keeping in line with.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, dental care is extremely important. I know that, as some of my colleagues have already mentioned, there are so many people across this province who simply do not have affordable access to dental care, which it's been noted several times by our party that dental care should not be separated from health care. You know, teeth are a part of our body just as, you know, eye care and other things like that should not be separated from our medicare system ultimately. So this is a step in the right direction — a small step, but a good one — increasing access to those who would not otherwise have access to proper dental care.

So from this we see that not only will this provide more opportunities for patients, but also more opportunities for dental hygienists, dental therapists, etc. We also believe that this is going to increase access in rural areas, something that is very important to make sure that there's equitable access to dental care across all parts of our province. So we're happy to see this overall, but we do need more access to health care generally in rural areas and need to provide supports for those health care workers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, prior to my election I was a representative for health care workers across the province, many of them in rural Saskatchewan, in health care centres across rural Saskatchewan. And it was something that was very difficult to hear from health care workers who simply did not have the number of staff in many cases available to provide proper care to people of our province.

Particularly in long-term care is something that I often heard from health care workers on, especially continuing care aides who in some cases were not able to provide breakfast to residents in the morning. They'd have to skip breakfast, not being able to get people out of bed until the afternoon — just basic, basic levels of decency that we need to be offering the seniors of our province in the long-term care that we provide. So those are, you know, some examples of the gaps and the real shortcomings that we see in our health care system very much in rural Saskatchewan specifically.

I did want to just note too, I saw that one of my colleagues, the member for Regina Rosemont, had made mention of the Allan Blakeney government and the children's dental program that Blakeney had brought in. As you know, we have a long history of advancements in dental care such as the children's dental program. And just incidentally as an aside, Allan Blakeney's widow, Anne, is a constituent of mine, a good friend, a dear friend, and someone who has also, you know, alongside her former husband, done wonders to support the people of our province for many years.

So in closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are in support of increasing access to dental care in our province. And on that note I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 62, *The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act, 2021*.

[16:00]

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. 63

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

The Deputy 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. 63, *The Reviewable Transactions Act*, 2021. I will be keeping my comments quite brief today. I believe my colleagues have canvassed this piece of legislation in some detail.

And I understand that this bill represents changes that come largely from the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, which is a body that makes recommendations to ensure that legislation is uniform across all jurisdictions. I understand that the critic, the member for Douglas Park, our deputy leader, is in the process of consulting with stakeholders on this legislation, who of course are experts in the field. And I look forward to the good work that she'll do on this legislation. As I understand, it represents a whole new Act. It's an entirely new piece of legislation, and I'm sure she'll have questions for the minister in that regard.

So with that, it's my pleasure to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 63, *The Reviewable Transactions 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. 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to speak to Bill No. 64, *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*. So my understanding is that this is a new bill, and that this bill contains consequential amendments to the bilingual legislation necessary to implement *The Reviewable Transactions Act*. And it also clarifies that a remedy cannot be sought under *The Co-operatives Act* or *The Non-profit Corporations Act* if remedy is made available under the Act.

Mr. Speaker, bilingualism in legislation is important. However I have to say that it's important that that legislation is clear and

concise to ensure the correct remedies are being used. When we think about bilingualism, you know, here in Saskatchewan, in Canada, you have French and English. And I know in Saskatchewan here we have many Indigenous communities, and Cree is quite . . . Many folks in Saskatchewan speak Cree, so that would be also quite interesting to find out if other stakeholders, including the Indigenous community, may have some input in this to incorporate their Indigenous languages into some of the legislation that we have.

Having said that, I'm in favour of moving this forward to the normal processes. With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 64, *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*. miigwech.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate again today, this time on Bill No. 65, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2021*.

I suppose I was somewhat surprised to learn that the salaries of judges are legislated, but I don't know why I was surprised by that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we have legislation for so many different things across this province and it makes sense that we would want to make sure that this is a standardized and expected process.

So I understand that this legislation is implementing recommendations that have been made by the 2020 Provincial Court Commission on setting the salaries of Provincial Court judges as a 95 per cent fixed percentage amount of the salary that the federal Queen's Bench judges receive. I think it's a four-year process, so this will ensure that there's a set salary for the next three years. As I mentioned, they set that at 95 per cent. The rationale that has been provided here is that this will streamline the process, create additional efficiencies, and remove some of the uncertainty and complexity that exists in the commission process.

