



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

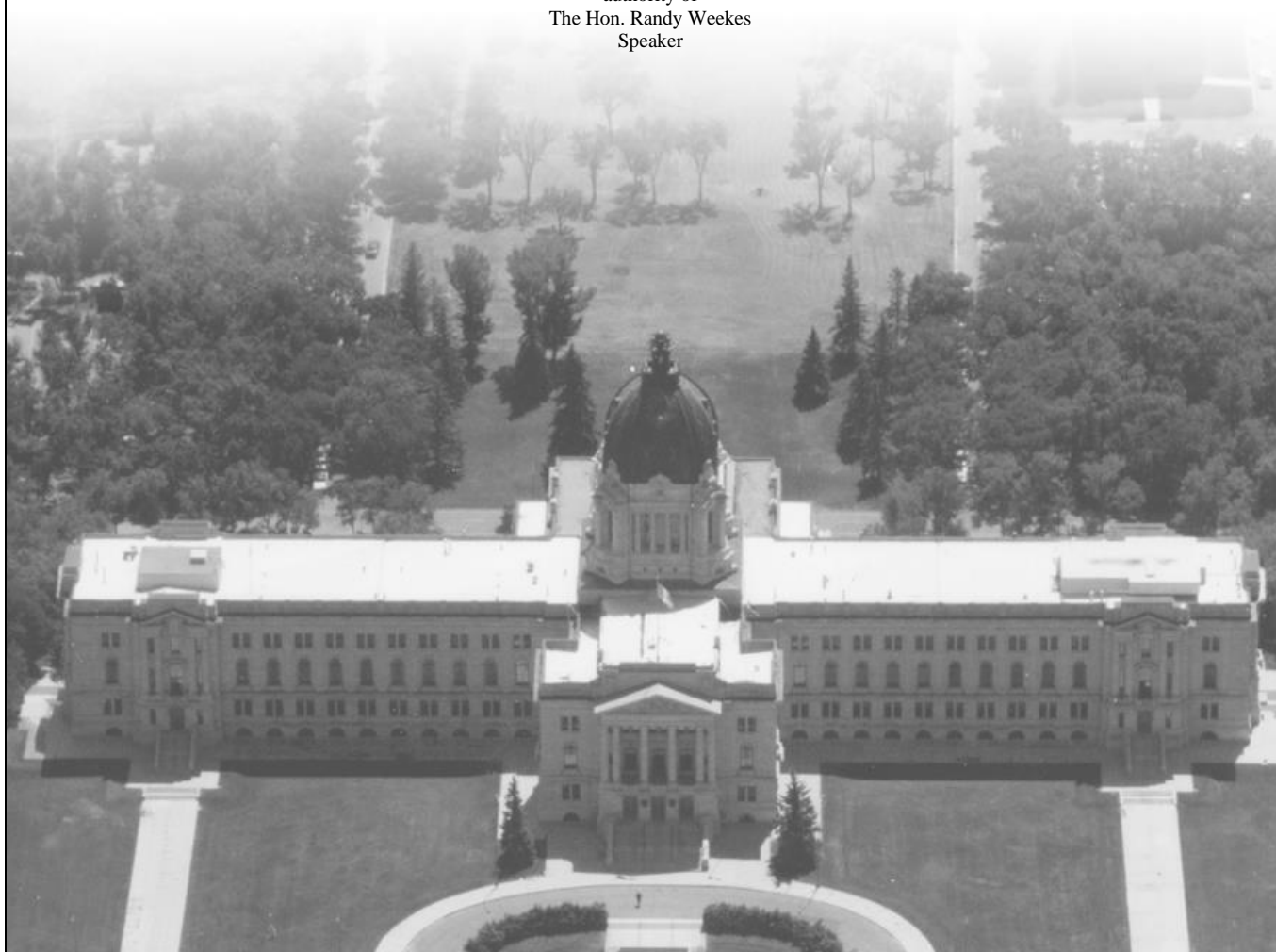
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd Session — 29th Legislature

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

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)
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)
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Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)
Docherty, Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)
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Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)
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Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)
Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)
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Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)
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Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)
Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)
Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (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)

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Independent (Ind.) — 1

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Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a rare and distinct pleasure for myself to introduce some very distinguished guests in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, a number of them, so bear with me.

I'll ask them just to stand and wave as I introduce them: Ambassador Kerim Uras of Turkey; Ambassador Emil Druc of Moldova; Jesoni Vitusagavulu, affectionately known as Vitu, who is the former high commissioner of Fiji to Canada. He's now with Embassy Connections Canada in Washington, DC [District of Columbia]. No stranger to this city, Omar Al-Katib is honorary consul of Turkey, also the VP [vice-president] of AGT Foods.

With him as well is Stuart and Joellen Rempel. Mr. Rempel is the chairman of the board of directors of the Great Commission Foundation, serving more than 470 Christian non-profit organizations doing education and humanitarian work in more than 90 countries. With them as well is our chaplain of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, Mr. Fred Hill, Pastor Fred Hill. And last but certainly not least, my very good friend, the president of Embassy Connections Canada, Mr. Jerry Sherman.

Mr. Speaker, I think worthy of mention is the ambassador of Turkey. Thank you so much for taking part in what you are doing in the current world situation in your country as well as Moldova, being in our prayers, being in very close proximity as well. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to welcome Mr. Al-Katib to his Assembly, and all our guests to our Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these distinguished guests to our Assembly on behalf of the official opposition and indeed all people in the province of Saskatchewan. Your Excellencies, all honoured guests, welcome to our beautiful province. We thank you so much for choosing to spend an important part of your day with us here watching the legislative shenanigans as they go on. And on behalf of the official opposition, you are, of course particularly from Moldova, in our thoughts and prayers. And we are so glad that you've chosen to spend some time with us here today. Thank you and welcome.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in the west gallery is Mark Lang. Mark recently retired from KPMG as the office managing partner in September, where he spent over

the last 40 years. Who thought that accountants actually lasted longer than lawyers?

He began his career at KPMG in 1981, got his chartered accounting designation in 1984, became a partner in 1995. He was awarded the designation of Fellow Chartered Professional Accountant in 2019. KPMG has served as accountants and auditors for a number of the Crown corporations for the last number of years.

Mr. Speaker, Mark along with his wife, Susan, and three children are lifelong curlers. He represented Team Saskatchewan at the Brier in 2002 and at the senior nationals in 2016. Last month he was coach for Team Saskatchewan at the Scotties where his daughter Christie Gamble competed. And he is seated today with another one of his daughters, Michelle Lang, who is the chief of staff in the Ministry of Justice in this building. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mark on his retirement.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister to recognize Mr. Mark Lang in his Assembly at this time of retirement. Certainly Mark has been a leader in many ways through his province, in the business community and also in sport as well, and it's a pleasure to see him here with his daughter Michelle. On behalf of the official opposition, we wish him a happy retirement and our thanks for all of his service to his province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Along with my colleague and the member opposite, I'd like to congratulate Mark Lang on his retirement in September. I've known Mark probably quite a few years over all the years at curling and seven years on the SaskTel board. We had many good times. I considered us friends, maybe enemies out on the ice. But it was great to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Frenemies, yeah. And Michelle, in my new role here as Deputy House Leader, she controlled me quite well and I do miss you, Michelle. Anyway, I would like to join in his retirement and get everybody to join in in congratulating him on his retirement. Thanks, Mark.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce today a group of medical students from the University of Saskatchewan who are part of an organization called Students for Harm Reduction and Informed Policy. Very important work. I do have one addition. I think it should be students for harm reduction-informed medical policy and then you can be SHRIMP, a better acronym there. But no, this is a group doing extremely important work.

We've got Alyx, Erin, Tong Chen, Lauren, Samantha, Ava, Matt, Sahya, Nina, Adrian, and Jared. We have Ryan who organized today's meeting and today's session, their visit here. And Anthony and Sarah who founded the organization.

This is a group of medical students who are using what they're

learning in their college, learning in their training, and bringing that forward in advocacy for harm reduction. And at a time when we have an incredible number of people who are struggling with alcohol and drugs, with high numbers of overdoses and insufficient support for harm reduction in this province, that advocacy is extremely important and appreciated. So I'd ask all members to join me in thanking them for their work and welcoming them to their Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, pendant que je suis debout, je veux dire bonjour à l'Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise, les représentats ici avec nous aujourd'hui: le directeur général, Ronald Labrecque; et un analyste politique, Marc Masson et leur groupe. Peut-être on s'est vu déjà, mais avec les masques c'est pas toujours claire. Mais vraiment bien d'avoir des représentants de la communauté francophone ici.

Ce mois de mars c'est le mois de la francophonie. On a des célébrations des contributions dans le passé and dans l'avenir de la communauté francophone. Moi je suis fier de faire partie d'une famille francophone, même qu'avec cet accent c'est évident que je suis anglophone pur et dur. Mais je suis vraiment content de vous voir ici, et je vous remercie pour votre travail ici dans notre province.

[Translation: while I'm on my feet, I'd like to say hello to the representatives of the Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise who are here with us today: director general Ronald Labrecque and policy analyst Marc Masson and their group. Perhaps we've already met, but with masks it's not always clear. But it's really good to have representatives here from the francophone community.]

The month of March is Francophonie Month. We celebrate the contributions from the past and in the future of the francophone community. I'm proud to be a part of a francophone family, even if with this accent, it's evident that I'm anglophone through and through. But I'm very happy to see you here today, and I thank you for your work in our province.]

Je demande à tout le monde ici [Translation: I ask everyone here], I ask everyone to join me in welcoming the representatives from the Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise to their legislature.

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I too would like to join the member opposite in welcoming these students here who are here in the Assembly today and thank them for what it is that they are doing with respect to harm reduction in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, as we've discussed on the floor of this Assembly many times and publicly in the media as well, this is a significant issue in our province right now when it comes to overdoses and addictions in Saskatchewan and across the nation. And the Government of Saskatchewan takes this issue very seriously, and it's a priority for our government.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the students for being here today. And I'm not sure what their schedule might be, but if there's an opportunity to meet later this afternoon after question

period, I would be more than willing to sit down and have a discussion with the students about their involvement and hear from them as to their ideas when it comes to harm reduction. So I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to introduce two individuals today. One of them is seated behind me — Em Ironstar, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance. We had a chance to meet earlier today and had a very productive meeting, and I just want to commend her for her incredible advocacy for the arts community, for artists, and for member organizations. We had a very productive discussion about the way that artists contribute to Saskatchewan artistically, culturally, and economically. And I want to thank her for our meeting and welcome her here to her Legislative Assembly.

