



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

## Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

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# DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Randy Weekes  
Speaker



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**2nd Session — 29th Legislature**

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

**Speaker** — Hon. Randy Weekes

**Premier** — Hon. Scott Moe

**Leader of the Opposition** — Ryan Meili

**Beck, Carla** — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

**Bonk, Steven** — Moosomin (SP)

**Bowes, Jennifer** — Saskatoon University (NDP)

**Bradshaw, Hon. Fred** — Carrot River Valley (SP)

**Buckingham, David** — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

**Carr, Hon. Lori** — Estevan (SP)

**Cheveldayoff, Ken** — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

**Cockrill, Jeremy** — The Battlefords (SP)

**Conway, Meara** — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

**Dennis, Terry** — Canora-Pelly (SP)

**Docherty, Mark** — Regina Coronation Park (SP)

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**Duncan, Hon. Dustin** — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

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**Grewal, Gary** — Regina Northeast (SP)

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**Harpauer, Hon. Donna** — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)

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**Harrison, Hon. Jeremy** — Meadow Lake (SP)

**Hindley, Hon. Everett** — Swift Current (SP)

**Jenson, Terry** — Martensville-Warman (SP)

**Kaeding, Hon. Warren** — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

**Keisig, Travis** — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

**Kirsch, Delbert** — Batoche (SP)

**Lambert, Lisa** — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

**Lawrence, Greg** — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

**Love, Matt** — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

**Makowsky, Hon. Gene** — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

**Marit, Hon. David** — Wood River (SP)

**McLeod, Tim** — Moose Jaw North (SP)

**McMorris, Hon. Don** — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

**Meili, Ryan** — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

**Merriman, Hon. Paul** — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

**Meyers, Derek** — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)

**Moe, Hon. Scott** — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

**Morgan, Hon. Don** — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

**Mowat, Vicki** — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

**Nerlien, Hugh** — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

**Nippi-Albright, Betty** — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

**Ottenbreit, Greg** — Yorkton (SP)

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

**Ritchie, Erika** — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

**Ross, Alana** — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)

**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

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

**Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel** — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

**Deputy Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyk

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

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## CONTENTS

### TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker.....	1571
------------------	------

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hindley.....	1571
Mowat.....	1571
Morgan.....	1571
Beck.....	1571
Bonk.....	1572
Love.....	1572
Skoropad.....	1572
Wotherspoon.....	1573
Wyant.....	1573
Sarauer.....	1573
Cockrill.....	1573
Carr.....	1573
Conway.....	1573

#### PRESENTING PETITIONS

Young, A.....	1573
Conway.....	1574
Ritchie.....	1574

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Future Nation of Saskatchewan	
Conway.....	1574
Regina Police Awarded Exemplary Service Medals	
Fiaz.....	1575
Saskatoon Neighbourhood Rallies Against Islamophobia	
Love.....	1575
Remembering Donald Stewart McKercher	
Wyant.....	1575
Donors Contribute to Globe Theatre Redevelopment	
Meyers.....	1575
Virtual Health Care Provides Safe and Convenient Access	
Hargrave.....	1576
Government Investment in Rural Health Care	
Ottenbreit.....	1576

#### QUESTION PERIOD

Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic	
Meili.....	1576
Merriman.....	1576
Leadership Changes at Saskatchewan Health Authority	
Mowat.....	1579
Merriman.....	1579
Provision of Security at Legislative Building	
Sarauer.....	1580
Tell.....	1580

#### POINT OF ORDER

Harrison, J.....	1581
Meili.....	1581

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 607 — <i>The Public Participation Act</i>	
Sarauer.....	1581
Bill No. 608 — <i>The Protecting a Woman's Right to Access Abortion Services Act</i>	
Bowes.....	1581

#### MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Commendation for Conversion Therapy Ban	
Conway.....	1582
Wyant.....	1582

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Ottenbreit.....	1583
-----------------	------

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### SECOND READINGS

<b>Bill No. 75 — <i>The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2021/Loi de 2021 sur les organisations sans but lucratif</i></b>	
Wyant.....	1583
Sarauer .....	1583
<b>Bill No. 76 — <i>The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021</i></b>	
Wyant.....	1584
Sarauer .....	1585

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

<b>Bill No. 46 — <i>The Legal Aid Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
Beck.....	1586
<b>Bill No. 47 — <i>The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
Wotherspoon .....	1588
<b>Bill No. 49 — <i>The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
Vermette .....	1591
<b>Bill No. 50 — <i>The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
Mowat .....	1592
<b>Bill No. 51 — <i>The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
Bowes .....	1595
<b>Bill No. 52 — <i>The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
Vermette .....	1596
<b>Bill No. 53 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2021</i></b>	
Conway .....	1598
<b>Bill No. 54 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021</i></b>	
<b><i>Loi modificative diverse (attestation instrumentaire à distance) de 2021</i></b>	
Conway .....	1599
<b>Bill No. 55 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)</i></b>	
Mowat .....	1600

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**The Speaker:** — According to provisions of section 14.1 of *The Provincial Auditor Act*, I am tabling the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan's 2021 report volume 2.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I have a couple of introductions to make here this afternoon.

First of all, I would like to introduce some of the folks who have joined us here today from the Saskatoon Paramedic Association. And I've only got a handful of names here. There may be others who are in the Speaker's gallery as well today, but joining us today are Paul Hills, Lloyd Zwack, and Aron Gidluck.

And I'll have the opportunity to meet with those individuals a little bit later today. I've had the chance to talk to them on several occasions about some of the issues with respect to EMS [emergency medical services] services not only in our urban centres but across this province. And I always appreciate their advocacy and their openness and the direct line of communication that we have when discussing some of these issues. So I'd like to ask all members of this Assembly to welcome them to the legislature.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery we have a couple of staff that both the Minister of Health and myself share in our office that are joining us in the gallery today. And they've given me the difficult names to pronounce. I hope I get these right, and I apologize in advance if I miss this: Hillary Pachal, who works in our office and is, I understand it, is from Yorkton originally, has family in and around there. She's an outstanding baker, Mr. Speaker. We've had the opportunity, the Minister of Health and myself, to sample some of her wares. And she is fantastic in that and just doing great work in our offices.

And in addition to joining Hillary is also Angela Pasiechnyk who recently joined our office on the front lines, answering the phones and helping out and just doing fantastic work for us. Angela is from, I believe, Winnipeg originally, and so always glad to have a Winnipeg import come to Saskatchewan, and appreciate her and the great work she does as part of our team. So to you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I'd ask members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the minister opposite in welcoming Hillary and

Angela, the staff from the ministers' offices, here today. We know that many of our constituency offices, constituency assistants end up having a lot of conversations with these folks in seeking the support, as well as support for constituents across the province. So thank you to these staff members for the work that they do day in and day out to serve our province.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming the Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Association here today. I know that a few other members will want to join in as well, but we had an opportunity to meet earlier this morning. It's always good to hear the concerns that are on their minds as they put themselves into harm's way to protect the rest of us. One of our colleagues said, as the rest of us are running out of buildings, you're running into them. You know, on the front lines of serious accidents, providing that initial first-responder care in many situations. You know, a ton of respect and hats off to these folks, and welcome to your Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation].

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce in your gallery today Tom Lukiwski who is, or was, the Conservative Member of Parliament for Regina-Lake Centre from 2004 to 2015 and later on Moose Jaw-Lake Centre-Lanigan from 2015 to '21. The polite media refers to his ability to filibuster. His colleagues say Tom's a good time-waster.

I first met Tom when he was executive director of the Progressive Conservative Party, going back into the 1980s. He was the first executive director of the Saskatchewan Party in the 1990s, which was some challenging time. He spent a lot of time running around getting signatures for forms for founding members, getting constitutions in place, working with wayward members that were or were not going to be part of the coalition, occasionally scrambling around to make sure there was money to meet the payroll.

Mr. Speaker, I worked with him during those days and was a huge fan of the work that he did. He had a commitment to building a coalition that would make the Saskatchewan Party a long-term, viable party that was absolutely committed to keeping the NDP [New Democratic Party] in opposition. And for that I am eternally grateful.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Request leave for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it is my great pleasure to welcome to their Assembly some very special guests seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. With us today

are members and the executive of the Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Association, and they're here for the 24th annual Gerry Huget Fall Lobby.

Mr. Speaker, with us today are Lloyd Zwack from Prince Albert, the president; Paul Hills, vice-president from Saskatoon; and Aron Gidluck from Regina, the secretary-treasurer. Also here today are members representing Swift Current, North Battleford, Yorkton, Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, and Weyburn.

Mr. Speaker, this group comes to meet with us most years, and of course last year, they weren't able to do that. But they were very busy over the last year. As my colleague noted, these are the folks who are running in when other folks are running out. And we should be thankful every year, but I think this year we should be extra thankful for the work that these great citizens of our province do on behalf of all of us.

Mr. Speaker, they're here today to lobby for some basic items of fairness and for safety for their members, as well as improving patient care for all people in Saskatchewan. We see that some of the pieces that they're asking for here, we've heard before. Hopefully now, when we've all had a chance to talk about the importance of front-line workers, and the importance . . . the lessons that we've been taught through the pandemic, hopefully these will be heard with new ears, specifically around utilizing firefighters' medical skills in pre-hospital care, removal of the 20,000 population threshold, and review and opening of *The Ambulance Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all members hear their concerns that they're bringing forward, and I would invite every member of this Assembly to thank them and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members in this Chamber, I ask that you help me welcome Rob Taylor, who is seated in your gallery, to this Legislative Assembly. Rob Taylor served as the Republican member of the Iowa House of Representatives for the state's 44th District from 2013 to 2019. Rob served as the Republican Party chairman for Dallas County in Iowa. In 2012 he ran in the Iowa House in the 44th District and was successful. Rob is also the Iowa representative Chair for the American legislative council.

Rob was born in Des Moines, Iowa and holds a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master's degree in business leadership. In 2018 Rob along with his wife, Christi, who's a physician, took up a higher calling and opened Revelton distillery, something that is of particular interest to all members in this Chamber, I'm sure.

I met Rob through our participation in the Midwestern Legislative Conference as well as through our interaction at Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development, where we serve on the steering committee. I'm proud to call Rob a colleague and a friend, and I once again ask all members to give Rob a warm welcome to Saskatchewan and to our Legislative Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, seated next to Rob is someone in this House who needs no introduction, so I think I'll stop there. But I would like to welcome Dan D'Autremont, a long-serving member, the member for Cannington, the former Speaker of this House. I'd like to welcome him back to his legislature. And just one thing I can remember Dan told me when I first got elected. He said that always take the high road, but don't be afraid to roll a boulder down once in a while.

So thank you, Dan, for your leadership and mentorship, and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join members from both sides of this Assembly in welcoming our first responders here today.

I'd like to also single out just two exceptional gentlemen who are constituents of mine in Saskatoon Eastview. Jared Benson is seated in your gallery. Jared is just an outstanding citizen, a strong advocate for his profession as a firefighter. He serves as treasurer for IAFF [International Association of Fire Fighters] Local 80, and in his extra time he volunteers with me. He served as my business manager during the campaign and currently serves as the constituency president in Eastview.

Also seated in your gallery is a close friend, Paul Hills. On top of being the president of the paramedics association, he's just one of the best guys I know. He's become a close friend. I had the honour of teaching both of Paul's boys in the past, Jude and Owen. I've built a strong friendship with our families, with Paul's wife, Christa, and my wife, Emma, and you couldn't find a better guy.

And I'm proud to call these two friends and constituents, and ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly.

**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 are two fabulous people I've had the honour to come to get to know over the years, Ken and Callum Maitland. If you can just give a wave. Thank you.

I first met Ken during my work as a career development consultant. Ken, who is a manager of the Giant Tiger in Moose Jaw, was always willing to work with the students I brought him through the career and work exploration program. And he always saw the best in those students that I had the privilege of bringing into his business.

But of all the accomplishments, I would argue that certainly being dad to the gentleman beside him is his greatest. Callum is definitely a rising star in my constituency. The involved, mature, gifted, Winston Churchill-loving grade 12 student presently sits with approximately a 97 per cent average and has his eye on a career in law or possibly politics. Mr. Speaker, I'd be so bold as to suggest that we may be looking at a future Arm River MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] right there. Maybe just not right away, though. I maybe have a couple years in me. That

said, it's an absolute pleasure to introduce Ken and Callum, and I ask all members to help me welcome them to their legislature.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to join with the member to call for some change in the MLA for Arm River Watrous, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to meet you and look forward to that change.

While I'm on my feet, I really want to join in welcoming the firefighters and paramedics that have joined us here today — the provincial leadership, the leadership from across Saskatchewan, President Zwack and all of you.

[13:45]

But I want to give some special love to the Regina Fire Fighters Local 181 and President Tyler Packham and the team, the executive that are here today. I want to thank them for their leadership, for their service, and their sacrifice. I want to thank them for stepping up at an incredibly challenging time in our province's history — stepping up and serving on the front lines of Sunset Extending care, Mr. Speaker, this last year, and in so many other ways to save lives and to protect our community.

And the least we could do in this Assembly is to look at the common-sense calls that they've laid forward with particular impact for Yorkton, North Battleford, Weyburn, and Swift Current and to improve services for all within Saskatchewan with an integration of those services. We need to look to those calls and to act on them to make sure that Saskatchewan people's best interests are served.

I ask all members to join with me in welcoming these very fine servants of their province.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to members of the Assembly, in your gallery I'd like to introduce Christopher Weitzel, Q.C. [Queen's Counsel]. Chris is a senior counsel at SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance]. Prior to SGI, he was at McDougall Gauley and then the city of Regina. And he tells me that he hasn't been in the building since he was in grade 2. So I'm not sure things have changed much for you, Chris, but we'll make sure we give him a tour.

Today I'd like to introduce him, Mr. Chair, as the past president of the Canadian Bar Association, Saskatchewan branch. The CBA [Canadian Bar Association] serves lawyers. They're the advocacy arm for lawyers in Saskatchewan and across the country. The Ministry of Justice often engages the CBA with respect to legislative changes, and often suggestions come from those conversations directly from the Canadian Bar Association in terms of legislative changes that they see are necessary in terms of ensuring the proper delivery of justice services in the province.

So I want to thank the CBA for all they do, Mr. Speaker, and I specifically want to thank Chris for his leadership of the CBA

and for his ongoing work with the Canadian Bar Association.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming Chris Weitzel to his Legislative Assembly. As the minister mentioned, Chris is past president of the CBA, a very important national and provincial organization. The minister had mentioned the Canadian Bar Association is the advocacy arm of lawyers, engaging on some very, very important files — most notably, I would say, ensuring access to justice for all citizens is met. I'd like to thank him and his team for his work, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming Chris to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce my wife, Meagan, today seated in the top row of your gallery, Mr. Speaker. Now much has been made by all members about how the spouses serve alongside them, and that is certainly true for Meagan as I've entered public life here. And I wish she was able to join me more often in Regina, but alas, she's a pretty busy lady on the go. So I'd like to ask all members in this House to join me in welcoming Meagan to her legislature.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I would like to introduce two ladies sitting in the east gallery behind me. These are two ladies that work in the Ministry of Social Services right in my office here in the building. And we have Debbie Wintonyk, who is my senior admin, and she fields all the calls coming in and sends them in the direction they need to go. And we also have Jessica Koch, who is one of our caseworkers, so she's dealing with those people face to face. And they just do an absolutely fantastic job within my office, and I'm thankful everyday that I have them there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the critic for the Ministry of Social Services, I also want to extend a warm welcome to Debbie and Jessica. I know that our constituency office is in regular contact with Jessica. She's always very prompt and responsive in getting back to us, and I know I speak on behalf of my constituency assistant when I say that that's much appreciated and we recognize the good work that's being done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for the funding of in vitro fertilization treatments here in Saskatchewan.