So it certainly sounds like it is a good move when you're looking at efficiency, but we will be watching closely to make sure that there are no unintended consequences of this legislation. We know that it's important that there is independence of the judiciary from executive government and that we have that impartiality. And we know our justice system is overburdened as it is, and anything we can do to lighten the load on the system certainly seems to make sense.

I know that my colleagues and the critic will have more that they want to weigh in on here, but with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 65 for today.

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. 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 67, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021*. The amendments that are in this bill will provide enhanced protection from liability to individuals and organizations who comply with the applicable public health orders, and it also provides clarified liability protection for the Crown and its agents against COVID-related litigation.

This legislation is welcomed. I'm pleased to see this. With the increase of unfounded threats of litigation against health care workers and organizations, this is a welcomed, a welcomed bill. Those that are out there obeying public health orders and acting in good faith should not have to deal with the stress of litigation. Unfortunately there is so much misinformation and polarization, but the government has a role to play in this. We need more clear and concise messaging from this government and more needs to be focused on educating the public.

You know, let me talk about this, educating the public. Today during QP [question period] I was asking about the duty-to-consult and in the gallery were many leaders from First Nation communities and also the FSIN. And we were being educated on duty-to-consult. And I had a look over to the gallery and looked at my First Nation relatives sitting up there and I thought wow, we are being schooled on duty-to-consult. Education is being provided to us about education. And I thought, you know what? Since time immemorial, First Nations people, the first peoples of this province, of this country, have been educating settlers. So when I heard today about being schooled and educated on duty-to-consult, I thought, you know what? Where we need education and the same language is on bills like this, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act*. That's where we need clarity. That's where we need education. That is where public need education on. And there needs to be more of a focused conversation about educating on public health, not educating Indigenous people about duty-to-consult, because we know what duty-to-consult is.

So with that, I won't say very much anymore on this. I'm sure my colleagues would have more to say. And I guess the only thing I would add to this is that it would be good to hear from the stakeholders that are going to be impacted by this. You know, the health care workers, where are they at? And I'm certainly in

favour of moving this, allowing this process to continue on to the next stages so that this can be passed.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 67, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021*. miigwech.

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. 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again I'm on my feet to offer my thoughts on Bill No. 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021*. So the amendment would give the maintenance enforcement office the discretion to commence enforcement proceedings after a payee is one month in arrears. This will be for instances in which a payer has defaulted on payments more than once in bad faith.

These changes are in response to some withholding payments for up to three months and only making minimum payments to avoid enforcement. The fact that this legislation had to be amended to combat abuse is very troubling and very disheartening. However I am happy to see that something is being done. Families should not have to undergo the financial stress and burden that this abuse causes.

I think about the many single parents out there that have maintenance enforcement in place and in particular those that are on, whether it's the social assistance, where they get their maintenance docked off their living . . . And they're often women that have to go without, their babies have to go without. I've seen too many people, too many women — single women, single parents — where they're wanting their child maintenance to come forward, and it's not happening. And it's their babies that suffer. And family law matters can be extremely hard on families and especially those single parents that are on low, low income.

So I'm really pleased that this government is taking measures to protect the most vulnerable, the ones that are intentionally ignored. So I'm grateful to see this. And I would hope that more of the families that are being impacted by maintenance orders are consulted so that we can take stronger measures to help them, to ease the suffering that they are going through.

[16:15]

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm in favour of this amendment, and I would like to see this proceed and continue on. And I'm sure the

critic for this area would have more questions to ask. However having said that, what I would like to do is move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2021*. miigwech.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into debate on Bill No. 69, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act, 2021*. I understand that this is legislation that would eliminate the requirement that copies of support orders from other jurisdictions have to be certified before they can be filed in a Saskatchewan court. Similarly this piece of legislation will eliminate the requirement that Saskatchewan orders have to be certified before they can be filed in other jurisdictions. The Act also provides, or would provide, the amendments would provide for the transmission of other documents via electronic means.

So in summation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a piece of legislation that would reduce some of the red tape around registering and collecting on support orders when they have an interjurisdictional element, which in general are changes that the opposition likely welcome.

As a legal aid lawyer, I did have the opportunity to work in the family law field, particularly with low-income people, particularly around when children were involved, as that was the eligibility criteria for being eligible for legal aid. And changes that simplify the ability to collect on these orders are in the public interest. I did have an opportunity to speak to maintenance orders, the legislation being proposed around maintenance orders yesterday, and I think it bears repeating some of the comments I made around that legislation, as it impacts the legislation that's coming before us today as well.