And too, in the Speaker's gallery is John McGettigan. John has been a long-time advocate known to many in this Assembly, a fierce advocate for public education. John is someone that I've gotten to know during his nine years and in his ninth year as the president of the Saskatoon Teachers' Association. John's office and my office cross paths between his home and his office and my home and my office, and we see each other frequently walking on Louise Street or to Market Mall. And I've enjoyed those chance encounters to talk about what's happening in public education.

I've had the honour to sit with John and talk about education in living rooms, in boardrooms, in conference rooms, in staff rooms, and I want to thank him for coming here to his Legislative Assembly and thank him for his tireless and fierce defence and advocacy for teachers, students, and learning. Welcome here, John.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the member across the way in welcoming John yet again to his Legislative Assembly. John has done an excellent job over his nine years as the president of the Saskatoon Teachers' Association in representing his members. And I look forward to continuing our discussions later this afternoon. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Justice minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too want to join with my colleagues in the legislature and the Minister of Education in welcoming John to his

Legislative Assembly. The Wyants and the McGettigans go way back, Mr. Speaker. Our fathers practised medicine together and our mothers played bridge together, Mr. Speaker, in the day.

But I got to know John quite a bit better, though, in my former role as the minister of Education. John's become a very, very good friend of mine. We do share a couple of things in common. I won't mention a couple of them, but John likes German cars, Mr. Speaker, and I like old North American cars, but it gives us something to talk about when we get together.

But I do want to thank him for his commitment to public education and the children of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Public and Saskatoon Catholic. John, he's just done a wonderful job and he was one of my go-to guys when I was the minister, Mr. Speaker. So I too want to welcome John to his Assembly today.

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

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to join in welcoming John McGettigan to his legislature. John's son and my son played soccer together. John's dad actually was my mom's physician. A very impressive young man John is, incredible guy. Been able to get to know him quite well over the last number of years. And just thank you so much for what you do.

John told me something quite funny today. He said his dad said that his IQ [intelligence quotient] was the same as his shoe size, and he wears small shoes. But I would say that is completely wrong — a very, very intelligent gentleman. Again thank you and welcome to your legislature.

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to welcome Em Ironstar to the Legislative Assembly. It is so important. The arts in our province is what makes this province so special. So thank you so much for your advocacy — there's a good word — and the hard work you do to ensure that artists have their rightful place in this province. And if you would like, I'm more than welcome to meet with you after question period. Thank you very much.

[13:45]

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce three individuals seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. The first needs no introduction — former colleague, long-time minister in this House and with this government, Rob Norris. A great MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], Rob served in ministries of Labour and Advanced Education, SaskPower, and others. He's Chair of Canada World Youth right now, working at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] synchrotron, and certainly providing community service and has been involved in civic politics as well in Saskatoon.

Seated with Rob is Kirsten Marcia, the president and CEO [chief executive officer] of DEEP [Deep Earth Energy Production Corp.], our innovative geothermal company here in Saskatchewan. I know many, many MLAs — I think there was 22 of us at the time — went out to the DEEP site northeast of Estevan. I remember it was a very, very warm day, unlike today, but we certainly enjoyed our time out there. Kirsten is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan. She's a professional geoscientist and recognized nationally as an outstanding female CEO in Canada.

Also joining them is Susan Handrigan. Susan is a graduate of Queen's University and she is the present and CEO of Canada World Youth, a globally renowned provider of international exchange and volunteer programs dedicated to inspiring agents of change. She's also the founder of Head2Core Foundation, an advocate for mental health through sport in our country. I haven't met Susan, but I look forward to meeting her and the group after question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, a good friend — not just to me but to a number of members on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker — Mr. John Schmeiser, who is the CEO of the Western Equipment Dealers Association.

Mr. Speaker, he's originally a Saskatchewan kid. He and his wife, Leandra, and his daughter Rachel live in Calgary now. Mr. Speaker, he's got a very impressive professional resume. The only blemish on his record, Mr. Speaker, is he's a Montreal Canadiens fan. But, Mr. Speaker, they're so bad this year I think we can forgive him for that. It's just great to see him in town. It's great to see him take time to be in the Legislative Assembly today, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask all members to please give him a warm welcome to our Assembly.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in, alongside the member from Saskatoon Willowgrove, in welcoming to their legislature Rob Norris, Kirsten Marcia, and Susan. I'm sorry, I didn't catch the last name. But it's so great to have you here in the Speaker's gallery and the work that you're doing in the area of supporting youth.

And in particular of course wanting to extend a very heartfelt, warm welcome to Kirsten as the CEO of DEEP geothermal and the enterprising, exciting work that her company is doing to bring forward an innovative technology, trail-blazing here in the province, and helping us transition to a clean energy economy.

It's been an enterprise that I have watched with great interest and fascination over the years as it has progressed through the various stages of development and see it come into operation this past year. Really exciting to see it under way, exciting to see how it's been supported through public funding to ensure that it's been realized, and her leadership as a woman, scientist, and entrepreneur here in Saskatchewan.

And with that, again, I would like to welcome you all to your legislature, and I hope everyone will join me in welcoming them here today. Thank you.

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

Ms. A. Ross: — Extended introduction?

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Assembly, it is my distinct pleasure to introduce Trevor Ives, who is seated in your gallery. Trevor and his family live in Prince Albert where he is the CEO for the Peter Ballantyne Group of Companies. But the reason Trevor is here today is because it is Multiple Myeloma Month in Saskatchewan.

When Trevor was 53, he went for a routine checkup and was found to be anemic. Over the next two years, he underwent multiple tests, was sent to an internal medicine specialist who ordered a full-body X-ray and a bone biopsy, and was finally diagnosed with multiple myeloma. Trevor underwent 16 weeks of chemotherapy and in September of that year had a successful bone marrow transplant. Trevor was recently selected to join the team of directors and staff of Myeloma Canada, where he hopes to have an opportunity to support others with this incurable disease.

Trevor would like to express his gratitude to the staff and doctors of the Saskatoon Cancer Centre, and to his families for their support, and to the Minister of Health for proclaiming March as Myeloma Awareness Month in Saskatchewan. He hopes that recognition of this disease will help early diagnosis and treatment for others.

At this time I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome Trevor Ives to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the member opposite in welcoming Trevor to his Assembly today. You know, I've been watching with great interest the advocacy that's been happening around Multiple Myeloma Month. Greatly appreciative of the fact that this month has been made Multiple Myeloma Awareness Month in the province.

I want to thank you for your public advocacy. I know that, you know, going through something personally isn't always something that folks want to talk about. So using that experience to do good and to raise awareness for the rest of the province and being in that role as a director now, I congratulate you on that and thank you for your advocacy as well.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce the 23 grade 7 students we have up in the west gallery. They're from Laval French school and that's in the MLA from Regina Coronation Park's area. We had a good time talking about the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie downstairs. Their teacher, Naomi Fortier, is here with them. Belineda Léopold-Juliette and Jean Claude Kouassi is here as well.

We have some people from the ACF [l'Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise]. And deep roots in Saskatchewan — 110 years. And I don't think any of them have been around through that time, but we've got Ronald Labrecque and Marc Masson and a nice young lady who I didn't get her name earlier, and I apologize for that. And then we have CJ Harel with the CÉF [Conseil des écoles fransaskoises] is here today and Anne Sibomana and Dawnelle McDougall. So I would like to welcome them to their legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today to present a petition calling on the government to scrap Bill 70. Mr. Speaker, those who signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: the independence of security at the legislature is of great importance to Saskatchewan people; it is a long-standing parliamentary custom that security maintain independence by reporting to the Speaker; the Speaker has a constitutional duty to defend the privileges of the legislature and its members; the Sergeant-at-Arms has successfully maintained the security of the legislature and its grounds since the 1980s.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 70 would turn the Sergeant-at-Arms into a ceremonial role. Bill 70 breaches tradition in how issues of security at the legislature are handled. And, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, historically all security concerns have been discussed at the bipartisan Board of Internal Economy.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to stop the passage of Bill 70, *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021*.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today come from Unity, Saskatchewan. I do so present.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to protect Saskatchewan's water supply. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that water is essential for human health, recreation, health of our ecosystems, and our economy; that research from the University of Regina shows the water quality of Saskatchewan's lakes and rivers is getting worse; and the Provincial Auditor has pointed out that Saskatchewan's lack of a

wetland policy negatively impacts water quality and that significant work remains to better regulate drainage.

Saskatchewan sat idle as our water supply was threatened by the Government of Alberta's decision to rescind their coal policy, a policy issue that continues to unfold in a manner that could have impacts for Saskatchewan. And the province needs to take an active role in opposing those policies that have downstream impacts on Saskatchewan's rivers and deltas, particularly now in light of last year's drought conditions and increasing climate threats and ongoing issues with illegal agricultural drainage.

I will read the prayer as follows:

To actively protect Saskatchewan waters from current and future threats to our valuable water supply.

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

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to once again present our petition today calling for the government to adopt a policy for universal cost-free birth control for all Saskatchewan people. It was my honour to launch this petition yesterday for International Women's Day, and I really hope that members opposite will take this to heart.

Mr. Speaker, birth control is cost prohibitive for many people in our province, particularly for young people. On the high end, some IUDs [intrauterine device] can run up to \$400 per device, and it's essential to the advancement of women's rights that barriers to sexual and reproductive health are remedied by our government.

The signatories would like to bring to our attention the following points: that Saskatchewan has some of the highest rates of adolescent — that's ages 12 to 20 — pregnancy in the entire country; that cost is one of the biggest barriers to accessing contraceptive birth control in Saskatchewan, especially among adolescents; that having consistent and affordable access to contraceptive options is essential for promoting bodily autonomy, preventing unwanted pregnancy, and saving money on sexual and reproductive health care; that sexual and reproductive health are human rights.

And I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to adopt a policy making no-cost prescription birth control contraceptives available to all Saskatchewan people.

The petition today, Mr. Speaker, has been signed by folks from Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to

be on my feet again today presenting a petition for the Legislative Assembly calling for the funding of in vitro fertilization treatments in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know every family or every individual situation is unique and every experience is unique. But what is not unique, Mr. Speaker: the cost associated with this. Members in this Assembly may not know that many people have to travel, even within Saskatchewan, to access these. Only certain types of treatments are available in Regina while others are in Saskatoon. And of course for those living outside of those two cities, there is the additional cost of accommodations.