I've risen a number of times this session to present the petition, so I would hope that all members in the House are familiar with the contents of it thus far, Mr. Speaker.

Instead today I thought I'd touch briefly just on the importance of this petition. As I'm sure members opposite have noticed, this petition has been signed by people across this province. We have petitions coming in from all corners of the province because this issue matters deeply to people across this province, regardless of their partisanship and regardless of their geographic location.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I also want to talk a little bit about the experience that I've had presenting this petition which is, you know, it's a heavy petition, Mr. Speaker. This is a really deeply emotional experience for many people, myself included. And, Mr. Speaker, I have been heckled while presenting this petition. I've been heckled while discussing the stories that people have shared with me and when talking about things like miscarriages.

And yesterday a comment was made, Mr. Speaker, while I was presenting this petition, saying, well, that clearly there is no issue with conceiving here. Mr. Speaker, if the members want to stoop to that despicable misogyny and callous disregard for basic . . .

**The Speaker:** — Sorry, time has elapsed. Petitions. I recognize the minister . . . Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to be on my feet to present a petition calling for changes to the new SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program, which of course represented cuts and changes that further pushed people into desperate circumstances during the economic impacts of a pandemic.

You better not live  
You better not eat  
You better not heat  
I'm telling you now  
The Sask Party is coming to town.

Those were the dulcet tones that you would've heard from the Unitarian choir not one hour ago on the steps of this Legislative Assembly. Many of those folks have signed this petition. They are one of the many stakeholders calling on that minister to please reverse these changes, these cruel and heartless cuts under SIS.

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 Nutana.

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly against the \$150 electric vehicle tax. Citizens are concerned that this punitive tax sends the wrong message and will act as a disincentive to electric vehicle

adoption.

Presently Saskatchewan has approximately 600 fully electric vehicles registered, out of a total 1.4 million. The provincial government's flawed rationale is that the annual tax will help pay for the wear and tear from electric vehicles operating on provincial roads and highways. This, despite the fact that the Sask Party government has not yet invested in fast-charging infrastructure, limiting EV [electric vehicle] drivers' ability to use roads and highways across our province.

Leading economists suggest piling of this surcharge on top of the 210 owners pay for home charging means early adopters are already paying more than their fair share.

I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, call on the provincial government to cancel the \$150 tax on electric vehicles and invest in charging stations to encourage electric vehicle use in Saskatchewan.

Signed by citizens of Saskatoon and Regina. I do so present.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### The Future Nation of Saskatchewan

**Ms. Conway:** — Earlier this sitting, the Premier spoke to the hopes and dreams of Buffalo Party supporters everywhere with his bold vision for Saskatchewan as a nation within a nation, from sea to shining . . . Oh wait. Announced at a time when our leading export was ICU [intensive care unit] patients, days before we sought help from the Canadian Armed Forces, one wonders how it came to this, Mr. Speaker. Is the Premier finally hoping for his chance to make it on the national stage? Surely there are better ways, because this province has much more to offer the country than cheap laughs at our expense.

Needless to say, we have a couple of questions, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier scrap the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and appoint his new Bill 70 Sask Party vanity police brigade to protect him? Will he finally recognize First Nations as distinct nations, or is their sovereignty something he plans on acknowledging after independence day?

Have they asked Rider nation how they feel about becoming a nation within a nation within a nation? It doesn't have the same ring to it. Cody Fajardo as SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] CEO [chief executive officer]. Better yet, Health minister — now that has some promise. The Riders certainly stepped up during this pandemic in a way we didn't even see from that government, Mr. Speaker.

Our landlocked nation will boast many last-place trophies, the lowest minimum wages in the country, the worst child poverty rates, climate denialism, not to mention a questionable commander-in-chief with three speeds: chest thumping, finger pointing, and gaslighting. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to clap dutifully for the future nation of Saskatchewan.



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

### **Regina Police Awarded Exemplary Service Medals**

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to recognize local leaders from Regina Police Service. The Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan has presented Canadian Police Exemplary Service Medals to 41 of our officers here in Regina. Between 2020 to 2021 there have been thirty-five 20-year recipients.

Mr. Speaker, there has been also six 30-year recipients whose names I would like to recognize today: Sergeant Ryan Ellingson, Sergeant Andrew Puglia, Inspector Audra Young, Inspector Brent Ermel, Superintendent Darcy Koch, and Deputy Chief Dean Rae.

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate their hard work and dedication to our city and province. They work tirelessly to keep our streets, neighbourhoods, and families safe. They have put in the time, effort, commitment, and perseverance to get to where they are today. They demonstrate remarkable leadership, and we could not be more proud to have them representing our community.

I ask all members to join me in thanking the 41 Regina Police Service officers for the incredible work that they do and congratulate them on this outstanding milestone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Saskatoon Neighbourhood Rallies Against Islamophobia**

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, today I rise to draw attention to the presence of Islamophobia in our province after a horrendous incident took place in Saskatoon Eastview. On June 24th, my Muslim neighbour Kashif Muhammad was out for an early morning walk when two men brutally attacked him. They stabbed him. They cut his beard, and they yelled hateful slurs at him.

Just two days later, together with the Leader of the Opposition, I had the honour of visiting Kashif in his home, with members of the Pakistani community in Saskatoon. He shared with us the ways that this incident affected his family, his children, Mr. Speaker.

The people who attacked Kashif were motivated by hate, but in response, the community of Eastview responded with love. Three of my neighbours, Laurel Lindgren, Caitlin Grant, and Michelle Lee-Klaassen planned a walk against Islamophobia. This had hundreds of people march through our streets proclaiming that hate has no home in our community. We heard from speakers Ali Ahmad from the PCCA [Pakistan Canada Cultural Association] and Fatima Coovadia from the Human Rights Commission who shared inspiring messages of hope and love. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I have so much to learn from the people that I represent.

I want to thank Kashif, his family, and community members who welcomed us, fed us, and shared with us. I ask all members to join with me and with the people of Eastview in proclaiming that everyone belongs in Saskatchewan, but hate does not. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Northwest.

### **Remembering Donald Stewart McKercher**

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the passing of Donald Stewart McKercher, Q.C. on December 4, 2021 at the age of 92.

Don was a lawyer's lawyer, a man of great integrity and intellect and compassion. His contributions to the community were significant, including a term on the Saskatoon Public School Board as well as many charitable endeavours. For the profession that he had a great passion for, he served as a bencher and as president of the Law Society of Saskatchewan and nationally through his involvement with the Federation of Law Societies.

[14:00]

For those of us who worked with him as associates and partners, he was an influential and insightful leader and a mentor. He shaped the careers of those who had the privilege of working with him. He was a man who always made time to answer questions or provide guidance on any matter respecting the practice of law or the business of the firm. He was largely responsible for the redevelopment of the Code of Professional Conduct, which every lawyer is duty bound to adhere to. He would never entertain any compromise to the duty a lawyer had to a client, another lawyer, or indeed the profession. He lived his commitment to the law.

The McKercher firm bears his name along with his brother, Robert. It's a fitting reminder to those in the profession who benefited from knowing him. The profession of law in the city of Saskatoon is better for the contribution that Don has made. For those of us who practised with Don, we are better lawyers and we are better people because of him. He is an icon and he will be sorely missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

### **Donors Contribute to Globe Theatre Redevelopment**

**Mr. Meyers:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If William Shakespeare were around today, he'd be very excited to see what's going on in Regina. The redevelopment of the Globe Theatre is turning the historic Prince Edward Building into one of North America's premiere theatre-in-the-round experiences.

Recently the Globe announced that Andrew and Chantel MacCorquodale donated \$3 million to the project for the naming rights of what will be called MacCorquodale Place. Now Andrew and Chantel believe that strong arts and entertainment are critical pillars of a healthy, exciting, and vibrant community. The theatre also revealed Gordon Rawlinson as the \$1 million mainstage donor for the new building to be called the Globe at MacCorquodale Place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Globe is one of 180 projects amounting to over \$202 million in provincial funding that our government has announced in 2021 under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. Our government's investment of over \$9 million will help with the complete refurbishment of the

building, including structural, mechanical, and efficiency upgrades. The project is under way, and when finished in a couple of years the Globe's Rawlinson Main Stage at MacCorquodale Place will once again be Canada's only permanent theatre-in-the-round experience.

I can say that many great things go on there. My kids have gone to the theatre school, and the Globe is one of the heartbeats of our downtown right here in the Queen City. Please join me in thanking the MacCorquodales and Mr. Rawlinson on their contributions to this wonderful project in our capital city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Virtual Health Care Provides Safe and Convenient Access**

**Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Digital health and virtual care are becoming a foundational part of health care delivery. Patients appreciate having this option. Mr. Speaker, at the start of the pandemic the province acted quickly to support doctors' appointments virtually. By shifting in-person appointments to telephone or video calls, physicians and other health care practitioners continued providing safe access to care during a public health emergency.

Since March of 2020, Saskatchewan patients had nearly 3.5 million physician services appointments without leaving their homes. Mr. Speaker, although in-person visits will always be an important and irreplaceable component of health care, many practitioners have found a place virtual care to be convenient and effective.

Priority work is under way on a virtual care strategy to guide the continued development and investment in virtual care in Saskatchewan. The ministry will also be reaching out to the public, doctors, and health care practitioners for their input on how virtual care has worked for them and where it best fits. Regulatory colleagues will also be engaged.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to stay tuned to this important upcoming initiative and learn more about virtual care and what digital health can do to improve our system. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

#### **Government Investment in Rural Health Care**

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the NDP are showing a new-found interest in rural health care during question periods. The member for Regina Douglas Park recently read a list of rural communities where she is concerned that full health services aren't being offered. Well, Mr. Speaker, members opposite should ask their research team to double-check why full health services aren't available in those communities.

The member opposite's list included Carrot River, Pangman, Lampman, Theodore, Spalding, Arborfield, Gainsborough, Bengough, Dinsmore, Birch Hills, Climax, and Goodsoil. Members opposite might want to forget, but residents remember

how the NDP government closed their hospitals — 12 in these communities and 40 others across rural Saskatchewan.

When it comes to maintaining health care, Mr. Speaker, rural Saskatchewan will take no lessons from the members opposite. When we formed government we inherited hundreds of physician and nursing vacancies by the NDP. Since, we've added 4,300 more nurses and a thousand more physicians. Our government has prioritized recruitment by adding more training seats for doctors, nurses, and of course creating the SIPPA [Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment] program, yielding over 190 physicians practising in rural Saskatchewan. We boosted recruitment and stabilized rural health care in the past, and we'll do it again.

If I had more time, Mr. Speaker, I'd detail the numerous rural investments in facilities, the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital that serves the whole province, the implementation and ongoing support of STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service], Mr. Speaker.

But the people of rural Saskatchewan know which party they can trust with their health care, and it is reflected in the number of rural members on the opposition caucus.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that the Premier has switched from losing his patience and making life uncomfortable for the unvaccinated to his new hug-an-anti-vaxxer-for-Christmas campaign, we learned that there are four cases of the Omicron variant confirmed here in Saskatchewan today.

We don't yet know what that's going to mean, but we do know one thing: we cannot repeat the deadly and dangerous choices of this Premier. To the Premier: will he learn his lesson this time? Will he release the modelling? Will he release Dr. Shahab's current recommendations, and will he tell us what's the plan to get ahead on Omicron?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And yes, there are four cases of Omicron that have been detected in the province, but the good news is our testing system worked. Our labs were on top of this. The individuals had been isolating since they'd come back from those 10 identified countries to be able to make sure that they weren't infecting anybody.

Mr. Speaker, I just talked to Dr. Shahab about this this morning. His recommendation is status quo. What his recommendation is — same what we've been saying on this side of the House — go out, get vaccinated, maintain your social distancing, and to make sure that if you have got your first dose, you can get your second dose and your booster shot. This is the best way of defeating any variant of COVID-19. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know that Saskatchewan had the worst fourth wave in the entire country. We know that the Premier chose to put politics ahead of people's lives. There are still some things we don't know. We haven't seen all the modelling. We haven't seen the recommendations from Dr. Shahab. We don't yet know why senior health leaders are fleeing our health system.

We saw dozens of patients flown out of the province because this Premier allowed our health care system to be overwhelmed. We saw people missing cancer care, surgery, therapies for kids. Nine hundred people and more lost their lives. Two more deaths today in the province, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier has nothing to say about it.

Saskatchewan people deserve answers for their questions, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier commit to getting those answers? Will the Premier commit today to a public, independent inquiry into his handling of COVID-19?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad to inform the House that the lowest cases per capita outside of the Maritimes is here in Saskatchewan. And the reason that we're there, Mr. Speaker, is the hard work of the Saskatchewan people going out and getting their vaccinations.

Since we introduced our two restrictions in September, we've done over 270,000. Our case rates have dropped by almost 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Our childhood vaccinations are leading the country. These are great indicators of dealing with any variant that's coming on.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know why the opposition keeps talking about what has happened behind us. We have lost people in Saskatchewan, and I completely understand that. This is a very, very serious, very serious situation, Mr. Speaker, and all the opposition members are just sitting over there heckling.

Mr. Speaker, we are leading the country in our vaccination rates for children. We are leading the country right now. We have the lowest per capita cases, and that's thanks to the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It could not be more ridiculous to hear this government talk about decisions in the '90s, but they don't want to talk about their choices weeks ago, when two people died yesterday, when two more deaths are reported today, where we are still dealing with the fallout of their decisions that led to hundreds of deaths, Mr. Speaker.

That minister hid the modelling from the public, wouldn't allow it to be shared with doctors. The Premier wouldn't allow the facts to be shared with the public. Dr. Shahab's recommendations still have not been shared. There's so much more we don't know. But we do know that this government cannot be trusted to be open and transparent with Saskatchewan people.

Again, will the Premier take his politics out of the pandemic and commit to a public, independent arm's-reach inquiry into this

province's handling of COVID-19?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I'll just unveil some of the stats here to the House. Our seven-day average is down at 62. That is the lowest since August 6th, down 87 per cent. Our active cases are down to just over 600. That's the lowest level, down another 87 per cent. Mr. Speaker, over 260,000 people did the right thing and went out and got their shots. That's why we're the best prepared to deal with any subsequent variants of COVID-19 is because people are getting their shots. Whether they are getting AstraZeneca, whether they're getting Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, or Moderna, they're out getting their shots.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? They're having those important conversations around the kitchen table on why they should get their children vaccinated, Mr. Speaker. Something that this government wholeheartedly supports is those conversations. We'll continue to do that, but I cannot thank the people of Saskatchewan enough for going out, doing the right thing, and leading us out of this fourth wave. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This has been the greatest human health tragedy that any of us have ever experienced in our lifetimes, and I hope that's the worst that we ever see. But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, hundreds of avoidable deaths, thousands more affected by collateral damage from this government's choices.

Maybe the Premier thinks he hasn't done a thing wrong. Maybe he thinks he's got everything right. But even if it's the case, surely he understands that there are lessons to learn from what we've been through. Can the Premier take his feet and give me one good reason why we shouldn't have an inquiry into what has happened in Saskatchewan?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Mr. Speaker, maybe I'll expand on some of the numbers that I've given, reported to the House. On top of all of that, Mr. Speaker, on top of what the front-line health care workers that had been working in COVID-19 . . . in the shots and the vaccination clinics, but also in our hospitals, we're able to restart, Mr. Speaker. Ninety per cent of the people are back in their original positions while we're still dealing with this, while we're still doing booster doses for those over 50, while we're doing the childhood vaccinations.