I'm sure the other members saw that we've just received some updated numbers on child poverty rates in Saskatchewan. We have 26 per cent of our children across this wealthy, great province living in poverty. That's one in four. It's absolutely shameful, well above the national average, and it's an issue that's been on our radar for a while. And it's an issue that has been paid so much lip service by this government, and it is just unacceptable that we are where we are today.

And yesterday . . . You know, the other side likes to snip at us that all we do is criticize, we're not propositional, which isn't

true. But one of the things I spoke about yesterday is an initiative we've seen in other jurisdictions, whereby low-income people don't get their child support payments clawed back from their social assistance payments.

I know that in British Columbia, and I'm sure that there are other jurisdictions, if you're eligible for social assistance and you successfully obtain a child support order, you'll receive that money in addition to your full amount of social assistance. And that makes sense because child support orders are for the child. And this would be of no extra cost to the good taxpayers of Saskatchewan. This is money that parents have been deemed to be on the hook for by the courts, based on their incomes.

And this current practice of clawing back child support orders are setting low-income people back even further, and in particular women, because we know that the vast majority of low-income households are led by lone-parent households, and the vast majority of lone-parent households are led by women.

So in summary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government is not doing nearly enough to support low-income people across this province. We hear a lot of crass, individualistic rhetoric from this government which seems to suggest that, you know, poor people are poor because they're lazy or it's their choices or it's their fault or they're not ready to accept help.

But I haven't really heard a compelling explanation around the fact that we have sentenced one in four children in this province to living in poverty. And it's not something we heard about in the Speech from the Throne. It's not something that they get up and talk about at all. But it's something that will cost us fiscally, socially for generations if we don't get at the heart of this issue.

So here I am just proposing one small change that could have a big impact on low-income households — allow child support orders to be collected in addition to whatever folks are eligible for, based on assistance. With that, it's a pleasure to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 69, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders 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. 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's very much my pleasure to stand here today and speak on this particular Bill No. 70, *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021*. And I do that acknowledging my great privilege, my parliamentary privilege to be able to stand in this Assembly,

speak to a bill which is going to have very significant implications for how we conduct our business here in the people's House.

As members of the Legislative Assembly, we are here as elected representatives of the people that we serve. We do that with great solemnity and full recognition that with those privileges also come risks to personal security potentially. And that is why there is a Sergeant-at-Arms that is here to preside and ensure the protection of all members — all members — of this Assembly overseen by the Hon. Speaker of the House, a non-partisan role, a role that is intended to act and take a solemn oath of impartiality to ensure that all members are treated fairly and equally, that their parliamentary privileges are protected.

And so that when we show up to the House and our dear children try to call us while we're in the House . . . Oh, I can't even get that to quiet down. My apologies. Someone take that from me. Just as a little explanation there, that's my youngest daughter who's calling me all the way from Australia. She's working in Australia, and she counts on her mother to stay safe . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . There are rules, absolutely. I wasn't expecting to be up on the floor this soon so I had taken my phone off mute to receive that call, and now she's going to be wondering why I didn't pick up.

At any rate, that all aside, I was talking about the role that we all play. And I would appreciate not being heckled and interrupted as I'm speaking. Thank you very much, members opposite. I was speaking about how . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I'll have the phone leave the Chamber please. Thank you.

Ms. Ritchie: — My sincere apologies, Mr. Speaker. As I say, you know there's times when duty calls. As parents, I'm sure we can all appreciate that. But I was speaking about our duties as members of this legislature, and it's kind of an ironic interruption.

And I was saying that when we enter this building, when we enter this precinct to do the work of representing the people, that it's so important that we know that we are doing it in a safe space, that those who are charged with providing that protection have adequate resources and authority to carry out their role, that reporting relationships are clear, that they're logical, that they're impartial in their design and their function.

And it comes as no surprise because you've heard us say it already here, both in this Assembly . . . You've heard us say this in front of the media and elsewhere. We are very concerned about the precedent that this legislation is proposing, the traditions that it is breaking, the trust as well, that it is all so damaging.

We as legislatures at times try to work collaboratively on matters that are of a legislative nature. And I think in the manner in which this particular bill has come forward, the way that it was sprung out of nowhere with practically no notification or ability to discuss it, as has been the tradition in the past . . . And I'll get into that later as well, of course. But there is parliamentary tradition and procedure that precedes the introduction of this bill that quite frankly, I am very disappointed has been broken with the introduction of this bill.