A couple of fees to list, Mr. Speaker: IVF [in vitro fertilization] cycle prior to medication, current cost in Saskatoon today is \$7,500. Intracytoplasmic sperm injection is \$1,650. An IVF cancellation fee, should retrieval be unnecessary, is \$1,320. The initial phone consultation, 250; and each additional phone conversation, \$150. The cost for photocopying a chart or any piece of paper, Mr. Speaker, is \$26.25. Mr. Speaker, people's ability to have a family should not depend on their financial resources.

[14:00]

I will read the prayer:

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

The signatories of this petition reside in Imperial and Simpson, Saskatchewan.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

24th Annual Rendez-vous de la Francophonie

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The month of March has been proclaimed the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. This is the 24th annual Rendez-vous in Saskatchewan, which celebrates the vital contributions of the French language and culture in our province. In addition, March 20th is the International Day of La Francophonie.

In Saskatchewan, month-long celebrations include a visit to the Government House, Moose Jaw's Western Development Museum, and other historic landmarks by Vitalité 55+, which promotes healthy lifestyles among our seniors. There's also a series of local concerts by artist Cristian de la Luna, and flag raisings in various Saskatchewan communities. This month celebrates what this community has meant to our province, and I encourage everyone to attend one of the local events taking place this month.

To learn more about these events, you can visit the calendar selection of the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie website. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the many and varied participants in Rendez-vous de la Francophonie all the best and to recognize the important contributions of the

francophone community in Saskatchewan. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatoon Venue Committed to Safety

Ms. Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, Amigos Cantina has been a vibrant part of my riding, Saskatoon Nutana, for over 30 years. Not only is it a spirited live-music venue, but a great place to enjoy popular Tex-Mex cuisine.

I'd like to give Amigos a shout-out for going above and beyond in supporting staff, the community, and their patrons throughout the pandemic. Last summer Amigos reopened with live entertainment. They worked with their staff, patrons, entertainers, and the broader community to ensure that measures were taken to keep people safe. Management took every opportunity to come back better than before.

Recognizing their leadership role in the community, Amigos initiated a community consultation survey to help build not only their business but ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive community for all moving forward. Based on the results of the survey, they started implementing measures that allow all patrons to feel safe, including a tamper-proof water station; an option to be escorted to your car after a show; clearly marked, non-gendered bathrooms; and are working on medium- and long-term policies and changes to make Amigos a safe, accessible venue for all.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing Amigos Cantina for their dedication to their community.

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

First-Ever Frost Regina Festival

Mr. Meyers: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well Saskatchewan is the Land of Living Skies, and now Regina is where winter comes to life. Sure it gets cold here from time to time, and the snow can make it tough to get around our roads, but winter is something we should celebrate. Frost Regina did just that, and for 10 days in early February our great city was alive.

The first-ever Frost Regina festival featured the very best of the Queen City and the very best of our province. Residents travelled around the world with the light displays of Glow at the International Trade Centre. There were ice slides, snow mazes at Confederation Park. We had a curling skins game with two of the best teams in the entire world at Mosaic Stadium. World-class figure skaters lit up the night sky with fireworks. Downtown and in the Warehouse District, they had ice bars, skating, art displays. The restaurants were filled with people. Right here at the Provincial Capital Commission at the Wascana Centre, we had an NHL [National Hockey League]-sized arena for people to skate at. There was dogsledding, an Indigenous village.

Most of all, it was a celebration of winter that brought smiles to people's faces. Our government and Tourism Saskatchewan was a proud partner. I was a proud committee member for Frost; it

was fantastic. I want to thank all the committee members, all the people that attended, and especially Councillor Lori Bresciani and Tim Reid from the REAL District who helped chair this event. Our city can come to life, and we saw it this year. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Harm Reduction Advocacy

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the inspiring work being done by Students for Harm Reduction and Informed Policy from the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine. They are working tirelessly to highlight the necessity of harm reduction services in Saskatchewan. In 2021 Saskatchewan had over 450 overdose-related deaths. In the same time frame, there were zero overdose deaths at safe consumption sites in the province.

Mr. Speaker, research has shown that IV [intravenous] drug use is a major driving force in the transmission of both HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] and hepatitis C. Currently Saskatchewan is in the middle of a dual HIV and hepatitis C epidemic. With case rates significantly above the national average, the need for harm reduction is more essential than ever.

While the government refuses to fund harm reduction initiatives such as safe consumption sites and more accessible needle exchange programs, they are ignoring the evidence that these programs will save lives and save taxpayer dollars. Harm reduction measures will alleviate stress on an already overwhelmed health care system. Mr. Speaker, we know that harm reduction strategies make sense through an economic and humanitarian lens. The time to act is now.

I ask all members to join me in thanking the Students for Harm Reduction and Informed Policy for their advocacy.

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

Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association Volunteer of the Year

Mr. Nerlien: — Mr. Speaker, every community in our province is blessed with volunteers who dedicate countless hours to local clubs and organizations. Each year the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association celebrates individuals, communities, and groups through one of their recognition awards. One such award, the Volunteer of the Year Award, recognizes outstanding achievements in the improvement of recreation and leisure opportunities at a local level.

It is both an honour and privilege to stand in the Chamber today and recognize Kent McMann of Foam Lake as volunteer of the year. He's been a key contributor to the Foam Lake Golf & Country Club, 35 years; Foam Lake Combine Lotto, 25 years, helping raise nearly \$3 million for recreation initiatives; Foam Lake Flyers Senior Hockey club, 35 years; Foam Lake Merchants Fastball, 30 years; Foam Lake Minor Hockey, 15 years; Foam Lake Minor Ball, 12 years; Saskatchewan Hockey Association, 11 years on the executive and 17 years as an official.

As credit union manager, I also know that Kent was also instrumental in leading many financial initiatives and community support.

Mr. Speaker, Kent has contributed over 211 equivalent years of volunteer time. It's truly people like him that make Saskatchewan strong and a prime example of what can be achieved when volunteers come together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Multiple Myeloma Awareness Month

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. March is Multiple Myeloma Awareness Month. Myeloma occurs in plasma cells responsible for producing antibodies critical for effective functioning of our immune system. Through a complex, multi-step process, cancer develops and the plasma cells mutate into malignant myeloma cells. Symptoms are often vague: fatigue, anemia, bone pain, kidney problems. This makes it a difficult disease to diagnose.

The cancer grows uniquely in each patient, which makes their responses to the same treatments vastly different. Myeloma can affect people of all ages. Many family physicians miss early signs, and it can take several years to diagnose. It can also be difficult for people to understand that myeloma is a terminal cancer.

Mr. Speaker, in 2021 Saskatchewan was the highest of the prairie provinces, with 9.7 new cases per 100,000 men and 5.5 cases per 100,000 women. By creating awareness, we will continue to raise interest and funding for critical research and the development of new treatments and therapies until the day a cure is found.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in acknowledging March as Multiple Myeloma Awareness Month and to offer our encouragement to those who are afflicted. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Record Sales in the Forestry Sector

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last summer we saw our government's timber allocations spur record-level investments in our forestry sector over the next three years. Now we are seeing record forestry product sales in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in 2021 the sector shattered the previous 2005 sales record with total sales of more than \$1.8 billion. This is a 60 per cent increase from 2020 sales and a 25 per cent increase from the previous provincial record.

Mr. Speaker, forested land covers over half of our province. Forestry is northern Saskatchewan's largest industry and plays a vital role economically and environmentally in this province while supporting thousands of northern jobs.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is home to the largest 100-per-cent-First-Nations-owned forest products mill in Canada. Twenty-seven per cent of our forestry sector workforce is Indigenous and 30 per cent of our provincial timber supply is allocated to

Indigenous businesses. These are the highest numbers of any province in the nation.

Mr. Speaker, last year's sales are another great indication they are on track to meeting our growth plan goals of doubling growth in our forestry sector, growing Indigenous participation in Saskatchewan's resource industries, creating jobs, and increasing the value of our exports. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Premier's Statements and Government Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 8th the Premier described proof-of-vaccination policies as having "effectively created two classes of citizens." He went on to say, "To my knowledge, this province has never done anything like that before in our history, for any vaccine or . . . any other reason for that matter."

Aside from being an inflammatory description of sensible public health measures — public health measures he introduced, admittedly much later than he should have — this comment was deeply ignorant of history, ignoring multiple past examples of real discrimination, such as the long-delayed right for women and Indigenous people to vote.

Yesterday the MLA for Saskatoon Centre, herself a residential school survivor — which is perhaps the most extreme example of two classes of citizens in our province's history — she called on the Premier to apologize for his incorrect and insulting remarks, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier instead did what he always does for tough questions. He sat and let someone else spin. Will he take the opportunity today to do the right thing and apologize?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'll clarify once again as to some comments that I had put forward in a media scrum shortly after those original comments were made. You know, as we look back through our Saskatchewan and our Canadian history, Mr. Speaker, not all of it, most certainly, is proud history.

And some of it, in particular our relationship with Indigenous people in Saskatchewan and across Canada, Mr. Speaker, we have a walk to do. And we have a walk to do together and that's the walk of reconciliation. We have a responsibility, each of us whether we're Indigenous or not, to join and to walk in that walk of reconciliation. We most certainly have that front and foremost with the decisions of the government, and front and foremost with the decisions of each of us as individuals within this government.

Mr. Speaker, to clarify the statement that I had said, and I said this in the media a number of days after, and I quote myself if that's possible.

And this policy that we had put in . . . [And I was referring

to the vaccine passport system, Mr. Speaker.] And this policy that we had put in to try to make a safer society through the Delta wave in no way, in no way, should be compared to those policies of our past and in no way should ultimately be compared to those very, very terrible policies that are part of all of our Canadian history.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But the fact of the matter is, the Premier did make that comparison by making that statement, by saying that there had been no such history in our province. And it's a simple thing, Mr. Speaker. Two simple words: I'm sorry. Can we hear that from the Premier today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[14:15]

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I have spoken in this Assembly many times, most recently a couple of minutes ago, with respect to the work that we have to do on reconciliation and that work is happening within the Government of Saskatchewan. It's happening on an economic level. It's happening on a community level. And it's happening on a very personal level, Mr. Speaker, as well.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the comments that I had made, they were very much in reference to a health care policy that we were putting in place in this province and other provinces were putting in place across the nation. Health care policy that was being brought in place through the Delta wave to make every attempt to make our communities and our families safer, Mr. Speaker.