We have to thank our partners with pharmacies that are being able to do this, with our Indigenous Services Canada partners as well, Mr. Speaker, so we can work on multiple fronts at the same time, Mr. Speaker, to make sure we can get the people the services . . . And the member from Eastview keeps heckling over this. This is very important information. He should listen to this, Mr. Speaker.

We are working on this, and the health care workers that are out there on the front line and through management are working

extremely hard to be able to make sure that they can get the services to the people of Saskatchewan while we continue our vaccination efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's clear they don't want to look at what's happened because they know that hundreds more Saskatchewan people would be with us today if they'd even tried to do their job.

Mr. Speaker, we're joined here by Melissa McGillivray, someone who did her job throughout this time. Melissa's an RN [registered nurse]. Melissa works at City Hospital; she works in long-term care. She's one of many who was deployed from the work she's trained for into the ICU. And like so many of her colleagues, Melissa has done everything she can in the fight against COVID-19, but she's exhausted. She's burnt-out and beyond frustrated with this government. She wants answers, and she believes a public inquiry is required to get them.

Does the Premier understand that if we don't examine his past failures then we're doomed to repeat them, and the people who'll pay the price are folks like Melissa?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank Melissa. I didn't quite catch where she is up in the gallery, but I want to thank her for doing all of that hard work on the front line, for taking up those extra shifts, which I assume she did, as well as all of her colleagues to be able to help with COVID-19.

I will agree with one thing on the member opposite, Mr. Speaker. This is a health challenge like we have never seen before, and the people up there are the ones that are doing it, that are on the front line out there, making sure that the people that we call our friends and family and neighbours are getting the proper care that they can. I cannot thank them enough for doing that, Mr. Speaker.

But what I also want to do is I want to thank the people of Saskatchewan for going out and getting their shots, Mr. Speaker, to be able to make sure that the fourth wave is in behind us. That's why our cases are the lowest in Canada per capita outside of the Maritimes, Mr. Speaker, because of the good work that people of Saskatchewan continue to do.

And people are excited about their booster shots. People are excited about getting their children vaccinated. And I encourage them to go out, get vaccinated, get their booster shot as soon they can.

[14:15]

But Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank Melissa, the staff that she gets to work with — and please pass that along to your colleagues — for everything that they've done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The health care workers of this province have done tremendous work despite the lack of

support from this minister and from this government. No answers from the Premier from one of those RNs right here in the House today, the Premier who drove our health care system to the brink, the Premier who is driving health care workers like Melissa out of their profession, the Premier who is driving leaders out of the SHA.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier recognize that his choices, his blatant disregard for the workers and leaders that saw us through this most difficult time, that his choices have damaged our ability to offer care, not just now but for years to come?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. And again I know the member opposite may not have been listening, but I did thank Melissa and I did thank her colleagues. And I do, when I return those calls, when the members from this side return calls to not just constituents but to their health care workers to be able to thank them.

Every time I see a health care worker, Mr. Speaker, I take time to say thank you. I take time to ask, how are things going; please tell me, I want to hear it direct from the front lines. I'd be more than happy to meet with Melissa to be able to discuss some of her insights at City Hospital, Mr. Speaker. But I can't thank them enough.

They've been moving from position to position, Mr. Speaker. They've been moving out of their traditional . . . into ICU, out of O.R.s [operating room] to be able to manage the people again that were mostly . . . coming into our health care system that were unvaccinated.

The good news is, Mr. Speaker, another 260,000 people have been vaccinated. And they should continue to get that vaccination, Mr. Speaker: first-set dose, second dose, booster dose, child dose. Please get out there and get your vaccination. This is the best way to defeat COVID-19.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, Melissa tells me that burnout among her colleagues is palpable. The morale is at an all-time low. The people are at their breaking point. Perhaps if the Premier had accepted the multiple invitations to go visit an ICU this past spring, he would've understood. Maybe he would've seen the double-bunking, seen the patients facing death alone, unable to have their family by their side, Mr. Speaker. Maybe he wouldn't have ignored the modelling, dropped all the public health restrictions, declared the pandemic over prematurely. Maybe we would've saved some lives. He would've chosen to do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier claims he's listening to both sides. Let's find out today if he's talking out of both sides of his mouth. Will he turn his back on Melissa, the way he's turned his back on health care workers throughout this pandemic, or will he meet with her today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm

proud to report that on our side of the House, the members that form government are calling all people back in their constituency to be able to talk to them, especially those that are unvaccinated, to talk to them about the benefits of getting vaccinated, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly what we should be doing.

Mr. Speaker, they're talking over there about separation of everybody and putting everybody into a nice little category, so they're friends or foes. These are our neighbours, Mr. Speaker. We have to be able to talk to them about the benefits of getting vaccinated.

And it's working, Mr. Speaker. It's working because since we've done our restrictions and our recommendations, 260,000 people have went out and got vaccinated. And a lot of that also is people that have been vaccinated talk to the ones that are unvaccinated to be able to tell them the benefits of being vaccinated.

Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't be isolating people and separating people in our communities. We should be gathering together at this time because it has been a challenging time and we should be coming together as a community. That's what the Sask Party government is all about, Mr. Speaker, certainly not those members over there.

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

#### **Leadership Changes at Saskatchewan Health Authority**

**Ms. Mowat:** — Well obviously that is a clear no, Mr. Speaker.

Day after day, the list of unanswered questions grows, Mr. Speaker, including any semblance of an answer from the Premier or the Health minister on the exodus from the SHA. Again, why did Scott Livingstone leave?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to be able to thank Mr. Livingstone for everything that he's done for the SHA. He was our first CEO in the SHA, bringing all of our regions together and building that community up. Mr. Speaker, we very much appreciate what he's done.

We also appreciate the exiting board member, Dr. Tootoosis, for her work. And we also did have — surprisingly enough to the opposition — a person retire, Mr. Speaker. Because that does happen after 35 years of service, Mr. Speaker, that people do do that.

So again, there is always turnover in all areas. There's 45,000 people in our health care system, Mr. Speaker. There's continuous turnover and we will continue to address that. We have a very capable gentleman, Andrew Will, who is in there, and he is . . . Mr. Speaker, we have a very capable gentleman in there, who has senior management experience, in the interim to be able to make sure that the SHA . . . But I can guarantee the people of Saskatchewan, there will be no impact on anything on the front-line services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — This isn't a simple HR [human resources] issue, Mr. Speaker. This isn't business as usual. The head of Saskatchewan's health system resigned on short notice in the middle of a pandemic. Did the minister put pressure on Scott Livingstone to change the structure of the leadership team?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and very similar answer that I had before. We thank Mr. Livingstone for the work that he did. He brought our health regions together, under the guidance of the former Health minister and the former minister of Rural and Remote Health. We wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours, Mr. Speaker.

But what I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that the SHA is being led by Andrew Will, who is very capable, on an interim basis to be able to bring the team together. He has already made some strategic moves to be able to put some people in some key positions, Mr. Speaker.

They seem very interested in asking these questions, Mr. Speaker, but not very interested in the answers. Just because they don't like them doesn't mean that they're not accurate.

Again I want to thank the outgoing board member, Dr. Tootoosis, for her hard work and her guidance on that. We're looking to replace that individual. I've been told by the board that they are actively recruiting somebody to be able to replace that. But again, I want to thank everybody from the CEO to the board to the front-line health care workers that are represented here, Mr. Speaker, on all the great work that they've done for our province.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — People deserve answers to these questions, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've lost the head of the organization. We no longer have a chief operating officer and the SHA board has also now lost Dr. Tootoosis, one of two Indigenous board members and the only doctor that was left. She explained her departure by saying, "I didn't want a front seat to watch great, incredible people taken out by whatever."

What exactly took out the great, incredible people who have now left our health system, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Mr. Speaker, as I've been informed by the board Chair, they are actively looking at recruiting somebody. And obviously we would love to be able to recruit somebody with Dr. Tootoosis's knowledge on the medical side but also on the Indigenous side, Mr. Speaker. And the board is actively working on that.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't new. We do have turnover at the board level on all boards within the government. There is refreshing, people coming on to be able to have fresh eyes . . . Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition continues to heckle. But what I can do is — not like the members opposite — I want to thank those workers for what they have done for us. They have done a tremendous job in helping us through the most challenging health

care crisis that we have ever seen, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm glad that we were able to pivot from our vaccination clinic back to our surgery and services. We're going to continue to do that while maintaining our vaccination clinics to make sure that everybody that wants to get a shot can get a shot. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — The minister has a lot of experience with pivoting as he evades these questions, Mr. Speaker. When Dr. Tootoosis was asked if the board was under any external pressure, she said she could not answer. To the minister: did he or his office put pressure on the CEO or the board to try to fill the vacant COO [chief operating officer] position?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this is the job of the Chair to fill the board positions . . . Mr. Speaker, I haven't even said two words and they're already yelling. They're already yelling. They don't even want . . . They just want to ask the question. They don't want to hear the answer to the question.

This is a position done by the board Chair, Mr. Speaker, the newly appointed board Chair. And I have full confidence in that board Chair to be able to recruit. This is what the board does, Mr. Speaker, is to be able to recruit those key positions.

Mr. Speaker, we want to get somebody in there, as I identified, that has a medical background, absolutely, and is involved with the Indigenous community. And if we can do that, it would be very beneficial to all of us to be able to have that.

But, Mr. Speaker, again I can't thank everybody . . . Past, present, and anybody that's coming into our health care system, thank you very much for what you're doing for our citizens.

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

### Provision of Security at Legislative Building

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, this government's unprecedented power grab legislation, Bill 70, would replace our independent Sergeant-at-Arms with a security force accountable to the Minister of Corrections. Earlier this week, Pat Shaw, the former Sergeant-at-Arms, told CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation], "I personally don't see what is to be gained by changing it."

Can the minister answer that basic question? What is to be gained by handing security over to someone accountable to her?

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as I have said before, we live in an ever-changed and -changing time when it comes to security challenges, not only throughout our province but also here in this building and beyond its walls. That is why

we are looking at ways we can enhance and improve security in the Legislative Building and the grounds.

Separating the parliamentary and security roles of the current Sergeant-at-Arms role is an important part of this change, Mr. Speaker. A new director of legislative service security will have access to more related resources and supports than what is currently available through the Board of Internal Economy or the Legislative Assembly Service, Mr. Speaker. This is far easier and straightforward to accomplish through these legislative changes than the current process. We believe in security and public safety, Mr. Speaker, and will continue on this process.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, no one thinks this change is a good idea except for that minister and maybe the Government House Leader.

Pat Shaw went on: "I think it's very, very important that there's an independent body there that serves all parties in the non-partisan way." Mr. Speaker, Pat Shaw. Can the minister point to one person outside of her own government who thinks the changes in this bill are a good idea?

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are 2,000 FTEs [full-time equivalent] employed by the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety under various pieces of legislation. So to say that each of these is a partisan appointment . . . disrespecting the non-partisan, hard-working civil servants who work to keep our communities safe each day. Like any other special constable appointment, Mr. Speaker, these positions will be tasked with specific duties and obligations under *The Police Act* and others.

Let me refer the members to section 76.2(1) of Bill 70: "The member of Executive Council responsible for the administration of *The Police Act* . . ." Good grief, Mr. Speaker. If those members would listen up, we might get through this okay. ". . . shall appoint a Director of Legislative Security." The members opposite's claims that this security director will be a partisan appointment, Mr. Speaker, it couldn't be further from the truth.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, it's an appointment by order in council. I don't know what the minister is talking about. And I think those were notes, although given very emphatically, about a completely different question than the one I asked.

Mr. Speaker, we all know who is really calling the shots on that side with Bill 70 — the Government House Leader. He's the one whose name is on this dumpster fire of a bill. He's the one who pushed for these changes, and he's the one pulling procedural stunts late into the night on Bill 70. Will he finally find the courage, finally find his feet, and finally answer why this government won't just scrap Bill 70? Or is he in the witness . . .

[Interjections]

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again the members opposite are being absolutely ridiculous. The minister signs various pieces of legislation. It's insane, what's going on over there. We had first reading of the bill. We have done second reading of the bill. Third reading will be in the spring of 2022. I am sure that the members opposite will be willing to participate in very vigorous and rigorous debate on this bill. We look forward to it, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, the question was for the architect of the bill, the Government House Leader. I'm going to ask again. Will he finally find the courage, finally find his feet, and answer why this government won't do the right thing, do what former Sergeant-at-Arms Pat Shaw thinks is the reasonable thing to do, scrap Bill 70? Or is he in the witness protection program today with the Premier?

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, if the members opposite could listen, first and second reading have been done on this bill. Third reading of the bill will be in the spring of 2022. Rigorous debate will follow, I am certain.

Mr. Speaker, the security services across this country vary in nature. In BC [British Columbia], a unit other than the Sergeant-at-Arms provides security services and still has a reporting structure to the Legislative Assembly. In Alberta, sheriffs provide 24-hour security at the Legislative Building while being employees of the Ministry of Justice, and work very closely with the Sergeant-at-Arms. Times have changed, Mr. Speaker. The members on that side need to get with it.

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

### POINT OF ORDER

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased but also very disappointed to have to take my feet, Mr. Speaker, on another example of these members' complete lack of respect for this institution.

During question period, Mr. Speaker, I would point to, firstly point to Beauchesne's page 618. And I would ask members to quit heckling and open their Beauchesne's to page 618, 6th edition, paragraph 484(3), Mr. Speaker. And also I would point to the ruling of the Speaker on March 29th, 2010, at *Hansard* page 4511, while quoting the Leader of the Opposition who said, the government cannot be trusted. Of course, Mr. Speaker, this is unparliamentary language. The Leader of the Opposition needs to rise to his feet and withdraw that comment and apologize.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I would point to the ruling on November 24th, 2016 by Speaker Tochor, and I quote, "Members are well aware that it is not permissible to accuse or suggest . . . [that another member was] not being truthful."

Mr. Speaker, during question period the Leader of the Opposition also said that a member was talking out of both sides of their mouth. That also clearly is unparliamentary. That member needs to stand and apologize and withdraw for both of those comments.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize and withdraw.

[Interjections]

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

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill No. 607 — *The Public Participation Act*

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 607, *The Public Participation Act*, 2021 be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Regina Douglas Park that Bill No. 607 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — At the next sitting of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

#### Bill No. 608 — *The Protecting a Woman's Right to Access Abortion Services Act*

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill 608, *The Protecting a Woman's Right to Access Abortion Services Act*, 2021 be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon University that Bill No. 608 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

**Ms. Bowes:** — At the next sitting of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

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

### MOTION UNDER RULE 61

#### Commendation for Conversion Therapy Ban

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to seek leave to move a motion under rule 61.

**The Speaker:** — Will the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion. I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The last few days have seen important legislation to ban conversion therapy fast-tracked through both parliament . . . with the unanimous support of all parties.

We know that conversion therapy is happening in Saskatchewan, and I think it's important for members of this Assembly to send a clear message with unanimous consent — just like all members in the Senate and House of Commons did — that we support this legislation and oppose this harmful practice.

My friend the Opposition House Leader shared the text of the motion with the Government House Leader earlier this morning, and I hope that all members would give me leave to move the following motion:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan commends the Hon. Rob Moore, Conservative Member of Parliament for Fundy Royal, for proposing that Bill C-4, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)* be passed through all stages in an expedited way; and further,

That the Assembly commends all senators and all members of the House of Commons for passing Bill C-4 in an expedited way to ensure that the harmful practice of conversion therapy is banned in Canada.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has requested leave to move without notice a motion of urgent and pressing necessity under rule 61. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. The member may proceed.