And in the time that I have here, I'm going to give you a little bit of an overview of what I want to cover, starting off by, you know, providing a bit of an overview of what is in the bill and a bit of a summary. I don't want to have to, you know, retread old ground that was very ably and thoroughly covered by the Justice critic, the member for Regina Douglas Park.

And then I want to speak specifically to some of the arguments that the Justice minister — some of the flimsy arguments, I would say, that the Justice minister has put forward, both when presenting the bill, responding to questions here in the Assembly, as well as in the media.

[16:30]

And I think what you'll come to appreciate and I'm sure all agree with me, that the basis for this bill is lacking in justification. And it's really failing to make any substantive case for revising the current structure, and really is a case of throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Anyways, more about that later.

But I will argue that, instead of enhancing security for the legislature — for the members, all of us, for the staff and the guests — that it's a reckless, reckless attempt to centralize control within the executive function and squash Charter right freedoms, such as a right to assemble and peacefully protest.

I think that there's a bait and switch that is being pursued here, and I find that really troubling. I find that really disturbing. And I think it says a lot of very disturbing things about where we are right now at this time in Saskatchewan, when we're dealing with a pandemic and a government that has refused to listen to experts and provide steady leadership and governance at a time when we so desperately need it. And now they've become unhinged, quite frankly.

And I don't know, and maybe this is part of the question. Is this a form of destruction? Is that why this bill has been introduced at this time? Is it meant to put us on to matters that, while of course important, it's being done in such a way that it, you know, takes the focus away from other very important matters? Is that what's going on? Or is it the case that it is an attempt at overreach and the centralization of control?

And you know, rather than taking upon measures that would improve upon something that has already been in place and functioning very satisfactorily for a very long time, it's attempting to scrap that system in a way that is very disrespectful, not only to other members of the legislature here by going against the process, the long-standing process that has been in place in terms of dealing with security matters through the Board of Internal Economy, but also the disrespectful nature of it towards our Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff in the unreserved, undying, dedicated support that they have been offering to us as members for decades. And so it really is an affront and an insult to our Sergeant-at-Arms.

Anyways I mean that's a lot as a bit of an introduction so, my goodness, we can only imagine where I'm going to go from here because that was just my first volley.

On to the next, I guess. Okay, so now you're all probably wondering, well what is this bill all about that she's going on and

on about? So let me get to that next. So this bill is seeking to change the jurisdiction that the Sergeant-at-Arms presides over from what was passed in 2019. And essentially it turns the Sergeant-at-Arms' role into a ceremonial one where they will only have jurisdiction for the floor of the Assembly.

I think we can appreciate that that aspect of this bill was covered well by the member for Regina Douglas Park in terms of what that means in terms of the very constrained environment under which the Sergeant-at-Arms would now be responsible for, the fact that it doesn't include the galleries; it doesn't include the hallways outside the Assembly floor or the lounges. And it creates a lot of questions, you know, structurally, in terms of just the layout of this building and how security will be able to function in this very, very limited fashion which that legislation is proposing.

So this definition of the precinct is a very fundamental feature of this bill. It leaves many unanswered questions about how things will function outside of this space through the creation of a new role, a role that is reportable to the Minister for Corrections and police services, which of course then also brings up the next issue which is that reporting relationship.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. I do want to continue on with a little more of a description first. So as I say, this bill would create a new security force for the building and surrounding space that would report to the Minister of Corrections. And that leaves us very concerned about, you know, what the role of the Board of Internal Economy will be in this new framework. So the security of this building, regardless of which party you belong to or, you know, who is in government at this particular time, is a matter that should be discussed at the BOIE [Board of Internal Economy].

And it's quite disturbing when asked of the minister why we needed to make these kind of changes, you know, we haven't been able to get a straightforward answer — anything that's coherent, logical, that makes any kind of a sense — and raises many questions in our minds about what really is going on here.

So I guess now what it means is that we're going to divide the Legislative Assembly into two parts. We'll have the legislative precinct, which will be the floor of the Assembly. And then everything else that used to be part of the precinct will now be part of this district, and that will be overseen by a director of Legislative Protective Service reporting to the Minister Responsible for Policing.

And so there has been long-standing parliamentary custom that the precincts of parliament are protected by the Assembly through the Speaker. And it's raising a very significant question for us in terms of why this custom is being breached.