And we have seen many divisions come out of those very policies that governments had to and we would . . . Looking back, if we had to do it again, we would, Mr. Speaker. Those policies were, most certainly, put in place to keep people safe throughout that Delta wave, Mr. Speaker.

We have now moved on to a different era, Mr. Speaker, finding our way through the Omicron wave. We've reduced and eliminated most of the public health, if not all of the public health care policies that we had in place because of what Saskatchewan people have done, because Saskatchewan people have learned over the course of the past two years what they need to do to keep themselves safe.

And we have provided them with tools, Mr. Speaker — access to vaccines, access to rapid tests. We have over 18 million rapid tests that have been distributed to Saskatchewan people. We have early intervention treatments. Saskatchewan people most certainly, they know what to do. They know how to use the tools that are available, and they're doing just that.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What an incredible display of pride. Someone who has an opportunity to say the right thing and chooses not to. What you choose to say, it matters. It's important. A hundred and forty-three people lost their lives to COVID-19 in Saskatchewan in February, the third-deadliest month in the pandemic. And yet we haven't heard a word of

condolence from the Premier for those who have lost their lives, Mr. Speaker.

He went on social media. He went on national television to promote protests that turned into occupations and illegal blockades, Mr. Speaker. He went on television to promote a group whose tactics range from spreading false information about vaccines to plotting to overthrow the federal government. Mr. Speaker, all kinds of support for that group. All kinds of good words for them, but not a word, not a word for the families who lost a loved one. Not a word for those in pain waiting for surgery delayed because of their inaction. Not a word for the health care workers burning out on the front line, Mr. Speaker, not a word.

Why, when it comes to choosing to say the right thing, does this Premier always have his priorities backwards?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear most of that question, and I think I'm happy I didn't. What the Government of Saskatchewan has done throughout the course of the past two years, which I think we all can agree have been unprecedented, we have faced in this province a pandemic that the entire world has faced, a global pandemic. And I would say that Saskatchewan people have faced it with courage. Yes, we have instituted a number of public health measures on and off throughout the course of the past year, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to those folks that have had a family member that has been in hospital or worse, to those families that have lost a family member due to COVID-19, I most certainly have offered my condolences to each and every family across the province. The Minister of Health offered them on the very first day of session again this year, Mr. Speaker.

And I think it's fair also to say, and we can all agree, that this government has been there for Saskatchewan people, not just in providing the tools that are keeping them, their family, and their communities safe, trying to communicate the knowledge that we know and learned about the different variants that we've faced over the course of the past two years. But, Mr. Speaker, we have provided about \$3 billion in supports to Saskatchewan people, whether that be infrastructure supports in their communities, whether that be rebates on their power bill, small-business tax reduction rates, whether that be post-secondary supports for our students, whether it be augmenting and supporting our front-line health care workers in facility after facility right across this province.

The government has been there for the people of Saskatchewan, and we're going to continue to be there in the months ahead, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, on the 29th of January the Premier penned a letter of support to those organizing the anti-vax blockades. In addition to the all-caps thank yous, the Premier wrote . . . After having been repeatedly corrected on this fact, he wrote, and I quote, "Vaccination is not reducing transmission."

Mr. Speaker, study after study has shown that even with the

Omicron variant, full vaccination against COVID-19 significantly reduces the risk of infection, significantly reduces the risk of transmission.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier now recognize that that statement, as was stated by world-renowned U of S virologist, Dr. Angela Rasmussen, does he now recognize that his statement downplaying the effectiveness of vaccines was, and I quote, “completely false.”

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect . . . And I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to come in with correct information. My words with respect to protests that may be occurring have been consistent for years now. People have the right to have their voice heard. They need to do so within the confines of the law, and they need to follow the law. Mr. Speaker, I never, at no time did I support illegal blockades anywhere, anywhere within this nation or within this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would take this opportunity to credit the Sergeant-at-Arms, to credit the RPS [Regina Police Service], to credit the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and to credit our provincial enforcement agencies for the effort that they made to ensure that we did not have illegal blockades. Through communicating with the organizers or whatever the effort was, credit to all of those organizations for their collaborative work to ensure that we did not have that occur here in the province. And credit to the people that were participating in having their voice heard in this province. They did so, and they did so legally, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the transmission of the Omicron variant in vaccinated versus unvaccinated people, I often refer to the statistics that we have in Saskatchewan as to who is catching Omicron, Mr. Speaker. And we saw Dr. Shahab, we saw Dr. Tam, we saw other chief medical health officers across this province speak very vocally with respect to the fact that vaccines are not as effective at reducing transmission. However they are extremely effective, they are extremely effective at reducing hospitalizations and severe illness, Mr. Speaker, and that’s why we continue to ask Saskatchewan people and anyone that isn’t vaccinated to consider going out and getting vaccinated. It’s still one of the most effective tools that we have available to us in this province.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two days after that letter, that love letter to the future blockades, the Premier once again went in front of the media. And the headline the next day said, and I quote, “Moe scrapping proof of vaccination, repeats falsehoods on vaccines.”

At a time when vaccines are our best hope, are really the only protection in place, we have the Premier of the province repeating falsehoods about their efficacy, and he did so again today. Refuses to acknowledge that he said they don’t work to reduce transmission or infection, which is simply false, Mr. Speaker. Does the Premier regret? Will the Premier apologize for spreading deliberate disinformation about vaccines and their efficacy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I answered most of that in the last answer. But if I’m guilty of having the same point of view as Dr. Shahab, call me guilty. If I’m guilty of having the same view as Dr. Tam when it comes to vaccines and their ability or inability to prevent transmission, but their tremendous ability to prevent severe health outcomes, guilty as charged. Chief medical health officers in Ontario and many other provinces have said very similar to the same things. The CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] in the US [United States] has said virtually the same thing, Mr. Speaker.

Stand by the comments, Mr. Speaker. Proud of Saskatchewan people for what they have done in utilizing the tools and the knowledge that they have acquired over the course of the past two years. We’re finding our way through this Omicron variant. We’re finding our way through COVID. We’re going to be ready to provide the resources to the world in a post-COVID environment, Mr. Speaker. You see the investment landing in this province as we speak in order to position us to do just that. Saskatchewan, most certainly our brightest days are ahead, and we look forward to participating in it.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier has the right to his own opinion but not the right to his own facts. The fact of the matter is this Premier was corrected by multiple experts for false statements. And yet here again we see the Premier of the province doubling down on falsehoods, and falsehoods about vaccines in the middle of a pandemic, Mr. Speaker. And now what do we see? We see the vaccination rate of this province dropping: the second lowest in the entire country for first shots, second shots, third shots.

We don’t know what’s coming in the future. We may very well need to be encouraging people to go and get another booster. When this becomes endemic, this may be a regular thing. This Premier, by spreading disinformation, has made it harder to encourage people to do the right thing. Does the Premier recognize that those falsehoods have consequences?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I’m not sure the Leader of the Opposition has proved any falsehood as of yet. I’m going to quote the Canadian chief medical health officer, Dr. Theresa Tam. We all know Dr. Tam. She’s been on the media a number of times over the course of the past two years, Mr. Speaker.

Here’s Dr. Tam, and I quote: “. . . it’s now clear that the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines — the first two shots of an mRNA vaccine or a viral vector product like the AstraZeneca vaccine — do not protect against an Omicron infection.”

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, all the studies show they reduce transmission. The Premier can wish away COVID by hiding the data, but here in the real world actions have consequences. As a leader, the Premier should know that his words on the efficacy of

vaccines have consequences.

Saskatchewan now has the second-worst uptake for booster doses. We've plateaued at a time when booster doses are essential to keep each other safe. Since the Premier's misinformation campaign and the cease of daily reporting, vaccine rates have dropped off. Week over week following the Premier's misinformation on vaccines, our province's vaccination rates dropped by 10,000 — 10,000 fewer doses in the arms than the week before the letter.

What's the plan to combat the Premier's disinformation and clearly communicate that vaccines work and they keep people safe?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolute ridiculousness coming from that side. To say that anybody on this government said that vaccines don't work, Mr. Speaker, is just completely false. The Premier just read out the quote about Dr. Shahab.

The members opposite claim that we're not being transparent with everything, Mr. Speaker. We are being transparent. Time after time. We're listening to what Dr. Shahab is saying. We're taking his advice. We're reading the quotes back to them, but they obviously can't pivot. They just pick up their next sheet and ask the question that they're supposed to ask. They never actually listen to what we're saying, Mr. Speaker.

I'll reread the quote again one more time, Mr. Speaker: "... [now it is] clear that the primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine — the first two shots ..."

This is why ... They don't listen. This is exactly it. They're just busy shouting. It's just white noise. If they actually listened, they would understand what we're saying here, Mr. Speaker.

I'll continue the quote: "... the first two shots of an mRNA vaccine or a viral ... [protector] product like the AstraZeneca vaccine — do not protect against an Omicron infection." February 4th, 2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday to reporters, the Minister of Health justified keeping Saskatchewan people in the dark by comparing COVID to a heart attack. Mr. Speaker, heart disease is a leading cause of death, yes, but it is not a communicable disease. We have tools at our disposal to limit transmission of communicable diseases: transparent data, vaccines, and public health education.

Instead, government is hiding the numbers, comparing apples to oranges, and putting words in Dr. Shahab's mouth. If he supports your plan, there is no reason to withhold his recommendations. Will the minister finally table Dr. Shahab's recommendations today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

[14:30]

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, we report out all of this information every Thursday. They only have to wait until tomorrow, and then they get the same information that I get. But I will tell you about what Dr. Shahab said on February 3rd. Dr. Shahab ... and we're not taking words; this is a direct quote, Mr. Speaker:

I've mostly been using those weekly reports when I speak to the epidemiology. It's always important to look at the past seven days, the seven-day average. That approach will continue to inform not just the health system and public health, but the public as well.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Shahab went on to say further, "I rely on the seven-day average. I may get to see daily case numbers, but I don't pay attention to them." I'll give you one final quote from Dr. Shahab. If the member from ... If he has something to say, he could pop up. He's just been sitting in his corner shouting the whole time. Then he says we don't tell him the truth, Mr. Speaker.