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to all members for granting leave. This sends a clear message that the members of this House do not condone the harmful and abusive practice of conversion therapy. This sends a clear and much-needed message to members of the LGBTQ2S+ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, or two-spirit plus] community, including particularly the young members of that community. So, Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan commends the Hon. Rob Moore, Conservative Member of Parliament for Fundy Royal, for proposing that Bill C-4, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)* be passed through all stages in an expedited way; and further,

That the Assembly commends all senators and all members of the House of Commons for passing Bill C-4 in an expedited way to ensure that the harmful practice of conversion therapy is banned in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The motion reads:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan commends the Hon. Rob Moore, Conservative Member of Parliament for Fundy Royal, for proposing that Bill C-4, *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)* be passed through all stages in an expeditious way; and further,

That the Assembly commends all senators and all members of the House of Commons for passing Bill C-4 in an expeditious way to ensure that the harmful practice of conversion therapy is banned in Canada.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the government to support the motion. Discrimination has no place in Saskatchewan. *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* provides full protection to all individuals to protect them from discrimination. The Government of Saskatchewan does not support any form of therapy that claims to be able to change sexual orientation, nor does Saskatchewan provide coverage for those unacceptable practices.

Mr. Speaker, conversion therapy is an outdated practice which is not supported by the Canadian Psychiatric Association, the Canadian Psychological Association, or the Canadian Association of Social Workers.

Mr. Speaker, last week federal Bill C-4, *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)* received unanimous support in the House of Commons and yesterday was passed by the Senate. Soon Bill C-4 will receive Royal Assent. Again, Mr. Speaker, discrimination has no place in this province. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the motion please say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the motion please say no. I



think the ayes have it.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 15.

**The Speaker:** — Question 15 is tabled.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## SECOND READINGS

### **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, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my comments I'll be moving second reading of *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2020*. This bill was modelled off the new business corporations Act, 2021 which was passed last spring and represents the next step in the government's ongoing review and modernization of business legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the intent of this bill is to modernize non-profit legislation to reflect the current practices, replace outdated rules and language, and adopt the use of modern technologies. In many instances, the updates are based on *The Business Corporations Act, 2021*.

Notable changes include updating provisions for boards of trade and chambers of commerce; reducing red tape by removing requirements to provide notices and other documents to the registrar in manners that do not involve the registrar; expressly allowing corporate names to be in Cree, Dene, or other prescribed Indigenous languages; and expressly allowing the use of electronic technologies such as sending financial statements electronically or holding electronic meetings.

Mr. Speaker, as with the new business corporations Act, this bill will also remove the requirement that at least 25 per cent of the directors of a non-profit corporation be Canadian residents. This requirement limits the ability of organizations to conduct activities in Saskatchewan that can already be avoided by incorporating in other jurisdictions that don't have residency rules. Mr. Speaker, removing the residency requirement follows the approach taken by other Canadian jurisdictions. Non-profit corporations will still be required to appoint a power of attorney who is a Saskatchewan resident in instances where there are no directors or officers who are Saskatchewan residents.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, in response to concerns from Saskatchewan accountants, the proposed change will remove the ability for the registrar to appoint a non-accountant to conduct audits or reviews. This approach is unique to Saskatchewan and was never meant to become a permanent solution when it was implemented in 2006, and does not achieve the goals of accountability or consumer protection.

Mr. Speaker, to achieve a balance and avoid placing an unfair burden on charitable corporations, the proposed changes will allow for increased dollar thresholds respecting mandatory audits or review requirements. This will also allow flexibility for small charitable organizations to vote against conducting an audit or a review.

Mr. Speaker, non-profit corporations serve many important roles in this province, from supporting cancer research to promoting our favourite recreational activities, such as hockey and snowmobiling. Before concluding, I'd like to take time to thank all our volunteers across the province for the work they do to support these great causes. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of the non-profit business corporations Act, 2021.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved that Bill No. 75 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. As the minister said, this is essentially a repeal-and-replace of the currently existing non-profit corporations Act, similar to what we saw last session with *The Business Corporations Act*. And I had the opportunity to speak with officials for quite a length of time. And I do very much appreciate their hard work and their willingness to sit down with me and answer the many, many questions I had on *The Business Corporations Act* last session.

[14:45]

And during that conversation, I forget if it was the officials or the minister indicated that there would be corresponding changes to, or similarly a review of *The Non-profit Corporations Act* and new legislation coming forward in the near future, Mr. Speaker. And here we are now with the new legislation — a very important bill, a very lengthy bill, Mr. Speaker. And I will be reaching out to lots of . . . to those who are experts in this area and stakeholders, those who practise law in this area, to ask if there are any concerns or otherwise.

The corresponding changes in *The Business Corporations Act* were undergone with quite a lengthy consultation, I do understand, and was met with largely positive reviews by those who worked in this area. I'll be asking to determine whether or not that similar consultation had happened with respect to this legislation and whether or not there were any concerns by those who work in this area in a similar vein, Mr. Speaker.

The minister mentioned in his remarks several changes that this bill will be providing. I will be highlighting just a few of them in my remarks today. The first one is, the minister mentioned that this legislation will make explicit the allowance for corporations to be named in Saskatchewan's Indigenous languages like Cree and Dene. Mr. Speaker, this is a very important step. It's a small step but still an important step toward reconciliation, Mr. Speaker. I can think of a lot of organizations that exist and are named in an Indigenous language. It's important that our legislation keeps up with modern times. I'm sure we're likely to see more Indigenous-language-named corporations in the future, including non-profits, Mr. Speaker. And the hope is that we see

more Indigenous-owned businesses, either profit or non-profit businesses in the future, Mr. Speaker.

The minister also indicated that this legislation will be allowing for electronic meetings to occur. This is a change we're seeing throughout the board in many different pieces of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I believe we saw this in *The Business Corporations Act*, but we certainly saw it recently in *The Credit Union Act*, Mr. Speaker.

This is something that I think folks were moving toward anyways, but the pandemic certainly exacerbated that movement, certainly made being able to meet remotely or electronically a necessity, not just a wish, Mr. Speaker. Again, modernizing legislation is incredibly important, and we need to continue to do that work to ensure that we're keeping up with the times.

Mr. Speaker, the minister also mentioned that this legislation will be changing the percentage requirement for Canadian residency on boards. This measure also came up in *The Business Corporations Act* changes. And I had several questions at that time about why that change was made and whether or not that change was appropriate. It's always important — I think we want to make sure that Saskatchewan businesses remain Saskatchewan owned and Saskatchewan directed, Saskatchewan operated — that we have as many local voices as possible in important positions, including boards, Mr. Speaker.

In my conversation with the minister and his officials at that time around *The Business Corporations Act*, they indicated that this would keep us in line with other jurisdictions, that we were actually a bit of an anomaly in that sense in what we had allowed, and that there was a concern about jurisdiction shopping, Mr. Speaker, which I think is a legitimate concern and one that potentially justifies this change.

But if there are individuals out there who have any concerns, who work in this area, who have any sort of specific examples where this might be of issue, I urge them to reach out to my office and to share that information with me.

The minister also indicated that this piece of legislation would increase the dollar threshold for a mandatory audit. This is very important. Although audits are incredibly important, Mr. Speaker, don't get me wrong, but non-profits work on very limited budgets with very limited person power, Mr. Speaker. And the requirement of a mandatory audit can be quite cumbersome, especially for those smaller non-profits, Mr. Speaker. So increasing that threshold may make sense.

Again I ask those who are experts in this area to reach out to me to let me know if there are any specific concerns that they may have about that increase and whether or not there might be issues that will be missed as a result of mandatory audits not occurring in some non-profits.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to thank those who volunteer throughout the province. I would say I think everybody in this Assembly would agree that volunteers are the backbone of our communities. We've had many times individuals come in to be commended for their volunteer work. I remember specifically a woman who was from a small town, who I believe was battling cancer while at the same time she was the

lead in raising funds for a playground for her community and had raised countless dollars for her community for various initiatives.

Like I said, truly the backbone of our community are our volunteers. There's the volunteer service awards that happen every single year, and I think they really highlight those who truly exemplify the Saskatchewan spirit. But beyond those names, Mr. Speaker, are the thousands and thousands and thousands of other volunteers that also exist to serve our province. One in particular, I think, was mentioned the other day in a member's statement.

Volunteer firefighters who serve throughout the province. My father-in-law is the chief volunteer firefighter in Indian Head. He's hugely passionate about that work, has been doing it for decades, Mr. Speaker. He answers the call even though he doesn't get . . . you know, he's a volunteer. He answers the call at all hours of the day, any day of the year. In fact when Pine Lodge caught on fire — I think it was around Christmas Eve actually, last year — he was there with his team, other volunteer firefighters fighting back that fire, doing their best to try to save that building on Christmas Eve. So I think that really attests to, you know, not just . . . I don't want to just, you know, win favour with my father-in-law, but all volunteer firefighters throughout the province and all volunteers throughout the province and the incredible, important work that they do all of the time.

I had the opportunity prior to being elected, worked for a non-profit in the province. I can tell you everyone who works in non-profits, they're not doing it for the money and they're not doing it for the glory. They're doing it because they care about the community. And they're doing it often on a shoestring budget with very limited resources. And I again want to thank them so much for their dedicated service and for all the work that they do.

I think this piece of legislation is an important part of ensuring that we have the mechanisms in place to ensure that they can do their good work. I believe there's some conversation around making sure this legislation cuts away some red tape and some redundancies. Very important, I think, in the work of non-profits to ensure that they aren't being burdened by unnecessary red tape, Mr. Speaker.

I know I'll have many others who'll be interested in entering into this debate along with myself. And we'll be reaching out to stakeholders. Again I encourage anyone who has any expertise in this area who have questions or concerns about the bill to reach out to my office. In order to facilitate that work now, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this bill.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at

the conclusion of my comments, I'll move second reading of *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill includes consequential amendments to the English legislation that are necessary to implement *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2021*. These proposed amendments are either housekeeping in nature or will implement modernized provisions that will help maintain uniform practices for all business types in areas such as publishing notices and the use of electronic technologies, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved that Bill No. 76 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm now prepared to enter into debate on this bill. And I very much appreciate the minister for providing his opening comments with respect to this legislation. As he said, this piece of legislation is largely consequential in nature. The thrust of the changes, Mr. Speaker, are in the previous legislation that I just had the opportunity to discuss, and I encourage anyone who has interest in this consequential amendment Act to look at the previous legislation that we discussed, as that's likely where the crux of the conversation will be.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister indicated, this bill largely makes consequential changes, but also some modernizing changes, that I think is important to discuss, and it also includes allowing for the use of electronic technology. And as I indicated in my remarks earlier, Mr. Speaker, very important that we keep up with the times. And I think if anything, during the pandemic taught us that there are going to be times when we might have to rely on electronic technology for meetings, for example, more than we care to.

I'm sure we can all agree that we're all sick of Zoom. We're all sick of online meetings, Mr. Speaker. As frustrating and cumbersome as they can be, and difficult — I find at least, Mr. Speaker, that they are — in terms of being able to build relationships and continue those sorts of relationships that one might have, the reality is I don't think that electronic meetings are going away any time soon. And I think, at least in some form, they're going to be a part of our reality, our professional reality and personal reality, for the not-too-distant future, Mr. Speaker.

I know when things were really bad here in the province with COVID and we weren't seeing our extended families, I know my family in particular relied on FaceTime to ensure that our children maintained a relationship with their grandparents. We FaceTimed my mother- and father-in-law, who I mentioned earlier, nearly every single day at suppertime and would FaceTime my mom and dad as often as we could, as often as they were available, usually around bedtime and the weekends.

And although it's not nearly the same as being able to hold your grandkids and hold your grandparents and actually have that face-to-face, Mr. Speaker, it was still very important. And I think it really helped my children, because they're at an incredibly young age. You know, my daughter is two. She only knows life

pretty much . . . well both of my kids only know life during a pandemic, so FaceTime is second nature to her. She already knows what the ding sound means on my phone. She knows that means someone's trying to FaceTime us, which is actually really depressing when you think about it, but it's really . . . I will say it has really helped in terms of maintaining that bond during some difficult times in the province when perhaps we weren't able to spend time with our loved ones like we wanted to, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm saying that because I think it's important that we realize that some of these things that have really become ingrained in our lives are, even once we get past this pandemic, even though we're likely, frankly, all a little sick of them, will likely base our reality for much, much longer into the future, hopefully well past the pandemic, because hopefully the pandemic will be ending shortly.

[15:00]

Mr. Speaker, I do want to highlight a few very specific provisions in this bill. Specifically, Mr. Speaker, they are changing . . . This bill will change the definition of "municipality" by striking out "means a city, town, village, rural municipality, municipal district or northern municipality and." Further, Mr. Speaker, there are lots of changes where "corporation" is being struck out and "body corporate" is being added into it. I'm curious to know if that's the more modern language — rather than "corporation" it's been changed to "body corporate" — and why that change was deemed necessary, Mr. Speaker.

There is another change adding a subsection after subsection 9-9(3), which is "(4) A director who is removed pursuant to subsection (3) is deemed to have not been appointed as a director."

Mr. Speaker, these are all very important pieces of this legislation that I think it's important that we take a look at and we find exactly — because words have meaning — exactly why these changes are made, exactly why these words are being substituted for other words, and whether or not this is language that's going to be needed to be updated again in another decade, Mr. Speaker.

Another example of that is at clause 20-11(4)(a) which is amended by striking out "form" and substituting "manner," Mr. Speaker. There is a change by adding "officers" to clause 20-19(1)(c), Mr. Speaker.

Very interestingly I think, Mr. Speaker, are some of the consequential pieces of legislation that are being changed as well. Specifically, *The Condominium Property Act* is being amended to reflect the changes in the previous bill that I had just discussed. There's also a change to *The Credit Union Act*, Mr. Speaker, to reflect the changes in the previous bill that I had just discussed. As I had mentioned earlier, I think in my remarks in the previous bill, *The Credit Union Act* had already been amended.

*The Credit Union Act* has been amended, *The Business Corporations Act* has been amended, and now we're seeing some similar changes to *The Non-profit Corporations Act*, Mr. Speaker. These are all individual pieces of legislation because they do deal with very distinct bodies, Mr. Speaker, but they do often mirror each other largely in scope.

There's also some changes to *The Métis Act*, Mr. Speaker, which I think will be of interest to some folks. There's some changes to *The Municipalities Act*, some changes to *The Names of Homes Act*, which is a new piece of legislation for me, and *The New Generation Co-operatives Act* is also being changed, Mr. Speaker.

I think all of this is very interesting consequential legislative changes, but I think folks who will be interested in *The Non-profit Corporations Act* and its changes would be also keen to learn about the consequential legislation that is affected by all of these changes, Mr. Speaker. Like I said in my remarks earlier, I'll be reaching out to stakeholders who are interested in this area, who practise in this area, who give advice in this area. I encourage anyone who has any questions or concerns or feedback about these legislative changes to reach out to my office. I'd be happy to hear from them and I can pass them on to the minister at committee.

In order to facilitate that good work, and I know I have many colleagues of mine who are very interested in entering into the debate on this bill, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared now to adjourn debate on this bill.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### 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 Regina Lakeview.

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into debate on Bill No. 46, *The Legal Aid Amendment Act*. I'll start by outlining some of the proposed changes laid out in this bill, specifically a number of housekeeping items, for example changing the term "solicitor" to "lawyer" to reflect current practice, and the "department" to "ministry" again for the same reasons. Further, it confirms the power of the Legal Aid Commission, specifically around the ability to confirm or deny any lawyer that wishes to withdraw services to a client.