And it also raises a question about, you know, what is going to be the cost structure for the creation of this new director and the service and the reporting relationships. I mean the legislation is saying that they're going to be co-operating, but I think that it's . . . If indeed it is the case, as the Minister for Policing has indicated, is that we're seeing, you know, a changing world with increasing security threats, then why are you introducing a bill that's going to create more uncertainty and risk, diminishing the effectiveness of the security service that's being provided? A

very disturbing question in our minds.

And also what's been very disturbing is how, when asked for evidence of . . . Well you know, the world is changing. You know, what has been the nature of the threats that we've been seeing here? She wasn't able to answer the question. She didn't answer it in question period. She wasn't able to ask it in the media scrums. I mean, certainly of course issues around security are ones that oftentimes need to be taken in camera, and certainly that would be the function of the Board of Internal Economy to do.

And so, as has been aptly pointed out already by our Justice critic, if there have been real, significant threats, why haven't they been brought forward to the BOIE? Why not? I mean, I'm asking a serious, valid question here. These are not matters of inconsequence. These are things that are going to impact on the safety of all of us.

We know that the Premier now has a security detail, and it's not been brought to my attention why that was deemed necessary. Who else has been receiving threats? How else has security been breached, potentially breached, brought into concern? And indeed if there has been, what is the substantive criticism against our current Legislative Protective Service and its ability to address those concerns? I mean, none of those questions have been asked.

And it's beyond passing strange that, if that was indeed the case, that those matters were not brought forward to the BOIE to be discussed, to be unpacked, to have a discussion around the adequacy of our current framework for protection, to see where indeed those services were lacking or coming short and what might be done about that. And instead just to, you know, scrap that system and bring in an entirely new structure, as I've said already, I think is incredibly reckless.

If those issues had been able to come forward, we might have then also considered the previous reports that had already been brought forward around, you know, proposed measures to enhance security.

In 2014 when there was the attack made on our House of Commons, and all jurisdictions in Canada took a look at their protective services to see if, you know, that there were any shortcomings or any breaches then, you know, those recommendations came forward at that time. And I mean both we saw how the federal Sergeant-at-Arms was a hero. He was literally a hero in taking down that terrorist and protecting the members of parliament in the House of Commons. And never at any point did they ever consider stripping that office of its role in protecting the members of parliament.

And yet here we are, and apparently the world has changed. Yes. Yes, the world has changed, we know that. You know, it's all about sort of the passage of time. Things do change in big ways and small ways and in ways that you've all heard me talk about in the past. I won't get on that high horse right now. Don't worry.

But when it comes to security and security threats and how the pandemic of course has changed the nature of debate within civil society, how it has increased the level of anxiety, people are agitated; you know, they're polarized. We've heard talk about

divisions within our society, and yes, that does mean the threat level has increased.

[16:45]

I can accept that. I absolutely can accept that. But what I can't accept is sweeping changes to the structure for our legislature protective services without any notification of the nature of those threats as has been encountered here in the legislature by members and others. I can't accept the fact that those measures or those issues were not brought forward to the BOIE, that we were not apprised of them, that we were given no opportunity whatsoever to have a discussion on matters of common interest.

And I think this false equivalency that the minister for protective services has put forward to say well, you know, we have other kinds of peace officers, so on and so forth, that add service and we want to break down silos. This is not the same thing. This is not the same thing. We are talking about the legislature's protective services that serve all of us, and you're lumping together apples and oranges when you try to deal with them in the same breath. One of them is accountable to the legislature and those other areas deal with matters of provincial government policy. And I frankly find it quite disturbing that that kind of equivalency would even be proposed, because it's not the same thing.

Anyways, what I wanted to say, though, is that when you go back to 2014 . . . And those were scary times, those were really scary times. I was working here in Regina at that time, and I remember distinctly what that was like in terms of that feeling of fear and insecurity around, you know, were we as government employees safe in our roles. And things, you know, were locked down immediately in response to that.

And there were, as I understand it, there were some assessments that were done that identified proposals for improving security here in the legislature. And it's my understanding that those, either most if not all of those very reasonable proposals and recommendations were never implemented. So they sat there for seven years. Seven years, nothing gets done. And then all of a sudden here we are today, and all of a sudden we need sweeping changes.