Third quote: "I think that it's time, and it allows us to focus on a more comprehensive weekly report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Rising Fuel Prices and Cost of Living

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, latest data here in Saskatchewan shows that the price at the pumps could be two bucks a litre in the coming weeks. It's a buck seventy today. That's \$40 more for your average pickup truck or minivan, Mr. Speaker. For those living paycheck to paycheck, about half of Saskatchewan, the squeeze is real. Yet when asked about affordability yesterday, the Finance minister pivoted to the home reno tax credit. A fair program, Mr. Speaker, but the minister forgot that most people don't have 10 or 20 grand sitting around for home renos, and many don't own a home.

In the minister's list of back-patting, they didn't offer up a single new measure to bring some relief to the exorbitant cost of living that Saskatchewan people are facing. What's the minister's plan to help people and families living paycheck to paycheck and being squeezed on all sides?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're well aware that inflation is very stressful on citizens within our province, within our country, and quite frankly I think it is being experienced globally.

Mr. Speaker, for the member opposite to pick one particular tax credit out of a very, very lengthy list is a little disingenuous to say the least. But if he wants to know about the average person, what about the utility bundle being the second lowest in all of the country, Mr. Speaker? That affects almost every citizen within our province. What about the supports that we had where we reduced the power bill for an entire year, each and every month, Mr. Speaker? He didn't mention that. He didn't mention about

the SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] rebate that this government did, or all of the other programs that we do to address affordability.

But I think it opens up a larger debate and something that the members opposite need to pick a lane. You know, they are not interested in oil or getting oil to market until oil prices are high, and all of a sudden, all of a sudden they realize the importance of energy security. Do they now support the fact that we need pipelines in this country?

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, tone-deaf to the reality that Saskatchewan families face, and a pile of rubbish when you talk about an opposition that supports the oil and gas sector, Mr. Speaker, at every turn. A pile of rubbish.

Mr. Speaker, fuel costs aren't just driving up the costs at the pumps. The skyrocketing price of fuel is driving up big increases in food as well. In the fall, the *Food Price Report* projected increases of 7 per cent in Saskatchewan, the highest in Canada, but now . . . And you know, this government, they can laugh away.

The newest report from Canadians for Affordable Energy are now expecting a 35 per cent increase to the price of food. That's \$5,000 more a year for the average household. Families and people are facing an affordability crisis. This government's facing soaring revenues at their disposal, Mr. Speaker. This government has to act on this front. What's the plan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that member said that when we have his colleague, the member for Regina Elphinstone saying things like this, and I quote: "The tar sands are a . . . [bleeping] nightmare period." Mr. Speaker, it says . . . And another direct quote is, "Any political agenda that takes climate change seriously doesn't have space for the KM Transmountain expansion and most regular people understand this intuitively."

Mr. Speaker, the quotes go on and on and on about members on that side of the House that have been against the oil and gas industry and have spoken very publicly, very negatively against it. You have a leader . . . They have a leader that was at a rally against pipelines. I believe he might have got arrested at that rally, Mr. Speaker.

That was a protest he supported, by the way. Because there's only certain rallies that he will support, and for the others that he does not support — of working individuals in this province and other provinces — he calls them names.

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

Government Support of Harm Reduction

Ms. Beck: — I guess, Mr. Speaker, when you can't lead, you just sow division.

Mr. Speaker, harm reduction saves lives. Harm reduction saves lives and this government knows it, but they still have to be dragged into action. Their own drug task force report clearly shows that the government's approach simply isn't working. Supports are not reaching those who need it most.

Tragically 442 deaths in 2021, up 150 per cent over 2019. A crisis that is only growing under this government's watch. My question is this, Mr. Speaker: will this government finally listen to the medical students who made their way here today and fund the harm reduction strategy that even their own officials have told them will save lives?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I extend my deepest sympathies to everyone in this province who has lost a loved one, a family member, a friend to overdoses. We know that this is a very serious situation, Mr. Speaker, and it's an area of significant priority for us.

We have made some significant investments into harm reduction initiatives over the past number of years. And recently in this year's budget, we've expanded upon some of these: 940,000 for drug-checking services, harm reduction supplies, and programming and naloxone; funding for the Muskwa Lake Wellness Camp up at Pinehouse to support folks in northern Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, earlier this past summer we entered into providing drug-checking strips in this province for the first time and expanded that program into 30 locations across the province. We now have free take-home naloxone kits to over 70 communities in this province, Mr. Speaker. We have reports of over 3,500 overdoses being reversed as the result of the use of naloxone kits.

And just this morning the Ministry of Social Services announced a new program that will provide some funding for at-risk youth at Prairie Harm Reduction in Saskatoon, on top of additional funding that we already provide to that organization. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a point of order arising from question period.

The Speaker: — Please state your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Basically the entirety of the outgoing Leader of the Opposition's opening questions were out of order. But I would point specifically, Mr. Speaker, to one quote: spreading deliberate disinformation. Clearly out of order. The Leader of the Opposition needs to stand in his place, withdraw, and apologize.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that you

review the *Hansard* on this. I know that the Leader of the Opposition was making quotes at some places and that there's other text that has been used in this Assembly before. So I'd ask for you to review the record before you rule. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I will review *Hansard* and take it under advisement. I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, introduction.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked leave to make an introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery we have the interim CEO of Water Security, Shawn Jaques, and along with him there is Vice-President Kevin France. These people have been working with me in my office, are very good people and very knowledgeable on what they do, and I'm really happy to have them work with me through the water security system.

And I will say one thing though, Mr. Speaker, is the bad part is they like to come in on Monday mornings because they know that that's when the butter tarts and the brownies are made. Kevin likes the butter tarts. Shawn likes the brownies. But anyway, I would like to welcome them to their Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Requesting leave to join in making introductions.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested to make an introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to extend a welcome to the executive for the Water Security Agency and the work that they do ensuring a safe water supply here in the province for all people here in Saskatchewan, an issue on which I delivered a petition today.

Water is so vital here. The role that this agency plays in ensuring that we have safe water is such an important one. We welcome you both and look forward to so many more opportunities to meet with you both to discuss these vital matters that are so important to every citizen here in the province. Welcome.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

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 Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 46. It's unfortunate that members opposite see it necessary to heckle during really important debate over important pieces of legislation. And it would be nice if they would actually pay attention for once, Mr. Speaker. They might learn a thing or two.

Mr. Speaker, *The Legal Aid Amendment Act* has some very important provisions in it. I know I've had the opportunity in the past to speak to this bill. I'm looking forward to having the opportunity to ask the minister and his officials questions with respect to this piece of legislation. And in order to facilitate that work, I am now prepared to allow it to move to its next stages.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 46 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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. I'll enter in briefly here today with respect to Bill No. 47, *The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, 2021*. We'll be following up at next stages, and certainly there will be lots of questions and scrutiny with respect to this important piece of legislation at committee. So at this point in time, we look forward to those next stages to offer the due diligence. And of course as always, as the official opposition we'll look for every opportunity to ensure the legislation is in the best interests of Saskatchewan people and

improved at every chance possible.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 47 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

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

[14:45]

Bill No. 49

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate again on Bill No. 49, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to put some remarks with respect to this bill on the record already, I do believe. Looking forward to having the opportunity to ask the minister and his officials some questions with respect to this legislation. In order to facilitate that work, I am prepared at this point in time to allow the bill to move on to its next stage.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 49 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

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

Bill No. 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to rise today and enter into debate on Bill 50. I'd like to recognize and thank my colleagues for the remarks that they've entered into the record on this important piece of legislation as well as the stakeholders with whom we will continue to work. However at this point, to allow this bill to progress to the next stages and discuss it more fulsomely in committee, I'm happy to allow that process to proceed. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 50 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

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

Bill No. 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 51, truly a very important piece of legislation for many people, Mr. Speaker. We hope that it's done correctly. In order to ask questions to the minister about that process and how it will be implemented in the future, I am prepared at this time to allow the bill to move on to its next stage.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 51 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 69

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

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to stand in the Assembly today and enter into debate on Bill No. 69, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act* of 2021. It's my understanding that this amendment will bring about some modernization based on changes, improvements in technology over time.

I did take the opportunity to review the minister's statements and just want to highlight a couple things that I find significant for, I guess, for personal reasons, some that I shared, got into yesterday on a different piece of legislation. In particular, the minister's words that these changes will allow where the person receiving support and the person providing the support, when they don't live in the same province or territory, that of course we can use existing technologies to ensure that that happens.

It reminds me a little bit of the first mortgage that I applied for, Mr. Speaker. As a young adult wanting to apply for a mortgage without the history that, you know, our older people have when they apply for that kind of thing, and the challenges to get signatures on a mortgage document. I mean, this is close to 20 years ago. And it was a really challenging time, you know, to try and find a company that will allow a parent to co-sign when we don't live in the same provinces.

And so I'm glad to see that when it comes to things like paying and receiving support, that we're now able to make that work. You know, the internet's been around for a long time, and it's hard to remember a time when it didn't exist. I think most of us in this room can think back to something about that time that was maybe better than today, but this is one of the improvements that technology brings.

And I know that I shared about this a little bit yesterday, being a child in situations very similar to this. Growing up in a single-parent home with another parent who lived in a different province, you know, created challenges that as a child I was aware of.

So again I commend the minister for looking for instances where

children are being impacted. In particular, we know that situations arise often when there's traumatic experiences that are happening in the life of child, whether it be domestic abuse or other problems in the home, or you know, other domestic issues that lead to this kind of trauma for young people. You know, I think it is becoming of the government to examine any way to protect children.

I will just make a note that while I'm commending the minister for finding ways that technology and closing other loopholes that I spoke to yesterday are there to protect children, it's also disappointing to see members of this government celebrate, celebrate the level of child poverty that we have in Saskatchewan, to celebrate the fact that 26 per cent of children in this province are living in poverty, really dire situations, that we lead the country in the rates of children accessing the food bank.

Perhaps the Justice minister needs to be put in charge of making sure that none of those children are being left behind. I see him doing this work with some of these amendments. And it's just really discouraging, and I think it would be quite repulsive for the people of Saskatchewan to see that level of arrogance and celebrating 26 per cent of children living in poverty as something that they can wash their hands of. I mean, they're only the government.