In the second reading comments, the minister noted that there's currently some limitations within the Act that I suspect are remedied here, around limiting the reasons for removal simply to just cause. And the minister went on to note in his comments that there are other reasons, that there might be a removal specifically, moving, taking on other employment for example. So that proposes to be remedied here.

Overall, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that makes some important amendments to *The Legal Aid Act*. And I think that there is opportunity for the critic and for members on this side to canvass those changes further and the reasons for those changes. But I do want to spend some time talking about the importance of legal aid more broadly, to the concept of justice, access to justice.

When I was going to be getting up on this bill, one of the first things I thought about was a bill that I spoke to earlier in the week, and that bill being around the non-consensual sharing of intimate images, and very important, Mr. Speaker, that bill. It makes some amendments to a bill that we saw first brought in in 2019, and something that I think there's agreement across both sides of the aisle about the importance of — that and the importance of updating it.

But I noted something that my colleague, the member for . . . I believe it was the member for Regina Douglas Park, mentioned in her second reading comments on that bill, and it was this: you know, creating that tort, creating that remedy for those who have been victims of this crime is important, but their ability to access those remedies really can be and is limited by their ability to access legal counsel.

So I guess that brings a broader concept, Mr. Speaker, about . . . The changes that we make here are important, but the access that people would have to those important remedies can be limited by their ability to access legal counsel. And specifically what we're talking, I suppose in some instances, the ability to access limited by being remote or by location or ability, and certainly those would provide barriers. Often one of the main barriers that we see to accessing remedies such as that or justice more broadly would be financial barriers.

So this is of course the reason or the main reason that we see legal aid services. And I'm always conscious of getting up and talking about things that I know I have colleagues on both sides who are more intimately aware of the system. But you know, legal aid services provide the ability for those who are low-income to access legal services to improve their access to justice.

And so one of the things that I looked up when I knew that this bill was coming up was just the limitations around accessing, and specifically financial eligibility, which is the main criteria. So in this province right now, applicants are financially eligible for legal aid services if they're receiving income from social assistance, band assistance, or the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the amounts provided by each of those programs are very low. We've certainly had my colleague, the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, bring up the very deficient nature of current social assistance rates, something that unfortunately we've delved further into with the introduction of SIS in this province. So we are talking about a very low bar in terms of those who can actually access legal aid services in the province.

Beyond that, someone would be deemed eligible if their financial resources are at social assistance levels. So again, Mr. Speaker, this would rule out almost anyone who has employment. Certainly those who work full-time at minimum wage would not qualify for legal aid in this province, or if the cost of obtaining

the services from a private lawyer would reduce their financial resources to social assistance levels.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are those who are on assistance, and that's very important that they have access to legal aid in the province. However what's described here — and this is where I do have some experience and I know many here will, with constituents, with their work outside of this Assembly — it means that there are a whole swath of people for whom they make too much to qualify for legal aid assistance, but they don't have income sufficient to secure lawyers at rates that are often in the thousands. So their ability to access remedies, access justice, is limited by their income. And that is an issue, and I certainly think it's an issue, but it's an issue that is much on the minds of not just members of the opposition in this Assembly. This is a topic of discussion right across the province and, frankly, right across the country.

Most recently in October we came through Access to Justice Week in this province. So that was in October, and the themes there were around putting public first, this year's theme. And this justice week stems out of a 2016 meeting of the Dean's Forum on access to justice and dispute resolution in the province, which identified this theme of access to justice as being vitally important. And I would tend to agree. I think there are many members here who would agree with that.

I also noted there was a House of Commons report — and I'm just going to try to pull it up here — in 2017, the report on the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. They reported back two parts. The second part of that was solely devoted to legal aid, and I want to read some of this into the record, Mr. Speaker, about the importance of getting legal aid right, but specifically the importance of legal aid in accessing justice. Reading from page 7 of that report, and the title here is "Legal aid as a sound investment":

The Committee discovered that there is strong support for legal aid spending in Canada. Many witnesses argued that spending money on legal aid is a sound investment.

Quoting from Dr. Doug Ferguson from the Canadian Bar Association, and I quote:

[S]tudies in the U.S., the United Kingdom, and Australia show that on average for each dollar invested in legal aid, the social return on investment is six dollars, so a 6:1 ratio. Much of that six dollars is comprised of government spending in other areas such as decreased income benefits, increases in tax revenues, or decreased court costs.

Mr. Speaker, a 6 to 1 ratio in terms of investment. Sometimes, oftentimes, we can be penny-wise and pound foolish when we're looking at investments such as investments in legal aid. We look short term at cutting budgets when investments in something such as legal aid can have benefits. Six to one — I think that those are returns that most of us would take, certainly in recent years.

[15:15]

But legal aid is one of those places that we continue to see struggle with rising case rates, workload for the lawyers, delays because of workload issues. So I'm here standing in my place

today making a pitch, as I'm sure many on this side would agree, for increasing that funding, for looking long term and making that investment.

So this is not only an economic argument. Certainly, you know, 6 to 1 is a pretty good economic argument in terms of an investment. But some of the other benefits, increased tax revenues because you see people who are able to contribute to access justice, be rehabilitated more quickly to be contributing members of society, as some would say, Mr. Speaker, that's a benefit, a benefit in . . .

Sometimes often the highest number of cases coming through legal aid are criminal law cases, but not exclusively. There's a high number of custody and access cases, for example, Mr. Speaker. That's important beyond that 6 to 1 ratio. And that investment, ensuring that people have their rights represented when they're facing, you know, often what is the most awful time in their lives. They're at risk of losing their children. They have had their children apprehended. Accessing their rights . . .

The scenario that I'm most familiar with, having worked in a shelter, is custody disputes, Mr. Speaker. And unfortunately when we see a wage gap like we do in Saskatchewan — one of the highest wage gaps in the country — it's often the person who has the ability to access the better legal counsel who has a better chance of accessing their rights. And that's a very significant matter as you can imagine, Mr. Speaker. So again, in favour of increasing resources to legal aid and increasing people's access to justice.

I also want to read . . . This comes from a speech from the Pro Bono Law Conference by Justice Wagner, the Supreme Court of Canada, this is 2018 in a speech he delivered in British Columbia. I'm just going to pull up the section that I'm looking for here. It's a rather lengthy speech and if people had a chance to read it, I would highly recommend it. It is remarks of the Right Honourable Richard Wagner, Chief Justice of Canada, as I said in 2018.

Thinking about the pillars of our democracy and our branches of government, you know, central to both of those concepts is the concept of justice and the judiciary. He talks about defining access to justice, "Access to Justice is a Democratic Issue." But the part that I want to read from is "Access to Justice is a Human Rights Issue." So we've made an economic argument, we've made an argument in terms of fairness in custody disputes, but also access to justice as a human rights issue. And I'm quoting:

Even before we feel the impact at a societal level, access to justice first and foremost affects the individual. Under the Charter, everyone has the right to equal treatment under the law and equal benefit of the law. To deny access to justice is to deny people their dignity, to say that some people are worthy of justice and some aren't.

Lack of access to justice reinforces existing inequities.

As I mentioned — interjection here — when we see things like pay gap, those inequities are reflected here. Back to the quote:

An accused without legal representation may decide to plead guilty when . . . [they] might have been acquitted or

convicted of a lesser crime with the lawyer's help. . . . [They] may be wrongfully convicted. . . . [They] may be sentenced to a longer prison term than would have received had . . . [they] gotten legal advice. Out on bail, . . . [they] may not be given the supports needed to comply with . . . bail conditions. In the end, those who can't access legal services may spend more time in jail. It has profound effects on people's lives.

So to wrap up some of those thoughts and those comments, Mr. Speaker, cleaning up the housekeeping in the bill and some important changes here, not to dismiss those or downplay them, that is important. But I think the larger concept here, the larger concept of who has access to these services, who has access to justice services, legal counsel more broadly, is something that we might, this Assembly might want to occupy our time with. We have seen a number of bills, often housekeeping measures.

You know, what we choose to talk about, what we choose to debate, what comes forth in this Assembly matters. Where we spend our time in debate matters. And again, not to downplay the hard work of those who have brought these changes that I'm sure are very necessary forward, but we ought to occupy, I think, our thoughts, our time, our action here with concerns that impact the people that we all serve. Again, something as fundamental as access to justice I think is worthy of that time and consideration.

And I'm not going to be able to leave it go, Mr. Speaker. You know, the fact that we see a bill in front of us, Bill 70 — which I may get opportunity to speak to later — and not these bills talking about improving access to justice, I think is a missed opportunity and is frankly a misstep.

We have great privilege in this Assembly. We enjoy many privileges. We are rarely, I'm sure, in danger of not having our human rights and our access to justice be called into question or be in jeopardy, Mr. Speaker. But I would suggest that there are many in this province who face that situation. Unfortunately I believe that number is growing, and I think that our time would be better served on issues such as those.

Pulling it back to the substance of this bill in particular, as I've said, I think that the minister has done a good job in terms of explaining the reasons why we see these changes in front of us, clarifying the ability to make changes that are necessary. And I know that our critic will be doing her due diligence, as I find I've said many times in this Assembly this session, in checking with stakeholders and making sure that there aren't any unintended consequences here. But on the whole I think it's pretty straightforward. The larger issue I've discussed, access to justice, I guess we will wait another day to hopefully champion and discuss those issues.

But with that I am prepared to conclude my comments on Bill No. 46, *The Legal Aid Amendment Act, 2021*, and will move to adjourn debate on this bill.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## Bill No. 47

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

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter in this afternoon with respect to Bill No. 47, *The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021*. I see the minister is in attendance here this . . . I guess I can't speak to whether someone's here or not. It's good to see the minister listening in, though, to remarks here this afternoon. I've read through his remarks and what he suggests the aim of this legislation is.

Certainly there is some important and practical changes that are brought within this legislation. There's also questions that exist, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And certainly it's critical when we're looking at any changes to an Act that relates to highways and transportation that, number one, we're focused on safety, Mr. Speaker, the safety of those that are moving our goods, Mr. Speaker — those that are involved in agriculture, the resource sector, our manufacturers, Mr. Speaker, and those of course that are on the roads within our province, Mr. Speaker. And of course we need to make sure that they're safe. We need to make sure that the transportation infrastructure, our highways, are efficient, Mr. Speaker, and that we're supporting those needs.

And of course we need to make sure that our highways and transportation infrastructure isn't just there for our economy. It's critical that we make sure that's the case, we make sure that it's there for safe movement of people, to enjoy this beautiful province, Mr. Speaker, to promote tourism, and allow folks to get from community to community, and to enjoy this incredible province, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to some of the aspects of improving our transportation infrastructure in our province, of course, Mr. Speaker, it's important that we're addressing the rail side of the equation as well, Mr. Speaker. You know, we don't see enough action from this current government to make sure that our rail system actually performs. All too often we see kid gloves with the duopoly that is the two large, major rail companies, Mr. Speaker, and a failure to stand up for exporters and producers in this province to make sure that we can get our product to market.

It's essential, Mr. Speaker, to our economy and to the future of Saskatchewan to make sure that we have a rail system that's working and we have a transportation system that's working — rail being, of course, one important component, Mr. Speaker. And it's essential that as we look to some of the very important investments that we see happening within Saskatchewan by way of value-add agriculture and canola crush operations and the wheat straw operations and those in our forestry and lumber industry, Mr. Speaker, we need to make sure that we have a transportation network and system to support those investments, those important investments to communities and to workers.

We need to do a better job in Saskatchewan of working with

those incredible shortline rail associations across Saskatchewan. These associations perform for their members and for their regions and present tremendous opportunity to this province. They're incredibly efficient. They're well managed and they can be leveraged and partnered with, Mr. Speaker, to build out further infrastructure on the transportation side within Saskatchewan.

It would be wise for us as we look to some of these big important investments that we're wanting to make sure we secure and realize around canola crush, for example, and around the energy and newer energy opportunities, Mr. Speaker, and the forestry sector, that we ensure a rail system that is able to support that on the shortline side, wherever possible, to move those inputs, those feedstock into those operations. It's important to make sure that we position those operations to be as economic as they can be. Transportation is certainly a critical component of the economics of operations like those.

And we want to make sure we maximize value for Saskatchewan people in the deployment of public resources in building infrastructure that serves us now and well into the future. And that's why when we build infrastructure and make plans, we need to be looking out for generations, Mr. Speaker, and making sure that we have a full scan of what the transportation requirements are for a region, Mr. Speaker, and then building out a plan that's most effective to respond to that.

We have seen a government that's really let folks down on the transportation side of the equation, Mr. Speaker. We see it in rail, for example. We see . . . Well I'll just stop. My friend, the minister . . . And he is a friend. He's a terrible fisherman, Mr. Speaker, but he's a friend and he's the member for Carrot River; he's the Minister for Highways. He's making, you know, heckling a little bit across the floor.

[15:30]

I guess, you know, he can listen to the remarks about how to make sure our transportation system performs for the producers and for manufacturers and for exporters, and that's all important. But then I would draw his attention back to Highway 9, straight from Preeceville up to Hudson Bay in his riding, Mr. Speaker. It's just in a deplorable state, Mr. Speaker, just in deplorable condition, Mr. Speaker.

I've spoken with community members from that area this last couple weeks, Mr. Speaker. I've written the minister, urging him to take these concerns seriously, to work with local residents and to fix the deplorable condition of Highway 9.

Of course that's an incredibly important region in this province. And that artery within the region is real essential, Mr. Speaker, to the people and the businesses and the farms within the area. So I would urge the minister . . . The minister is suggesting that he's got it taken care of. That's certainly not what I'm hearing from folks out of Hudson Bay, Mr. Speaker, and out of Preeceville, those that are on Highway 9. And I'd urge him to read the letter that's come in from him, from local community members, as well as the letter that I've written as critic to the minister on this front.

But as I've said, we need to do more to ensure our rail system is performing. We need to be supporting and working with and

leveraging our shortline rail associations across the province. We need to make sure that, as we secure important investments in our economy by way of industry around canola crush and renewable diesel and wheat straw and in the lumber industry, that we work together, organize transportation in an efficient and in a safe way. That wherever possible, we do a scan as well to see how shortline rail may be able to be deployed into those operations to ensure the efficient, safe delivery of feedstock for those operations, making sure that we're making investments and plans now that not just serve us today but well into the future, Mr. Speaker.

And then of course, you know, that we don't treat the rail companies with kid gloves, as we see with this government, you know, all too often. That when it comes down to push or shove, Mr. Speaker, that we stand up for producers, that we stand up for exporters, and we stand up for our manufacturers against the duopoly to make sure that it performs in the interests.

Making sure that we're enforcing interswitching, for example, Mr. Speaker, to ensure value for those that are transporting goods, Mr. Speaker. Making sure that we push for things like joint running rights, Mr. Speaker, and that we speak strongly on these fronts as a province, ideally in a unified way with the federal government as well, as it relates to the CTA [Canadian Transportation Agency] to make sure that we have the kind of protections and measures in place that will ensure that our transportation system performs.

Of course we know the realities of a failed transportation system come at a cost of a landlocked province like Saskatchewan, and we need to be able to get our products to market. We know all too well that producers, that when they take off that crop, Mr. Speaker, and they put it in the bin, Mr. Speaker, that that's only half the battle. There's still so many other factors that they're at risk with, Mr. Speaker.

And we think of the transportation piece as one that they really don't have a lot of security or protections with, Mr. Speaker. And when you're not able to be loading ships out on the West Coast, Mr. Speaker, and those big ships are sitting there, Mr. Speaker, it's producers who are paying the price by way of demurrage, Mr. Speaker. It's not the grain companies. It's not the shippers. It's producers, Mr. Speaker. And you know, producers deserve and need their government to stand up for their interests.