There were very practical things that were recommended, and so it's really hard for me to buy that argument that, you know, the world changed. Well yes, and it's been changing all along, and there were things that were identified and yet they weren't acted on. But all of a sudden now we find ourselves in this position where we have to make wholesale changes and we haven't had any consultation. We've had no justification. We've had no substantive evidence for why this has become necessary.

And as I've said already, it speaks to a degree of disrespect both for the role of the Sergeant-at-Arms, the role of the Board of Internal Economy, and a mutual respect that should be afforded between members on the government side and the opposition side when we're dealing with issues of mutual concern.

I also want to point out that in defending the bill, the Minister for Policing tried to suggest that the opposition was consulted. And I can, you know, unequivocally say that we were never consulted. We were notified a couple of days in advance that this was

coming forward. And similar to what the good member from Saskatoon Centre was saying earlier today about the duty-to-consult framework and how First Nations have not been consulted on that framework, yet again here we are in this instance where we have a minister saying that we were consulted and yet that's simply not the case. It's simply not the case.

If we had been consulted, the bill would have gone to the BOIE where those matters are typically, traditionally discussed and we would have had an opportunity to, at that point, talk about these issues of mutual concern and weigh in on well, you know, a whole range of options rather than going all the way to this very extreme measure. And maybe we would have landed on a more balanced approach to the issues at hand, if indeed there are issues, which again have not been substantiated.

I also want to touch on the fact that at another point . . . I mean we hear the minister say one thing and then, you know, the story sort of evolves, and then she's starting to say something else. And at one point in her responses to media questions, she spoke on the need for a jurisdictional change. And I find that really interesting because she very emphatically defended the impartiality of a director that is appointed and reports to that role as being an impartial one. And yet why the need for . . . why change that jurisdictional relationship?

I still have not heard a valid reason for why you would move the accountability for protection of our legislature and the members here, from an impartial body of the Speaker of the House to a member of the Executive Council, who is part of a partisan process . . . and suggests to me that that doesn't have a partisan effect. One follows the other and so it seems to me as though the Minister for Corrections was almost admitting to that when she talked about a jurisdictional change.

And I'll just go back to what I was saying a moment ago about what I see as a very disturbing false equivalency between how members of the legislature, the function of this body, this Assembly, and its need to be able to govern itself have autonomy and independence. And it's a disturbing power grab. It really is.

So I also found it rather interesting as, again, as I was reviewing some of the remarks from the media. And one of the headlines read "Few answers, more questions."

And I know that some are watching the clock right now, and I am . . . Yeah, I'm going to keep going. Keep going. We haven't had an evening session in a while, so what the heck. What the heck. Well you know, if it wasn't so . . . You know very well that we are not in favour of this bill. And this is an important matter. It's not something that I'm going to rush through, and I have much, much more to say on this bill. I am kind of in a little bit of a pivot, but that's okay. I'll just keep going.

So as I was mentioning, I think, you know, even the media is unconvinced. And certainly their coverage and their commentary on this suggests as much. And I think it's true to say that there have been far more questions around this bill than there have been answers. We don't know what the composition of this new police service is going to be. We don't know if they're going to be armed. Will they be wearing uniforms? We don't know anything about the cost implications for this significant change.

And we even have the former Sergeant-at-Arms on record saying that this is supposed to be an independent body that serves all parties in a non-partisan way. And it defies logic how, with the changes that are proposed in this bill, how that objective can be served with the reporting structure that's been proposed.

We have the Minister for Corrections talking about escalating protests and security threats, and no evidence to substantiate that claim. They're vague, vague assertions with nothing brought forward in the House, to the media, to the Board of Internal Economy to substantiate those claims. You know, but what we do have is we do have cases of groups and individuals who have come to the legislative grounds to peacefully protest government policies, lack of government action in areas of concern, and of course most egregiously, the case of Tristen Durocher who conducted a 44-day ceremonial fast in protest of the suicide prevention bill that was shut down here in September 2020. The government attempted a court order to throw him off the grounds and that court order was denied.

And I think it's not unsurprising that we would be concerned about how that's informing this bill, and whether that is forming the true intent behind the changes that have been proposed. I must say that I think that, you know, it also makes me quite concerned about the lack of respect for the Sergeant-at-Arms and the highly skilled role that they play and by reducing it down to a ceremonial one, what that is really saying about how this government respects the Assembly and this institution. And I know that our time is up.

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Fred Bradshaw
Minister of Highways
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Lori Carr
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Hon. Donna Harpauer
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