But I digress a little bit. It's discouraging, but as far as this legislation goes, I think it's something that will make a positive impact on families and children in particular and Saskatchewan people. And so I will voice my support for this bill, but I'm looking forward to hearing the comments from my colleagues in opposition as we continue to debate this bill, and from the critic when it proceeds to committee. But at this time I'll move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 69, *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Amendment Act*. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 70

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

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 70, *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021*. Mr. Speaker, as we are all fully aware, this bill will create a new Legislative Protective Service that will be responsible for partisan security for the legislature. As a result, the bill reduces the role of the Sergeant-at-Arms to one of a very ceremonial nature. The Sergeant-at-Arms under Bill 70 will only have jurisdiction over the security of the floor of the Chamber, not even the galleries of the Chamber, which will be excluded. The floor only.

The bill splits the Legislative Assembly into two parts: a legislative precinct and the legislative district. The precinct will be restricted to the Chamber. The district is to include the rest of the Legislative Building as well as the grounds, as was previously defined as the legislative precinct. The bill also gives the Minister Responsible for Policing the ability to appoint a director of the Legislative Protective Service.

Mr. Speaker, you are of course aware of the long-standing parliamentary custom that the precincts of parliament are protected by the Assembly through the Speaker, through your role. Mr. Speaker, we have yet to hear any semblance of a plausible explanation from this government as to why this custom is being breached.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, really the most suspicious thing about this bill is that not one member from this government, not one single member has been able to point to an actual, real-life example of a security threat here that would necessitate a change in security services. Does that seem fishy to you, Mr. Speaker? Because it sure does to me.

And the Minister for Corrections, Policing and Public Safety who is responsible for this bill, the very person who the proposed new director of security would be answering to, has had literally no answers when asked about the details of this bill. That's of obvious concern. It's quite bizarre, Mr. Speaker, and it sure makes a person wonder what the real objectives of this bill are.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the matter of maintaining the independence of police from government, as well as maintaining the independent, non-partisan nature of the role of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Any reasonable person can surely see the importance of this.

One more thing, Mr. Speaker, and this has been noted by several of my colleagues already. We all know that issues relating to security should be dealt with at the Board of Internal Economy as a bipartisan board. And we have again been left with no explanation as to why this process has not been followed.

This bill is just one example in a veritable sea of them, Mr. Speaker, of this government's obsession with unnecessary power grabs. It's actually strikingly similar to what we are simultaneously seeing with Bill 61 and our advanced education sector. Power grabs and infringement on autonomous institutions and offices, that's the MO [modus operandi] of this government, especially these days. And that should be concerning to the people of this province. And it is of great concern to them.

Now believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, I know a thing or two about security. I actually worked as a corrections officer at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre for two years after university where I was assigned to the highest security unit in the jail, Mr. Speaker. The secure unit had some pretty intense security threats. Let me tell you, there were not infrequently situations where the unit was set on fire or the unit was fully flooded, Mr. Speaker, where the shanks were frequently found on routine searches of the unit, Mr. Speaker. And so if someone like me could handle security threats in a unit like that in my 20s, nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, I'm pretty sure we can manage just fine with the experienced professional security services that the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff provide for us here at this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in early December, Alexander Quon wrote an article in the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] on this bill. And I'm going to read from that article just right into the record, Mr. Speaker. This is an important article because it includes commentary from a former long-serving Sergeant-at-Arms from this very legislature, Mr. Patrick Shaw. Midway through the article, it says:

There have been few answers from the government on what the new force would look like or how much it would cost. Christine Tell, the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, has been unable to answer how many officers are expected to make up the force, whether it would be armed, and whether its members would be in uniform.

Pretty basic stuff, right? The article goes on to say:

The lack of answers only raise more questions for Shaw. "I think it's very, very important that there's an independent body there that serves all parties in the non-partisan way," Shaw said. [Shaw continued to say] "And if that doesn't happen, what's going to happen when there is, and there will be at some point, a change of government?"

So there you have it, Mr. Speaker. So many questions and so very few answers. You really have to wonder if all of this is just government's cowardly attempt to quash protest activity outside of the legislature that those members simply don't want to deal with. They don't want to be bothered by it. They think that they're better than having to deal with concerns raised by people in front of the legislature, in front of their legislature. They don't want to have to face the people of this province that they're failing, Mr. Speaker. The Justice for Our Stolen Children camp, Tristen Durocher — we all know very well, prime examples of this, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

You know, Mr. Speaker, all of us here, all of us who have been elected to serve the people of Saskatchewan, we signed up for a job that involves listening to people and hearing their concerns. Even when it's uncomfortable, even when it's something that we'd rather not have to deal with, that's what we were elected to do. It's not a responsibility that any of us should be attempting to weasel our way out of, which is what we see here.

The people of Saskatchewan have a right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, which indeed includes the right to protest at this very legislature, Mr. Speaker. Protests are one way for people to express themselves, for example, in relation to decisions that are made by their government.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which came into force on April 17th, 1982, sets out the rights and freedoms that Canadians believe are essential in a free and democratic society. Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms enshrines a number of fundamental freedoms, including the right to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.

Justice Peter Cory wrote of freedom of expression that "It is difficult to imagine a guaranteed right more important to a democratic society . . ."

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to close my remarks at this point. I strongly urge this government to reconsider this ill-conceived bill. I urge them to scrap the bill and to start showing the new Sergeant-at-Arms and his team the respect that they deserve. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 70, *The Legislative Assembly 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. 71

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

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet today debating Bill No. 71, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*. This is providing amendments to the Act which came into force in 2020, and it's codifying a recent Court of Appeal decision respecting the limit on the amount of funds that can be held in side accounts for life insurance policies. Of course we're always happy to see codification of court decisions. It provides clarity and consistency in how those rulings are being applied and administered, and it also recognizes that our courts are an essential part of the legislative process.

Limiting the amount of money that can be deposited into side accounts, as I understand it, is intended to protect both consumers and insurers. And I will acknowledge the fact that deposits to side accounts are not treated in the same way that deposits into bank accounts are. You know, they're not pursuant to the same regulatory protection measures, and so therefore could be at risk.

I wish I would have had more time to delve into the background details for this bill, because I do have some questions, and the coverage thus far has been fairly scant. I mean, certainly it does raise questions in my mind about, you know, what the intent has been beyond simply providing monies to cover off on future costs related to the administration of an insurance policy, as I understand it. You know, was this seen as a means to protect funds or earnings from some other kind of taxation or perhaps be, you know, establishing the net worth of an individual who may be in some kind of a legal proceedings where their worth is being assessed? Those, I think, are the questions which I know that our critic for this area will be bringing forward to the committee to discuss.

And yeah, I found it interesting that the news release for this bill discussed "preventing people from taking advantage" but no detail really on how that may have been occurring in the past, may occur in the future. And as I say, I would like to see some more details around that issue. And as I say, this is an amendment to a bill which was a recent piece of legislation and had been the result of some court challenges.

And as always, we look forward and welcome greater clarity through these kinds of amendments where they are protecting the rights of Saskatchewan people, that ensures that their money is protected through a legislative framework that ensures that, in the event of dissolution or some other matter, that people's money is protected while at the same time also ensuring, as has been indicated, that folks aren't taking advantage of a system or a measure that's in place for a different reason than what they may be trying to apply it to.

With that, I will wrap up my comments and move that we adjourn debate on Bill 71.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 72

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 72 — *The Life Leases Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter briefly here today with respect to Bill No. 72, *The Life Leases Act, 2021*.

I understand this is new legislation that would require a life lease operator to require disclosure of entrance fees and other financial obligations to potential lease holders before a life lease is executed. That's really important. Consumer protection is critical on these fronts, Mr. Speaker. Too often we've heard of situations where seniors have been exploited on this front with life leases, and many others, Mr. Speaker, where we see predatory behaviour from companies without the proper checks and balances to ensure those protections are in place.

I understand that this will require that terms be set out in each life lease respecting whether the life lease can be assigned to a subsequent lease holder, that the lease holder will have 10 days after the life lease is signed to cancel for any reason, and it will require lease operators to establish a reserve fund which will be used for repairs to the complex, and it creates offences and penalties for contraventions of the Act.

These sound like reasonable measures. Certainly we'll assess them and review them. I'm heartened that I see they're coming as a recommendation of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan. And certainly it's critical that we allow people to have full financial disclosure of the costs and terms of a life lease plainly understood before someone enters into one, to make sure that it's in their best interests as a person, as a household.

Most often these, I believe, are seniors that are entering into life leases, and they certainly deserve consumer protection on this front. The reality is that many seniors are struggling in a terrible way with the cost of living. Certainly many seniors have fixed,

and in many cases, inadequate incomes, Mr. Speaker, while they continue to face a barrage of inflationary costs, Mr. Speaker.

We talked about it here today where we're pressing the government, the Sask Party, to wake up to the reality that food is going up in an exorbitant way. And this is incredibly hard for a household and so hard for seniors, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about food going up 35 per cent in a year. Now for a household, that's going to be about \$5,000 a year by way of an increase. And I know many seniors . . . Now seniors aren't going to, you know, have that volume of food, so their increase won't be quite that much. But I know what their modest and inadequate incomes often look like.

And it's a terrible reality that we have in this province. Often under-discussed is that we have a lot of seniors in this province, a lot of grandmas and grandpas, mosōms and kohkoms, that are living in poverty, Mr. Speaker, that are short of the basic dollars at the end of the month and making some of the hardest choices that a person can make, you know. And so I think we certainly owe it to our seniors and to people to have the protections that they need and deserve, and transparency they need and deserve, with respect to life leases and other contracts and consumer services that they might be entering into.

But we also need to be doing what we can to provide some relief, and we need to see that now. We see the cost of living going through the roof. Of course with Putin's invasion of Ukraine, this has skyrocketed the costs, and this is an extraordinary situation that people are facing.

What hasn't increased one iota though is the earnings of seniors across Saskatchewan, and seniors as well that, you know, of course are going to see their cost of food go up, and seniors that, if they're getting out with a vehicle, are going to see that the gas price today in Regina is a buck seventy a litre, Mr. Speaker, a record high. And in fact projections are suggesting that it could go as high as two bucks a litre in the coming weeks, Mr. Speaker.

And so in times like these, in times of an exorbitant, you know, inflationary pressure and spike caused by an invasion — an illegal invasion that we see in Ukraine by Putin and his regime — we need to make sure that we backstop Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan seniors and families, and provide some relief: some relief from those cost-of-living pressures like the gas, the fuel that's gone through the roof, and as well with the food that's, you know, directly connected as well to the very high fuel and transportation costs.