I don't see anything within this legislation to do just that, Mr. Speaker. I have read the measures that the minister's brought forward. There are certainly, as I said at the front end of this, some important and common-sense components to what's being brought forward, Mr. Speaker.

There is a concern, and this is something that we'll put the government on notice with now and urge them to take on this important work. What we're hearing from First Nations within our province, from Indigenous leaders in the province, from Indigenous communities, Mr. Speaker, is that First Nations haven't been consulted with respect to the changes within this bill. And that should be a critical starting point, Mr. Speaker. And they have questions about some of the provisions within this bill, Mr. Speaker, around what sort of rights this is asserting for the province, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why it's so critical that when legislative changes are

being brought about, that First Nations are there from the very beginning, that Indigenous peoples are there from the very beginning. There's a duty-to-consult from a legal perspective, Mr. Speaker, and it's in all of our interests to be working together in a consultative way whenever possible, in a way of partnership, Mr. Speaker, pursuing opportunities that are in the interests of all, Mr. Speaker.

And that only happens when those conversations happen, Mr. Speaker. And I know I've heard from First Nations leadership of late that they have concerns that that hasn't happened with respect to this piece of legislation. They have concerns with respect to specific provisions within this legislation, certain powers this seems to be granting the province, and how that impacts the rights of communities, Indigenous communities across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess I would urge the minister to make that happen now, because of course we're speaking to this bill on December 8th, 2021. This legislature will likely soon rise from this session and will not be sitting again until likely into the spring, Mr. Speaker. I would really urge this government and this minister to take that time to just make sure that Indigenous peoples, that First Nations are engaged directly, that they've fulfilled the duty-to-consult on this front. And further to that, that they answer the questions that are being asked and work together and address any changes that need to be made to this legislation.

What I would suggest to Saskatchewan people on this front is that like any other piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, we're here to listen, we're here to work with you. We would urge you to reach out and share your concerns. We'd appreciate you sharing where you see strength and benefit in this legislation.

We're here to work in a constructive way, and we'll look for every opportunity to strengthen every piece of legislation, address gaps that might exist, Mr. Speaker, bring forward amendments, working together with government whenever possible on these fronts. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we'll push back against and fight against any component of a piece of legislation that's not in the interests of Saskatchewan people.

And ultimately, as I say that, when we're talking about highways and transportation, we need to be focused on safety, Mr. Speaker. We know that there's too many lives at stake on the roads in Saskatchewan, those that are grinding it out, working hard, providing for their families by moving our goods, Mr. Speaker, in transportation, moving the proud products of our resource sector, Mr. Speaker, moving those products that are manufactured in this province, bringing goods to the people of Saskatchewan that are essential and needed.

We think of all those folks involved in transportation through this pandemic, Mr. Speaker. Of course many people had provisions that changed their work in a significant way. Some folks worked from home for a period of time, Mr. Speaker. That wasn't the case for those in transportation. They were out there taking on the risk, doing the work, making sure that Saskatchewan people had the essential services and the products that are essential to life, and making sure that they're moving the goods that support this economy.

So it's critical that any changes are made that take their well-

being, their quality of life, their safety, those need to be front and centre. Think of too many tragedies in this province, Mr. Speaker, that have taken the lives of far too many loved ones of Saskatchewan people in accidents across this province.

And then of course, as we organize our transportation system, that we really need to make sure that it's there to perform for communities and for those that are going to be transporting the goods. But for those investments that are going to be made and that we need to secure, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, looking at the best way to maximize the value of the public resource that's being placed, to make sure we're working with private partners when it's their entity that's involved, and looking at opportunities to, as I say, make sure that we're utilizing or expanding shortline rail in this province, working with those amazing associations.

I would identify that this provincial government, the Sask Party, cut funding of course to those shortline rail associations a few years back, left them in a real difficult spot. That was when this government went out and, in a very short-sighted decision, sold off the Grain Car Corporation of Saskatchewan, taking away just one of those levers that producers had, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that their products were moving in a timely way, Mr. Speaker. And something that was returning money every single year, a profitable venture to the people of Saskatchewan and more than that, because it was sustaining and because it was bearing a profit. It returned a million dollars of matching grants to shortline associations across Saskatchewan. And of course, you know, that government cut it.

You know, I'm kind of getting a kick out of the Minister of Highways here right now. And I don't know if he's entering in lightly or . . . He's usually a friendly guy. But that certainly was a loss for shortlines. It was a loss for producers when the Grain Car Corporation of Saskatchewan was sold off.

And it was a loss then when this government pulled those million dollars in matching funds to shortline associations. And what shortlines were doing with that was real critical infrastructure renewal and maintenance, Mr. Speaker. And this is a . . . The minister heckles away, we'll have time at committee here. But anyone involved on any of those shortline boards knows how this government shorted them in the last number of years. Producers know how this government failed them at the time they needed it most when they were needing to move crops, you know, to market, Mr. Speaker. And as we look at our highways and transportation Act, we need to, you know, integrate all of those considerations into these sorts of changes, Mr. Speaker.

I look forward to continuing to be engaged with all involved in this important sector and in this important work. I invite all stakeholders to engage directly with us to share their insights, Mr. Speaker. And we'll do everything we can to make sure that we have the best interests of Saskatchewan people in mind and the best piece of legislation possible. With that being said, I'll adjourn debate on Bill No. 47, *The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021*.

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



**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 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 Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Bill No. 49, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021*. Initially, before I make my comments on this change and amendments and changes to the Gaming Corporation amendments that are being proposed, I think a lot about back home and many of our First Nations who do a lot of great work with the youth, and they do.

They take profits from the Gaming Corporation that they operate, and they do a very, very, very excellent job of it in that industry. And of course they've been hit with some hard times. But I want to commend the work that all their employees do. They have many First Nations, Métis, Indigenous, non-Indigenous employees working for gaming. And those profits are given back to the communities, the 74 First Nations and those that are partners. And they get an opportunity to use those resources to do some excellent work.

And I talked . . . We've had a First Nations leader on Monday and I know his community. I know that they get some of the dollars that help from the gaming to help a part of their community. And they do such a great job with those dollars to try to focus on the youth, to try. They do all they can. It's limited because of course there are big First Nations that have a lot of youth. But I watch, whether it's the recreational facilities, the youth whether it's hockey, sports, different activities that they help their community members, and to make sure people are feeling involved. And they do all they can. And of course again, it's limited dollars. Everything that you do nowadays whether you're, you know, sports, whatever facilities, the costs are just unbelievable, and they have so many areas that they have to stretch their dollars.

[15:45]

And I just want to give, you know, compliments to our First Nations who are receiving those dollars, and they do amazing things with those dollars to help their community. And you know, some of them maybe target our elders and they help their elders. Some of them target recreation. Some of them maybe target families. And they all do different things with their dollars. And they try to help their communities, to make their communities better.

And they truly are entrepreneurs, and there's partnerships we talk about. You know, our First Nations have many partnerships and they want to be involved and they want to be consulted and they want to take part in this provincial economy and they want to be great citizens and many of them are. They want to be

ambassadors in their communities.

I watched a young leader come here on Monday and tell the ministers, tell government officials, come, come to our communities, he said. I invite you. Come to the reserve. I invite you. We'll show you hospitality. But we'll also want you to see some of the challenges we're faced with, and we'll ask for your help.

And that was really . . . He came with compassion and he truly wants to work with government. And he talked about partnerships, but he also talked about federal/provincial. But it's interesting. Here we have, you know, the ability. And truly, you know, and I think the minister is going to take him up on that. And maybe there'll be more ministers coming in to the constituency to see some of the challenges that we are faced with.

So you know, when I see our leaders come here and express their concerns and doing it with respect and that, you know, they see the challenges that they have to deal with.

But again, I go back to the same leader. Take some of those dollars that he gets as revenue from the gaming, and he shares that with the youth or elders, community members. And they utilize those dollars so well. They try their best to do all they can with it. And you know, from what I've seen, they target so many areas and they try to partnership, and they do just amazing work. And I just want to commend them. And that truly is, sometimes our true heroes are our leaders in our communities, whether they're First Nations, Métis leaders, mayors, you know, sometimes you look at that.

So when I look at this new Bill 49 and they talk about creating an online partnership with First Nations, I think I've heard comments that are very positive. And that's good, and I think it is. And I'm glad that, you know, they see a movement. And that's fine to see the movement. They should be a part of this economy, and the province should be working with them. But again, it's important that we make sure we consult and we talk to them about when it impacts them in industry that we're sharing with them.

And on this legislation here, obviously I'm hoping the government has done the good work to consult, and we're hearing positive comments that this partnership, it's a partnership. We talk about, you know, the ability to generate dollars and for them to bring it back to the reserves, their home communities, take care of their members, and that's what they want to do. They are, you know. This is their traditional territory, their inherent rights.

My grandchildren have those rights. Many of my 17 grandkids have those rights. They're treaty. They have the rights, inherent rights, and I thank the leadership for fighting for their rights. And that's important, but when I think about, you know, the limited funds that they're having to deal with the challenges, and I think we can go online and here's a partnership. And this is the right direction to have more partnerships, as I've said.

Now I don't know how they came to decide that it would be 5 per cent, 10 per cent, 50 per cent, 75, 60 per cent, 40/40 of the profits. I don't know how they got to where they got to. But I would wish, and hopefully I wish this would have happened for them.

The more we can give to our First Nations, our 74 First Nations, those that would receive those dollars, the more profits they generate, it should come back to their communities. I wish that would happen more.

And you know, this agreement is good. I just wish they could have gotten more, you know, to help out their communities. And that could have been something the government could have done, I guess, looking at this. But you know, for the most part we support this. It's the right direction. It's moving . . . It's true partnerships, if that's what we want to hear. But you have to make sure at the end of the day, you know, that this is going to be the right deal.

Now, and I've said this . . . I don't know how much of the government's portion . . . You know, it's like everything else. People try to balance out. When we have mental health, we have addictions in our province, and sometimes addictions affects . . . There's different ways addictions affect, whether it's drugs, alcohol. There is gambling addictions, you know, and there are issues with that, and sometimes it impacts families. And we've got to make sure at the end of the day that when somebody has and runs into problems, that they make sure that those supports are there, should somebody have an issue with addictions. And if somebody has a, you know, a gambling problem, that you want to make sure supports are there.

So I'm hoping the government's taking that into account. If it creates more of a problem for families that, you know, young families, maybe somebody overspends on it online; they get on there or they spend a lot of their money. Like, who knows? I don't know how it's going to work. I'm curious. I know we're going to ask, but I hope the supports are there should somebody find themselves . . .

You know, it's all right to have a little fun and go out and, you know, gamble a little bit online I guess. Yeah, people do that. I get that if it's done in moderation. But if somebody should get into a situation where next thing you know they're having a gambling problem, I'm hoping that the government will make sure that, with the profits they're getting, that they'll make sure that people's addictions, should it need some counselling, need help, that that will be provided.

But for the most part I see this bill as positive. I've heard First Nations. I've heard some people saying this is good. It's a partnership; it's moving forward. I think we need to do much more of this and I think we need to start making sure our First Nations get more and more of their profits from the revenue that they're generating, and you know, when I think about this deal, so they can do more in their communities and help out.

And I think it's about jobs and everything else. Like there's, you know . . . and there are lots. So at this point I know my colleagues may have more questions. We're going to have some time to reach out to individuals and find out, you know, are there any challenges. And I encourage them, any of our leadership, any community members if they have issues, to reach out to the minister and the ministry to say, hey, this is good or not, to reach out and say, here's some things that you could do. You know, we've always said that. Make sure that people feel their input. And if this is the right deal and this is the way it goes, then it'll go and pass, and we're supportive of moving ahead with a

partnership but making sure.

Of course I always hope our First Nations brothers and sisters out there would get more of the profits. I wish it was, but for now I guess this is where we'll start. It's a good start, and a lot of support for this online and this change to allowing First Nations to do online gambling and again going forward.

Again, last few things I want to say. Again, I am truly amazed at watching all the different activities and the events that I go to. Watching, whether how it's being funded, the advertising. And it's amazing to see the revenue that's generated in our province from our First Nations who do . . . You know, SIGA [Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Inc.], gambling online, whatever they're going to do with it.

Just amazing to see the work that's put into it and the way they manage things and the way the profits go back to the community — that's what you want. So this is something that's very positive and hopefully this all works out well, and First Nations can do more programming in their communities with the youth, with our elders, and just community events that go on. They can sponsor and create positive stuff.

But again I just wanted to make sure the government's well aware of if you need to make sure to provide, you know, supports when it comes to addictions — should it get to be a problem — that that's being provided. You're taking those profits that you're using, the 50 per cent profits, and you'll provide the supports that are going to be needed should someone need that. You know, hopefully we'll see that and a commitment from the government.

So at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't know that I have much more to say on this one, but I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 49, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 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 Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 50, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act* of 2020.

I felt like I had already spoken to this bill before when I started looking at it. And I actually did a search in *Hansard* to just double-check and make sure that I was, you know, doing my friends a solid here and not accidentally speaking to the bill twice and adjourning twice on it, which would trigger its next step.

So I realized that the reason that that happened is because apparently we amend *The Traffic Safety Act* often, and we actually were here doing this in the springtime. So it was just like a strange déjà vu moment where I thought, I've already done this. But I assure you that I haven't, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think the changes last year, I remember there was discussion, I remember, about red light cameras. You know, these are hot topics for people, that people are certainly quite interested in. I've received a ticket from a red light camera. I wasn't very happy about that, although I definitely realized that I was in a hurry that day. And it was funny because I was on my way from home to Regina and I thought, I didn't think I was ever in that much of a hurry to get down here to do this work. But apparently I was that day, because I got caught by a camera.

And I know sometimes there's controversy about which cameras are operating at which times, and people try to be in the know about this. And I remember hearing that in Regina the red light cameras were not operational for a period of time, and we sort of learned about it after the fact. And I thought, the amount of times I have tried to rush through those intersections and it was all for nothing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it would not have noticed me.

So we know that traffic safety is something that a lot of folks are concerned about, and I think this is because it governs a lot of our days — we commute. Certainly for members who don't live in Regina, we spend a lot of time governed by these rules on the road. We have this shared understanding of rules and we've sort of created this modern concept of traffic that we now have to regulate. So it governs our lives. It's around us all the time. And these rules can sometimes seem daunting but we just kind of carry them with us everywhere. And it doesn't seem strange until you go to a different place and the rules have changed.

And I remember when I was about 19 or 20, I worked for a summer in Winnipeg at the cadet movement centre there. Basically it's just a stopping point for kids who are on their way to and from camp, and you sort of handle all the logistics while they're on their way because they're travelling and they're between 12 and 18 and they're not with their parents, so somebody has to show them to their hotels and make sure they get meals and tell them when to go to bed and that sort of thing. It sounds like I was a babysitter, but there really was a lot more to the job than that.

And I remember I went there and I had to get my military driver's licence, which is just like an extra course that you have to take once you have your civilian driver's licence, to be able to operate military vehicles. And in order to receive that in the province of Manitoba I had to take the Manitoba driver's test, the written test. And it was quite a bit different from the Saskatchewan test. And I was surprised, because I thought there can't be that many changes. And I remember all of my supervisors just saying, oh it'll be fine. Like, you'll pass it with flying colours. And it had been a while since driver's ed. I remember I still passed that test but I was quite nervous about some very particular rules. There was something about electricity. It was quite bizarre, the amount of questions that were on there that I did not know the answers to.