The Government of Saskatchewan, of course, in face of this invasion, their revenues are soaring on many fronts, Mr. Speaker. And the revenues are flowing in, Mr. Speaker, on oil and gas revenues, certainly as well on potash on the fertilizer front. Certainly the uranium industry's more buoyant right now, Mr. Speaker.

These are very important industries to Saskatchewan, industries that we want to see grow and thrive, and industries that play a very important role in actually expanding into export markets that are currently served by Putin's regime, by Russia, to expand the flow of goods and exports from Saskatchewan, a democratic, trusted partner from Canada — a democratic, trusted partner — and to get our products to those markets to ensure stability, but

also to cripple the ability for Putin's regime to be funded. So that's an important piece here as well.

But obviously, Mr. Speaker, the province is right now seeing high revenues as a result of this horrible global conflict. Saskatchewan people and seniors are seeing wild prices that they simply can't afford, Mr. Speaker, and they deserve a package of relief to address this cost of living. And they certainly deserve measures like improvements to the accountability and transparency in the types of contracts they're going to enter into, as we see here with the life leases.

We will fully review the changes that have been put on the table with respect to Bill 72, and we'll make sure that they're as robust and as effective as they can be to protect consumers, to protect seniors in Saskatchewan on this front. As always we would welcome any input from people across Saskatchewan on this front, from seniors across Saskatchewan, from direct stakeholders on this front. And we'll always work to support legislation that's in the best interests of Saskatchewan people, and we'll always work to make improvements to legislation ensure that we're serving the people that we've been asked to serve.

[15:15]

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I will adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 72, *The Life Leases Act*, 2021.

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.

Bill No. 73

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Marit that **Bill No. 73 — *The Animal Production Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 73, *The Animal Production Act*, 2021. Mr. Speaker, this bill replaces four pieces of legislation, *The Animal Identification Act*, the animal producers Act, *The Line Fence Act*, and *The Stray Animals Act*.

With the bill being proposed is one new Act to bring together government oversight of livestock production. The bill covers livestock and animal product inspections and related licences, rules for administrative agreements, authority for the handling of stray animals, fence cost-sharing rules, and an arbitration process for settling disputes. According to the minister's comments, government plans to consult with stakeholders and bring forward regulations in 2022.

So with this bill, Mr. Speaker, we certainly say innovation in our agriculture sector is a priority for the opposition. The agricultural sector is diverse and an important part of Saskatchewan's culture,

history, and economy, and really any way that we can support our producers by providing efficiency is welcomed by the opposition.

We do hope that the government is true to their word that proper consultations will move forward in the near future. And I think, you know, it's worth mentioning that this government should be looking for ways to support the sector, rather than shaming and blaming them like we saw not too long ago with the APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] letter, which was extremely condescending and not the way that, as a government, we would certainly be corresponding with that sector.

I don't have too much more at the moment. I'd noticed that the minister in his remarks actually referred to climate change, which is quite uncommon from members on that side of the House. So you know, it's good to see, like at least, you know, a token attempt to talk about climate change, but we don't see a lot of action. Talking here, he's referring to the Prairie Resilience strategy, which we all know has been criticized as highly inadequate by those in the environmental community.

I'm not going to talk too much more about this. I think I'll wrap my remarks up now for this. And with that, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 73, *The Animal Production 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. 75

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 75 — *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 2021/Loi de 2021 sur les organisations sans but lucratif*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. As always it's my honour to rise here today and enter into debate on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. As I understand, this bill is essentially a repeal-and-replace piece of legislation before the Assembly, similar to a bill I believe we saw last session in regards to *The Business Corporations Act*.

And, Mr. Speaker, similar to the changes that we saw there, I would imagine that lengthy consideration of the impact on pieces of legislation such as Bill 75 — which as I understand it are consequential in nature or, pardon me, involve the modernization and introduction of modern technologies into legislation uses, such as electronic filing, of course recognizing some of the shifts that we've all seen, important to the ongoing work of governance — and that, of course, is modernization allowing for electronic board meetings.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet I'll take a moment here and talk about governance. And it's easy for us in

the hallowed halls of this, the people's legislature, to forget the important work that so often goes on across this province, at a much different but no less important level in non-profits, in for-profits, local governments. And without the importance of local government and local governance, and governance in organizations such as non-profits, we would not function particularly well as a society. And the commitment that I have experienced, that I have seen, throughout the non-profit sector in this province amongst directors, many of whom are volunteers, is to be applauded and is essential and is far too often overlooked when we talk about all of the good work that does go on in this province.

One of the things I love best about this province, Mr. Speaker, is the real kind of can-do, pragmatic nature of so many. Speaking with stakeholders in the tech sector, Mr. Speaker, they discussed what they called a Saskatchewan advantage, you know, the thoughtfulness and the high level of education that so many here have, but in addition to that, for many of them a background on the farm or not too far from it, and an ability to look at a problem, whether physical or in code, and fix it with a good bit of common sense and the mental equivalent of duct tape.

And in addition to that attitude has been, I think, a really respectful and a really functional history of handshake agreements that have governed so much of the work that's gone on in this province, Mr. Speaker. But as the times change, so must our processes, so must governance, and as such, so must our legislation.

Of course any modernization of *The Non-profit Corporations Act* to allow for greater access and deployment of that governance, whether it's the use of electronic filing — board meetings is noted — or of course the important piece that recognizes and permits for the use of Indigenous languages and recognizing non-profit organizations is critical, not just for the ongoing evolution of this really essential part of society — that of course being the governance of non-profit corporations — but also more broadly for the health and success of civic society in Saskatchewan more broadly.

Mr. Speaker, this is a big bill. Many of my colleagues have spoken at length on this. I understand that the critic has been hard at work, reaching out to stakeholders across the province, and will certainly have more questions for the minister in committee. But, Mr. Speaker, at this point I am happy to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 75, *The Non-profit Corporations Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 76

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 76 — *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to enter into debate here today on Bill No. 76, *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act*.

Now of course with any piece of legislation, with consequential pieces of legislation that will indeed be amended, there are a number of moving parts and there's a great deal of work to be done.

You know, I look down at my notes and I see some of those pieces of legislation are *The Condominium Property Act*, *The Credit Union Act*, *The Métis Act*, and *The Municipalities Act* — all things on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that we love. And again as I noted, of course, with this bill there's a great deal of work that has gone into this as well as the subsequent consequential pieces of legislation that will have an impact there as well as impacting those many stakeholder groups associated with the various pieces of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the critic will have a great deal of hard work to do in regards to oversight and questions to be asked of the minister in committee. But with that, I have no further comments or concerns to enter into the record in regards to Bill No. 76, *The Non-profit Corporations Consequential Amendments Act*, and I move to adjourn debate.

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.

Bill No. 56

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

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into adjourned debate today on Bill No. 56, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2021*. I've had the chance to review this bill. Certainly it's welcomed that there's modernization happening to reflect the superior court. And it is important to reflect the number of family law judges, as we know that this area of law oversees many, many cases in our province. In fact most people who interact with the justice system right now, I think, their first exposure is through family and law. There's so many implications as family law comes to the table.

There are going to be quite a few questions that we have on this front. This Act establishes the criteria for the operation of the superior court, and that amendments are required to reflect the current makeup of the court and modernize the court's ability to assign residency. It updates the number of judges who comprise the Court of Queen's Bench. Certainly makes sense that these would have to be accurate. Contains new provisions that will

allow the court to make an order to allow changes to beneficiary designation for people without capacity, and decision makers for those without capacity can make an application to the court to make changes around those beneficiary designations.

We know that this can be a very contentious issue when people are designated as not having capacity. And maybe others have had this experience, but I've had folks come into my office quite frustrated with the system that exists here, and how sort of final it is when that designation happens.

We do have some questions around the changes on beneficiary designations. I know that the critic is actively reaching out to stakeholders to look for feedback and to gather some information about why these changes are being made, what consultation has taken place, and get some of the rationale there, Mr. Speaker. We will be digging into some of these questions. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 56 for today.

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. 57

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

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise on my feet today and speak on Bill No. 57, *The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2021*. The proposed amendments in this bill are intended to achieve a balance by limiting or prohibiting certain insurance claims that would place an unfair burden on public funds. It would be achieved through . . . for both surface and mineral titles, and changes would clarify that a loss should be valued at the time the error occurred.

[15:30]

And maybe before I get into more of the specifics, I'll back up a little bit and provide a little more context here. So as has been explained with the introduction of the bill by the Minister of Justice — and I thank him for those introductions — what we're talking about here is insurance compensation for Saskatchewan's land registration system and where payments are made for certain losses due to errors in the land registry or potentially caused by real estate fraud.

Although I guess, based on reading further through the explanation, this seems to be more focused on a type of claim related to mineral holdings and how in some cases those are being . . . claims are being withheld or delayed to perhaps hedge, it would seem, and postpone making claims in order to achieve a windfall in value. And so this legislation is intended to put limits on that from occurring, and cap such value losses at \$50,000 on mineral claims.

It's also providing some time limits in terms of when these can come forward. I understand that that would prohibit compensation where a registrar's caveat was filed more than 20 years and the error that was registered against the title at the time the claimant originally acquired their rights. Also it seems that — and this I guess is quite concerning — is it relates to a type of claimant who is of a very sophisticated nature. And by that I would assume that it's been taking advantage of loopholes that these amendments are intended to close off.

These are matters which I know that our critic for the area will be looking to seek greater clarity, understand both the nature of these claimants, the type of land title holders that have been making such claims, and you know, the full scope of this issue as it relates to the number and value of such claims, as has been mentioned by my colleagues in previous deliberations here.

So certainly I would be remiss if I did not also of course mention the important role that mineral development plays here in Saskatchewan. It's crucial to our shared prosperity. And it's vitally important that we have systems in place to ensure the equitable, fair discharging of mineral payments and that we're protecting the public purse, reducing that liability, as has already been mentioned, and that we have the correct checks and balances in place in order to do so and, as I understand it, that this provision is being provided through ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan].

And again I think this is an area where I know that our critic, our Justice critic, will have several questions to be able to drill down and understand the vulnerabilities that may be occurring within that system to ensure that we don't have bad-faith actors taking advantage of our system.