[16:00]

So when we talk about traffic safety being provincial jurisdiction, I really understand that first-hand and have experienced some of the differences that exist in different places. I think about like, advanced green lights. They have those in some cities. And you're sitting there and you're like, what's this blinking green mean? I'm still not entirely sure about the answer to that question.

Yeah, so we have this modern creation of traffic. We have to create these rules. And I know there are . . . You know, the ultimate intent is to avoid accidents, to ensure that everyone understands the rules of the road. I think there's probably some fairness mixed in there. And there are a lot of ways that even though we're supposed to know all these rules and agree to them, there are a lot of ways that this . . . People get it wrong. And I think of four-way stops which I think is a pretty, I think is a pretty easy-to-understand right-of-way system.

But I think in Saskatchewan we're all just too polite and people will, I think, even if they know it's their turn to go, they will just provide the opportunity for you to go in front of them. And then that confuses everything, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because as soon as you change the order of who's allowed to go first, it creates a bit of chaos. So there's four-way stops.

Also left turns, if you're at two stop signs and someone's doing a left turn, they don't understand that if they got there first, they should go first. That's a pet peeve. And then merging, you know. So many people don't actually understand how to merge or don't yield when there's a merge sign. And I've been in far too many situations with drivers — won't throw my partner under the bus, but I may or may not be talking about him — where they're like I have the ability and obligation to merge right now. And I'm just going to get in there and the other vehicle must yield to me.

So traffic has this system, it creates some conflict situations sometimes, but ultimately we know that we have to look out for the safety of other people. We think about the safety of ourselves as well in vehicles, and when you think about the fact that these are just large pieces of metal that we're driving around at high speeds — maybe more fibreglass now than metal — it certainly makes sense that there are this amount of regulations around traffic safety. And we all know what happens when we . . .

Oh, I wanted to tell another quick story about a different jurisdiction, actually, of traffic, and I forgot about this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And maybe not so much traffic, and just something getting lost in translation. So renting vehicles when you go to foreign cities always seems like a good idea, but you have to know those local rules. And I think about when I was in Quebec. And I don't know French; I have a very small understanding . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yeah, I wish I did. My partner speaks French every day to children and teaches it to them, but I have not learned.

And so going to Quebec was quite the learning curve because we were in Quebec City, which is already a pretty big operation. When we got to the airport, we rented a car at the airport. And just navigating from leaving the airport — I was with another English-speaking person — trying to leave, to understand which is the exit to get out of the airport, I think we went around a few times just because we couldn't understand what the sign said. So we know that these are critically important.

And I also got a French parking note written to me that essentially said, don't park here, I assume. I'm not even going to try and pronounce it. It would be bad. But I do remember what it said. I'll tell you another time.

But we know that this is ultimately about safety, that our entire insurance system is also tied to many of these rules and regulations. And we're very grateful to have SGI as our Crown corporation. People complain a lot about SGI, but I've also lived in Alberta, where my cousin could barely afford his car as a teenager because his insurance rates were so high because new drivers are penalized so heavily in other jurisdictions. So I'm grateful for the fact that my insurance, it still cost more than my parents', but it was more affordable when I was learning how to drive. Of course I think every person has had their individual run-ins with SGI, but on the whole, absolutely grateful for these low insurance rates.

And we know that we have a bit of a cash reserve that's growing in SGI as well. And we've had our plans on this side of the House to, during the election, to lower the amount that people are paying in insurance because we see that this fund just keeps on growing. And so it seems like there's something wrong with the system that we should actually address. And why not lower those fees and make it even more affordable?

Life has gotten more expensive. Wages haven't went up in the same way. You know, I talk to constituents who are concerned about losing their homes. These are real concerns that people have, and when you have government utilities to Crown corporations, why wouldn't we be trying to help people out, get them off on the right foot, and give them a few extra dollars of spending money at the end of the day to help the economy moving?

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a few changes that I want to talk about in particular that are being made in Bill No. 50. It provides the authority to immediately suspend driver's licence and impound vehicles for drivers that are charged with stunting, racing, or excessive speed. And I have a few thoughts on this change, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Ultimately I think we all have the same goals of keeping our roads safe.

You know, I think about in many jurisdictions, there are commonly known areas where these types of activities take place. And in Saskatoon, it used to always be 8th Street. 8th Street on a weekend evening, you would see people racing. I always kind of assumed it was teenagers. Maybe that's unfair to them. But people would bring out their vehicles and there would be racing and stunting and shenanigans on 8th Street. And I know there have been many attempts to crack down on that.

And I often think about this because this government has such a reputation for trying to be tough on crime in a way that they just increase the punishments that exist, so sort of back end. If you get caught, the punishment will be more severe. And it certainly seems like that's what's happening here because impounding a vehicle is a big decision. So it seems like that's sort of the direction that is going here, is this attempt to . . . It's almost like increasing mandatory minimums. Like it has that same feel to it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I wonder if they have researched this extensively, if they

have consulted extensively on whether this action, this intervention will in fact decrease the amount of stunting and racing that takes place, and what the associated education process will look like. Because I don't think most of the people that are stunting and racing are diligently glued into the legislative channel. I could be wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But what is the plan to educate the public on these changes? And are we confident that this is going to make a difference? Because ultimately we are talking about our children, we are talking about our families, and other people's families that are at risk when these situations go wrong which, I think, is why we have to absolutely crack down on this. But what is the implication if it goes wrong?

I think about a nine-year-old girl from the Mayfair area of Saskatoon who was hit and she passed away this fall, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you might have remembered hearing about this. Her name was Baeleigh Emily Maurice. And this was on, I think, on September 9th of 2021, and you might remember this story. So she was being given a small amount of independence. She's nine and her mom was letting her go on her scooter to travel to school. It was at 9 a.m. that morning. She was crossing a crosswalk and someone didn't see her and she got hit by a truck. And I remember the community coming together and holding a vigil, and just the pain in her mother's eyes. Her mother was Rochelle Dubois.

And I can't pretend to understand that because I don't have any children of my own, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but you really feel for a family in this situation. Because you want to be able to offer your children independence. That's how they grow. That's how they become. That's how they grow into magnificent adults, is by learning to trust themselves, you know. Looking at their own instincts and at age-appropriate independence, I think, is a part of a healthy development.

I have a nephew who is a very similar age and doesn't actually live that far from there. And you know, they will go out on their bikes and walk to school independently, and it would be so heartbreaking for our family if we had to experience something like this. And I didn't grow up that far from here either, and we certainly were afforded a ton of independence.

We need to make sure that our traffic safety rules are put in place to protect every person that's going to be on those streets, including our little people that are on those roads, that are crossing at crosswalks, doing everything lawfully. And we still don't know the details of what happened in this situation, so don't get me wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, I can't guarantee that this person was speeding. I'm sure they feel a ton of remorse for what happened. I think that the investigation, I believe that the investigation is still ongoing into what happened to little Baeleigh, but I couldn't not bring it up when I realized I was speaking to this bill today, because that is ultimately what is at stake here. And we need to get this right. And the government has a responsibility to make sure that the interventions that it is introducing contemplate all of these situations, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There are a number of other changes that are being presented here, including allowing suspended drivers to legally partake in driver evaluations while they're in the company of an authorized driver instructor. So this makes them legally able to partake and

have coverage to do so.

It also brings all road signs, including municipal speed and road signs, into legislation. I thought this was particularly interesting. And I think some of my colleagues have weighed in on this, but I didn't know that these weren't included in the legislation. I sort of wonder if there is a standardization that is required, and maybe this is spelled out in regulations or in the initial existing legislation. But I started to think about all the ways that municipalities could create their own signs and what that might look like. Maybe I just want to create havoc. But it certainly seems important that if there is some sort of legislative loophole of this nature, that that be closed in this legislation, as we have just talked about the importance of traffic management.

[16:15]

So I think ultimately my comments can be summarized, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in that we know people are concerned about speeding and stunting and racing. I think there is good reason for that. We need to make sure we are getting this right. And I know my colleagues are going to be looking into this legislation further, that there will be good questions from the critic in committee. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 50, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 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 Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to offer my comments on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 51, *The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021*. That's quite a mouthful.

Mr. Speaker, the government first amended *The Privacy Act* back in 2019 which created a tort for the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. As the minister has explained in his remarks, this new tort is available even in cases where a person had consented to the image being taken, as well as in cases where the survivor themselves took the image, which are good additions.

An important aspect as well of this bill is that a reverse onus is created, which requires the person who distributes the image to prove that they had consent to actually distribute them. Mr. Deputy Speaker, consent is such an important concept. It's my belief that it should be made mandatory in our curriculum for school-aged kids to be learning about consent, especially in a province where we have the highest rates of domestic violence in

all of Canada. We have double the national average for sexual assaults in our province. We have a real issue here with violence against women. And consent and teaching kids early on, right from a very young age, about consent is key in proactively addressing the issues that we have with violence against women in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

With this bill we see an expansion of remedies for the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. This expansion includes requiring the defendant to return any copies of visual recordings that are in their possession. We also see the inclusion of threatening to distribute, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not just the actual distribution itself. We see this added and included to the tort, which is really important. It's sometimes just the actual act of threatening to distribute these images can be equally traumatic to the survivors. It's something that is extremely coercive. It's meant as a way to try and control, in most cases, women, and it's sexual violence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So it's good to see that inclusion as well.

Part of the problem though, and something that's been flagged, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by advocates in our community, in our province, is that a person may not always know who has distributed their images without their consent, especially on the internet. This isn't something that's always easily traceable, and so we've got a bit of an issue there that some advocates have flagged that even with these new amendments an issue like that isn't properly addressed.

Mr. Speaker, the depiction of an individual is also included in the definition of protected images, so not just only the original visual recordings. And the reason that this is necessary is in order to address situations where there are fake or altered images being distributed, which unfortunately is becoming more and more common and more readily easy for people to be able to do to alter these images.

Further to this, the bill requires the defendant, as well as an internet intermediary, to make every reasonable effort to remove all visuals of a survivor, but again as was mentioned, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this can become very difficult to accomplish. I mean, once an image is out there on the internet, it's very difficult; it's quite a feat to track down every possible copy that could exist and see that those images are removed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, unauthorized distribution of intimate images, also known as revenge porn, is a horrible violation of a person's privacy. Even the threat of distribution, as I had said, can be incredibly traumatic for survivors. And we do know that survivors in these cases often face significant challenges with mental health as a result of non-consensual distribution of their intimate images.

We know as well the vast majority, as I briefly noted, of survivors in situations such as these are women. Revenge porn is most commonly used as a way to demean, to intimidate, and to control women, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is sexual violence. It's a form of sexual violence and it should be treated as such. And of course, as I'd mentioned earlier, we know that sexual violence is extremely prevalent in Saskatchewan.

So it's good to see this step taken. It's a step in the right direction for sure. The tort is designed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a tool that

survivors can use to gain some form of retribution. And it's the expectation that this will also serve as a deterrent for those who may otherwise commit such a crime.

So I hope that, you know, that will be successful. I hope it will be a successful deterrent. And I hope that part of the government's work around this bill will include a broad public awareness campaign so that people are aware of, you know, both the protections that are available to them as well as, you know, the consequences for committing a crime such as this.

One thing we would like to be made aware of, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the level of success and total number of these kinds of cases that have been seen since the amendments were last made to *The Privacy Act* in 2019. I think this would be really helpful information for us to know.

And as the member from Regina Douglas Park had suggested, an awareness campaign could be a key component of making sure that people are actually making use of this legislation because they know that it exists. You know, the common person doesn't sort of tune in for adjourned debate; they don't tune in for second readings sometimes. Many kind of average folks just may not be aware of certain pieces of legislation such as this without additional efforts made by the government to publicize the changes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are aware that, even with the amendments brought forward in this bill, gaps still do remain in this legislation. For instance, Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan has noted that these new measures will not assist with easing the burden of reporting, hiring a lawyer, filing a civil suit, or navigating the court system, which are all real barriers that people face, especially women when they're trying to seek justice for these violations and these crimes that are committed against them. SASS [Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan] also noted that many survivors of these crimes simply do not have the money needed to take a civil case to court — another significant barrier to obtaining justice.

Furthermore, survivors are typically the ones who are actually responsible for telling a person to stop sharing pictures or videos and to delete those pictures or videos, which is very problematic. I'm sure you can see why, as has been stated by Ashley Kilback of SASS, "It puts the onus back on the survivor to have to undo their victimization." And I'm sure we can all agree that's not something that we want to see as a reality.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see there are still significant barriers that will continue to exist for survivors. And so consequently I would urge this government to sit down and consult with organizations like SASS in order to fully understand the range of barriers that survivors do face. Ultimately further consultation should be undertaken to further strengthen this legislation and to close those gaps that do still exist, Mr. Speaker.

With that being said, this bill does represent an important step forward in broadening protections for survivors of these crimes, and I am encouraged to see the government bring these amendments forward. So again in closing, I just want to encourage again the minister to reach out to consult with organizations who really are experts in these areas, like SASS, in order to identify ways of improving protections for survivors

even further, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

With that I am going to move that we adjourn debate on Bill 51, *The Privacy (Intimate Images — Additional Remedies) Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 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 Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in Bill No. 52, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*. I guess initially, you know, you think about our insurance, and it's good to have good coverage. And for myself, I've always taken quite . . . pride in SGI and the good work, the coverage that you get from SGI.

And I've been in a few accidents. You know, unfortunately happened to me with a deer one time. He decided he was going to go across the road, and he didn't care if I was going. He thought he had the right-of-way, and unfortunately it didn't turn out so good for my vehicle. But having said that, you know, I wasn't injured. Nobody was injured, so the good thing about that . . . Because we know sometimes when people hit wildlife, unfortunately it doesn't end well for the animal, but injuries and loss of life for people in vehicles, you know, happens.

And for me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was good because SGI . . . And I didn't know this actually until I'd hit, that there was no deductible for me for hitting wildlife, and that was something you went through and something I learned. Because I didn't know; I thought I would have to have paid something, my package policy or something. But actually again I didn't have to pay anything. The vehicle was hit because of wildlife, so that was good to know that. Again, you know, I'm saying there's the good coverage a person has.

And many people in this province are very proud of our Crown corporation, SGI, and the good work it does, and the rates. And I think my colleague, our House Leader on this side was just talking about Bill 46 and referring to, you know, the pool of dollars that SGI takes. And you know, we can get better rates and stuff like that, and you know, can have that because the surplus dollars are there and there's things that can look at. And maybe soon we'll see that it'll be amendments that are coming there. People will be getting more rebates or they'll look at lowering the cost, if that's something that's available to Saskatchewan citizens. We own SGI, so the benefit should come back to us. And it is good. And again I said that earlier in some of my

comments a few days ago, of the good work that SGI does do, and you know, that coverage we get.

Now this bill, what they're talking about here, when you look at it, it's saying, I guess, if somebody . . . And I'm curious to find out more. If this is somebody who has, if it's for medical reasons, maybe their driver's is being questioned, suspended, there's different reasons why. I don't know if this refers to somebody if you're impaired and you're driver's is suspended. If it's speeding tickets, that if you're driving and you're speeding, and Saskatchewan's traffic safety board questions you and says, for whatever reasons, you have too many points. Your driver's will be suspended. So there's different reasons. And I've heard different people have to go before Saskatchewan traffic safety board and sometimes it comes back where, you know, you might have a reason why and work it out.

But if your driver's is suspended, what this legislation's saying is apparently, and I have never been part of this process, or I've heard some people who have had troubles, you then have to . . . I don't know if it's an evaluation, if you have to redo your driver's. They take you . . . You have an instructor with you. I take it it's an SGI instructor, who issues a driver's licence to our young people, whoever it is in our province. When you're ready, you have a learner's licence, and you're ready to take your driver's, you go to SGI. You make an appointment, and you go do your drive around with them. And they determine whether or not, you know, you meet the requirements and you pass your driver's and then you can drive as an independent. And that is important. So having said that, I see that happens too.

[16:30]

So in this case they're going to be doing some of that. But I guess the question was, if you're in the vehicle with them and they're doing the evaluation — because it's medical or speeding or whatever reasons — when you're asked to take that evaluation or to redo your driver's, are you insured?

And the amendment in here is saying that they want to make sure — from what I've got, and I know we're going to be asking more questions about this — but are you insured if that individual's in there? And what I'm getting from this is if you're in with an instructor, and you're doing the evaluation and you were to get into a car accident, there would be insurance. You would be covered, is what I believe the amendment is taking part in. That you would be covered.

And you want to make sure. Because what if that person injured somebody and you had a family who got hit by somebody who was with an instructor, caused a lot of damage or caused injuries to someone? Would there be coverage? And I mean, you know, this is kind of what I believe this change and amendment is doing.

Now they also talk about it in here a little bit about housekeeping, and I know that we've seen a number of bills in the last while where it's just some minor changes or housekeeping that the, you know, minister brings forward the legislation to make those changes. And that's important. Sometimes it's name changing. Sometimes it's different things, and that happens.

But in this case, I think it's important that we make sure that people are covered when they're in with an instructor and they're

on the roads that . . . It's about safety, making sure. It's about coverage, making sure families in our province are protected. That, you know, people have the coverage should some accident happen. It happens if somebody was doing the training, like I said, for whatever reason their licence has been suspended and they're required to take further exams, driver exam or training, whatever it is. We want to make sure that should that person, something happen and they cause an accident, there would be coverage with that.

Now I don't know . . . Looking at this we may have some more questions, but it boils down to make sure we're keeping Saskatchewan residents safe. And that's vital. That's what we want, we all want. You know, we have a lot of traffic on there. You have winter driving. You want to make sure people are taken care of. So it is safety. And I think clearly we want to make sure Saskatchewan residents . . . Any of us, whether it's members in here or residents who work in our building, everywhere, you know, who are travelling — we have a storm today — we want to make sure that people are covered, you know, you have good insurance.

And that's why for me, when it comes to insurance, I like to have the package policy, you know. It's of course like an added cost, but it's important to have. You have windshield deductible. You have damage if you get in an accident. It's a \$100 deductible. That is the difference. If you're not, it's \$700. So it's nice to know that you have that coverage.

If you can, you know, afford that. Nowadays we see so many families struggling to make ends meet in our province. You know, they're really struggling to pay the bills, to put food on the table and to pay the registration. And to actually have a package policy, I don't know how many have it. And some people can't afford . . . I know they would probably love to. I've heard people that I know say they would love to have the extra money to do things, but they're struggling too. So they may not afford to have the package policy. But having said that, I know, as I said, costs are going up all over and we see that.

And then I talked a little bit about the surplus money that's within SGI and how the fund is doing really well and it's being managed really well, and we hope it will continue to be that. It is a gem. Any of our Crown corporations, I've always said that. I believe in our Crown corporations. I think they pay back great, great dividends and this government has been helped many times by those dividends. Many times they've used those dividends to help them when they've went on the wrong direction to spend dollars.

But having said that, I'll get back to actually this bill, you know, Bill No. 52, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*. I think there is some good changes. We'll go into committee. We'll ask some questions to get clarification. And I know I have some questions. And if people have any concerns or want to, you know, raise to the critic, or you know, or any of the members, government, I think they can reach out.

You know, I hear the government saying it stays all weekend. Some of the members on the phone calls, making call back . . . [inaudible] . . . Oh here's some opportunity if you want to call in to the members opposite or government, to any of us, you know. We'll return those calls. We're going to make sure of that. I hear that that's something that's very crucial. So that's important.

So if somebody does have issues, call the minister's office, call your MLA. Say hey, I've got some issues with SGI. Or you want to give compliments, you can do that too. We know our Crown corporation does some good work. And if you want to criticize the government sometimes and let them know if you think, you can do this a little better, you do that.

But for the most part, I know that we'll get through this bill when it's in committee and the critic will do the job and the committee members will ask the questions. And hopefully they've consulted, and they've got the information they're needing.

And that's the one thing that we keep saying. Making sure that those impacted with legislation, you've done the good work as a minister, as a ministry, and everyone else to make sure you've done what you can to consult. Because for me as an Indigenous person, I've seen too many times where we've seen Indigenous people are not consulted the right way, are not taking part, and would like to take part in the discussion and find solutions together.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn on Bill No. 52, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 53

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

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to engage in debate on Bill No. 53, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act*, as many of my colleagues have spoken to. This is an Act to repeal outdated or obsolete legislation that are no longer in use. This year's miscellaneous statutes repeal Act makes changes to *The Agricultural Safety Net Act*, *The Pastures Act*, an Act to incorporate Additional Municipal Hail, and *An Act to incorporate Sisters of St. Martha*.

Those bills are being repealed. And I understand the remainder of the legislation focuses on modernizing unused legislation. It's important that as a government and as legislators, we work to modernize the legislation that impacts the people of this province. Unfortunately we see so many steps from this government that appear to be moving us backwards though, Mr. Speaker. And I commend my colleagues for putting comments on the record in this regard.

You know, when I think about modernization, I think about action on climate change. I spoke earlier today about the Premier's announcement or proclamation that Saskatchewan should be a nation within a nation. You know, he would take us

from being a landlocked province negotiating a fair transition around energy to being a landlocked nation, thumping our chests, making threats that the rest of the country doesn't take seriously.

When I think about modernization, I think about representation of government, you know, making sure that the folks that sit in this House represent the folks out there. And the fact that, you know, this side of the House, the opposition, and the government have the same number of women, that is spectacular.

And you know, I've spoken before in this House about how the Sask Party plays with angles. And you know, they make sure that when the business of this House is being broadcast, the Premier has several women in the background, trying to indicate that, I guess, their caucus has more significant representation of women than really they do. Less than 20 per cent of the government is made up of women, and this is just a shocking fact in 2021.

And you know, some people think that representation doesn't matter. I would disagree. I think that there's a lot of evidence that when you have, for example, women intervening in the law-making and decisions of government, we see more of an emphasis on social programs, investments in education, planning for the long term.

It also sort of impacts the work environment. My colleague for Regina University, during her petition this morning, was speaking about some of the comments we hear on this side of the House because we're a little closer to members of the government than usual, and you know . . . physically close.

But you know, when my colleague presents the infertility petition, the petition calling for coverage of various rounds of treatment around infertility, I think one of the members opposite who are sitting next to us said, oh there's no problem with conception over here. You know, I took it personally. I'm eight months pregnant; I don't know, maybe that was a comment to me. Maybe that was a comment to my colleague, Aleana, who had a baby, you know, the day before she won that seat. Maybe it was a comment about the Deputy Leader. I'm not sure. But you know, it's fine.

It'd be better, you know, if we didn't have to put up with those kinds of comments in our workplace, but we also recognize we're a relatively privileged bunch. And of course this isn't the first time we've dealt with stuff like that. But I think it's great that we have a bunch of, you know, new parents and young mothers involved in the law-making process.

And I think it's incumbent upon the government to make more significant efforts to have better representation on that side of the House, and also just maybe, you know, engage in a bit of education with its members in terms of what are acceptable comments to make in the workplace. And I did think it was important to put that on the record because my colleague from Regina University was speaking to that, and she didn't have an opportunity to finish her thought around that. And we both heard that comment, and we had a little commiseration about it after. And it's not the first time we've heard such a comment, particularly when we're speaking to issues that directly impact women across our province.

So those are the kinds of things I think about when I think about



modernization, you know, action on climate change, representation. I also think about the collective benefits to supporting our most vulnerable.

And you know, I think I'll take a brief opportunity just to talk about the fact that, you know, I've presented a petition about changes to SIS every day this session. It's been really important to me that we hear about that every single day during this fall and winter sitting. And I continue to hear from stakeholders on a daily basis. I continue to hear from the individuals on the ground that are impacted by these changes, and it just doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker. You know, this is not good for the province from a social perspective. It's also just bad fiscal policy.

And I've been copied on those letters from conservative folks that vote for you that are saying, what is this government thinking? They have lost their way. They have lost their way . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well I'm addressing the Speaker, but I can look wherever I please, thank you very much. I'm glad to see that the members opposite are paying attention because this isn't a political stunt, Mr. Speaker. These are speaking to, these are speaking to the significant issues that are impacting the people out there across this province.

[16:45]

A family of four is expected to live on less than half the poverty line. And just yesterday, Saskatchewan received the unenviable honour of having the worst child poverty rates in Saskatchewan. These policies have consequences. These policies have consequences. And the living allowance, 285 for a single person under SIS. It is the same if you have one, three, five children. So even if you buy into that conservative rhetoric about blame the individual, they've got to lift themselves out and pound the pavement and get a job, what about these children?

So when I think about modernization again, I think we need to forge beyond, you know, modernizing the language in our legislation and think about social policy that is demonstrated to benefit the collective. This isn't just about people's lives. And I see the House Leader rolling his eyes. Maybe he's reading one of my tweets, I don't know. But the human argument, I get it. You don't get it; you don't care. But there is an economic argument here, the downstream impact for the Minister of Justice, for the Minister of Corrections, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Addictions, the Minister of Education. Are your ministries okay with this? Is this going to cost you far more in the long run?

And I know ministries always work in silos and that's always a challenge, but have a conversation with your colleague because it's very rare to have, it's very rare to have landlords and anti-poverty advocates and the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and rural and urban mayors speaking out against a welfare policy, something that people don't usually get too interested in. Not a lot of ink is spilled on these issues very often, particularly in the media, but this issue isn't going to go away. So let's work together. Let's address it.

People will die this winter. People will die. That's the most acute consequence, but more than that, this is going to have generational impacts. This is going to have impacts for

generations to come, whether it's on incarceration, you know, the ministry. You know, I've talked to people, kohkoms who had children in their care who were doing really well. They were stable. Children had been apprehended from parents, placed with kohkoms, grandparents. They were doing really well and then these changes came about. They could no longer pay their rent and utilities, and the children went into care.

And you know, working as a legal aid lawyer, the first thing I always asked a parent who had a child apprehended, the first question I always asked them when they came into my office, was about their background. And 99 per cent of the time they came up through the system. They were apprehended.

I know you know I'm right so just, please. I know it's just swallowing a bit of pride and doing what's best for the people across this province, and I promise you it will pay for itself. I promise you it will pay for itself. And I will get up here and I will give you props. We all will on this side.

So yeah, that's what I wanted to say on the issue of modernization. And with that I'm pleased to adjourn debate on Bill No. 53, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 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 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. 54, the miscellaneous statutes remote witnessing Act. This bill amends the Act to allow lawyers to witness powers of attorney, wills, health care directives remotely via electronic means. Of course these were changes that came about due to COVID, but they were long coming. It's perhaps a shame that it took a pandemic to see some of these steps in modernization in the legal field. But fortunately they're here, and it looks like they're here to stay.

This bill also provides that lawyers must follow any rules established by the Law Society of Saskatchewan. That's likely a good policy, Mr. Speaker. The changes made under this bill, it's said, will improve access to justice. This opposition is in favour of modernizing procedural issues in the legal system in order to improve efficiencies and make it more accessible. Of course we always need to guard against sacrificing any substantive rights for efficiencies, but I don't see any of those flags in this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

And I have spoken to some of my colleagues, and many of these

changes were welcome. As I said, they likely could have come sooner. And I understand that the critic, the critic for Justice, the very able member for Douglas Park is reaching out to stakeholders and may have more to say about this legislation. I'm sure that if there are any improvements that can be made, she will bring that feedback to the fore.

So with that, I am pleased to adjourn debate on Bill No. 54, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) 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. 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 Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter into debate again today, this time on Bill No. 55, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*.

And I've heard from members opposite that they couldn't hear me very well last time, so I've assured them that I can speak into the mike a little bit better but will also remind them that we have earpieces provided for this purpose. And I do think it is a good idea for them to listen to all the remarks that are put on the record by the opposition, so appreciate that feedback from my colleagues, as always. You're all in professional development journeys, after all.

Mr. Speaker, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act* . . . Every time we talk about miscellaneous statutes, we know that we are amending more than one piece of legislation. I always find it interesting when the word "miscellaneous" is used so regularly in the amendment of Acts. It makes me think about just assigning a miscellaneous drawer and putting everything in it, which I think doesn't go well in the world of home organization. But it does fit well in the world of changing legislation apparently, Mr. Speaker.

And so this is where we're at. We're amending *The Electronic Information and Documents Act* of 2000. And it implements similar amendments to those that have been set out — I think we're talking about Bill No. 54 — that were set out in Bill 54, the miscellaneous statutes remote witnessing Act. So this one, 55, goes with it, and it allows for electronic witnessing of documents. And there's a number of different documents that are laid out here including wills, power of attorneys, and health care directives.

And remote witnessing, certainly the idea of remote witnessing

makes a lot of sense. I think I've talked to a couple of folks before about the fact that I signed my mortgage remotely. Someone came to me with a tablet, and I signed my name and then suddenly I had debt for 25 years. So if we can do that, it certainly makes sense that remote witnessing in these other areas could be possible.

Given that we are in 2021, we expect these types of advancements. And so it's interesting that the pandemic has moved us in this direction as well. And I think it's sort of an unforeseen circumstance, but so many people have become comfortable using Zoom, like people that I never would have expected in my life I would have seen on Zoom. Because there is a lot of access to it if you just click the link. You don't have to have the app; you don't have to sign in. It certainly allows for people to participate remotely. And this has become more commonplace. We have kids that have been going to school remotely at varying stages of the pandemic. Some people chose to keep their kids at home. My nephews were a couple of those kids last year and I tell you, it was a completely different experience for them trying to do school on devices from home.

You know, there's the question about access to the device in the first place. You know, not every family has enough devices to go around and so it sort of reminds you of your own privilege in these situations. I know there were programs at schools and that sort of thing to loan out devices. But you can't replace the real thing. And I don't know what, if you folks in the Sask Party caucus have had meetings remotely. I assume you have had some of these as well. But I know for the NDP caucus, we have had a lot of meetings remotely, and you know, whether these are . . . I won't disclose the platform we use because I don't want anyone to get any ideas.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know, I think it can't replace the real thing to do these things remotely. So there is meaning and context and intonation that are lost. And someone described this to me as, the Zoom meetings of the world are effective at communicating information but not effective at understanding emotion. And I have definitely witnessed this as well, where I've thought, well geez, what did this person mean about that? And then I think things can get torqued up a little bit on online settings or you see this on online comments as well as social media. There can be misunderstandings. So we want to make sure, obviously, that that isn't the case, that there isn't essential information that's being lost through these processes and that instead we are just looking at increasing access to justice.

I shouldn't admit that I don't have a will at this point, but I should get a will. And if this legislation allows people to . . . The Law Clerk is giving me eyes. I think if this allows for folks to do their important business in a remote fashion, then that is certainly of benefit. Of course access is still limited on whether you have access to reception and the internet. This was an election promise from our side, about increasing access to high-speed internet across the province. So I know that that is an essential piece, and something else that we need to look at to make sure there's access. My colleagues will have a lot that they want to say about this, and we will have those conversations in committee as well.

But with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 55, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Remote Witnessing) Amendment Act, 2021 (No. 2)*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. We have now reached the hour of adjournment. This House now stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning, but everyone stay for the CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] AGM [annual general meeting].

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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