I understand that this also . . . there are some other administrative amendments that will improve or clarify the registrar's ability to correct title errors and to lock titles to prohibit dealings where there is reason to be concerned with permitting further transactions with respect to those titles. I think members here have spoken to that already in terms of where there may be cases of duplicate titles existing and the ability to also rectify those situations.

I'm just going to want to check my notes to make sure that I haven't missed anything in my comments here, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure that I mentioned it but I also wanted to mention that the Act is also providing clarification that losses are capped at \$50,000 on minerals for compensation with respect to mines and minerals. And I guess the one question I would have about that provision is how that value or number was arrived at and if it is the appropriate amount. From this vantage point it's difficult for me to, you know, weigh in on that.

But certainly, as I say, I think our Justice critic will be looking to understand the appropriateness of that amount. And I think that pretty much wraps up my comments on this bill. So with that, I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 57. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 58

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

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet entering into debate on Bill No. 58, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2021*. This is a fascinating topic and Act on which to be speaking here this afternoon. It is focused on prohibiting the aiding and abetting of those who contravene security laws. I think we're all aware that there has been quite a bit of movement, innovation shall we say, within this area of market exchange. Creative destruction I guess would be an appropriate term to apply in this case.

We're seeing how, with the move towards more individuals entering and trading in the stock market through online platforms, that it be necessary that we amend, update, and improve our security laws to account for the numerous ways in which bad-faith actors, I suppose, may be taking advantage of a system that could be somewhat antiquated and not purpose-fit for the manner in which individuals are investing and taking part in the stock market through these new means.

So as I understand it, the amendments in this Act are intended to clarify, among other things, the limitation period suspending plaintiffs seeking leave of Queen's Bench. This apparently has been recommended by the Canadian Securities Administrators. It prohibits false, misleading promotional activities in capital markets industry and allows for electronic filing delivery of documents required under the Act.

So I just want to back up and speak to this item around the false, misleading promotional activities. I've been watching with great fascination the advertisements for capital markets that we've seen. I'm sure we've all seen the ads. And it's been quite concerning to me that . . . the manner in which, you know, individuals are given the impression that, you know, they can make a quick win on their investments with very little talk about any side risks of doing that.

And it kind of glosses over, you know, the complexity that exists within the stock markets. I mean certainly, of course, people can become, you know, well informed and educated on matters related to the stock market. We're certainly seeing a lot of millennials and 20-somethings that are undertaking that endeavour more and more all the time. It's exciting; it's accessible.

But I think what it means is that, you know, there's a lot of people who are falling prey to this, you know, misleading advertising that I think oversells, overrepresents the opportunities. All the upside, not so much the downside of investing in the stock market through platforms that offer reduced fees and, you know, quick returns. You know, I'm not sure, maybe there is some fine print running along the bottom of these advertisements. I've never noticed them. But maybe they're sort of covering off their

liabilities in ways that I'm not aware of. But certainly I think anything we can do to be strengthening the rules around those who are offering services within the securities market and potentially contravening security . . .

Thank you. Just lost the mike there for a moment. Happy to be back on. As I was saying, my point around the need for regulations and legislation here in Saskatchewan that is protecting Saskatchewan investors from nefarious actors looking to take advantage of an emergent area of the market through online platforms, and in particular through promotional activities. And I'd be interested to hear more about the regulations that are going to accompany this proposed legislation and see the details there in how this will be achieved. And also I've been referring to the concerns around misinformation within social media and the need for these rules to keep that in check.

[15:45]

I also wanted to take this opportunity to, I guess, also highlight that . . . I see that there's been additional measures put in place to assist in persecutions that was recommended by the Canadian Securities Administrators, and the need for due diligence around those offering advice and ensuring, I guess, that they're staying in their lanes and not overselling investment opportunities.

I guess at this point that's all I want to enter into the debate on this important Act, Bill No. 58, *The Securities Amendment Act*, and move that we adjourn for debate today.

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. 59

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join on Bill No. 59, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act*.

You know, I want to start out with my comments on the good work that I have seen justices of the peace do. They handle a lot of situations and work well with the court system and, you know, some of the jobs that need to be done so people can get some of the business done. It's important that they do the work they do, you know, whether it's weddings, different documents, allowing people to, I guess, that are incarcerated get out. Justices of the peace can do that. So having said that, I just want to acknowledge the good work that they do.

Some of the amendments that are being proposed in here to me look like they're straightforward. It's a process that they've looked at. I'm hoping the critic will ask the minister and the committee some questions. But overall it looks like they're

moving the age of justices of the peace to 75, but they'll actually assist in, you know, working with justices of the peace in a supplementary process in a way, not full-time, I think, filling in where they can. And that's my understanding, what I'm getting from this. But I know the critic will have more questions and can look at that.

There's also talking about some, I believe, compensation for administration work that they may be doing, extra duties, which makes sense to look at and compensate them when they're doing that type of duties. Another part of the process . . . I think it's six years. They're going from a six-year term to a four-year term.

So some of this stuff I think is, I'm hoping has been, you know, with the minister and Justice have had the discussions. The critic will ask those questions, and hopefully they've come through a process that, you know, is for the most part we would support it. I'm sure if we have any questions, the minister is always open with the critic, and they work through questions that they have to.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I don't have a lot more to say on this bill, and I know the critic will do the work that she needs to do — consult, talk with anyone she needs to. And she has her own connections and gets good conversations going sometimes. So on that note, I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 59, *The Justices of the Peace 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. 61

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 61, *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*. You know, I know that there's a lot of good work out there in post-secondary education, many of our kids, our grandkids, many residents have an opportunity. And I think there's many of them, whether up North, I'm aware of, you know, Northlands College, our universities, Gabriel Dumont Institute — there are many good organizations. SSIT, many of them, many of the provincial colleges, there's many organizations that work on behalf of post-secondary skills and training and trying to get people trained and into the jobs. And there's many areas where I know we need to focus more on making sure that there is opportunities for our young people.

We have many young people, especially when I think about our young population of Indigenous people. And we've been saying this for many years, they are crucial for the economics of our province. They are crucial, crucial to be partners. If we want to, you know, work with our First Nations and Métis leaders to work

with those communities to make sure that our young people have opportunities to training, skills training, and being part of the system, working with our partners in the education system, in the workforce, we know that there's much work to be done.

And we have to encourage that those organizations are there, and that those organizations have the independence to do what they need to do. We understand that, you know, sometimes there's funding, and they get provincial funding, but some of those organizations get a lot of federal funding too. And they do partnerships, and that's important.

We want to make sure . . . And I know for myself, being a part of Gabriel Dumont Institute when I served on the acting board for many years, the board Chair. And I worked with our organizations to take a post-secondary education for many of our Métis students, and a very proud organization, an institute — whether it comes from staff, our students, our senior staff, our administration — they did amazing work, the board of governors working in partnership with the province, federal governments, working with other organizations, other post-secondary institutions.

They did many partnerships, and that's important that they have their ability to do what they need to do. And they didn't have anyone controlling them, like you have to make sure, I understand there's processes and checks and balances need to happen, but you know, unless you can prove, and I think that there's something going on where you need to take away certain . . . and give certain powers away from the boards through the education, the post-secondary education Act that they have to follow, adhere to, the rules and the regulations that they have to follow.

I don't know, and I'm a little concerned here sometimes when we see conversations going where you're going to have a minister who has certain powers over the organizations, and that's scary. And I think we have to be very . . . we have to pay close attention to make sure because sometimes we have a government who likes to . . . oh, they make it look like it's all going good and everything's good. Oh, there's nothing to worry about here. This is all just, we just want to administrate a little maybe too much and have too much control. And I understand government has to have some controls in there to make sure. It's taxpayers' dollars and we want to make sure that happens. And I agree there is a process.

But I hope, and at the end of the day, I know the member opposite, Saskatoon University and the critic for post-secondary, she's going to have an opportunity. And she's been talking with people that I know she reaches out. And she'll do the good work to talk to organizations. And I hope and I would encourage them to reach out to her.

If there are concerns with this legislation, I'm hoping the government has truly taken the opportunity to talk with the organizations, the institutions that will be impacted to make sure they have had that good talk. Because I've said this many times before, Mr. Speaker, you cannot have a government saying it's listening to the people when it actually says, "Well we consulted with them." And actually all it ends, in the end, it's like many Indigenous people that I know are frustrated, and I hear say, "Oh yeah, they say they consulted with us. They come and heard us

and then they go off and make all the decisions, and they didn't take anything serious." So make sure you're consulting and not insulting people. And I think that's very important.

And maybe the government has the best interest in their mind of going on. Maybe they do. But honestly, I think at the end of the day, let's make sure that you do consult and you talk and you make sure you get it right. Because when you're making changes in legislation like this and giving the minister certain powers, that is alarming. And I wonder why.

And I hope and I know my colleague will ask many questions and try to find out what exactly why are they going the route they're going. So I think, you know, it's very important that we be very clear to those organizations that have done amazing work in our province. Our post-secondary institutes have done, have done amazing work. They've done a lot of good work.

So I want to make sure that the government isn't trying to . . . I don't know what their reason is looking at this, and maybe they'll be able to, in committee, explain that. But I think there's people watching this morning what's going on, and I think at the end of the day we'll make sure we ask those questions and make sure we hold the government accountable. And I know my colleague will do that in committee when this bill goes to committee.

But I know more of my colleagues will have comments about this bill and the process that will happen. And when that time comes to ask those tough questions, we'll have more time to consult and hear what people have to say. We'll be prepared to ask more questions and find out what exactly then.

And if the organizations that may be . . . I don't know how the students will be impacted, how the organizations . . . There's so many of them doing great work. If they feel like this, I know sometimes you're scared to say anything because you're scared of your funding, because government can be pretty harsh. They don't like to be criticized. They don't like being questioned. I hope those organizations will speak and say if they have concerns with this change in the legislation. I hope and encourage them to reach out and say something, like you have. We're here. I think the public would listen to you.

We've seen some of the organizations do the good work, post-secondary work that's been done. We see the good work. Many of us are behind you. We thank you for your service to many of our students, to our residents in the province, and we'll back you. We'll do all we can to make sure if you're feeling like you're being threatened or you're, you know, you're unsure if you say anything will you have a backlash of funding, something cut.

I know it's alarming, because I've seen what this government can do. I've seen NORTEP [northern teacher education program] get just . . . It was terrible what they did to NORTEP program, a gem of an organization that did such good work in the North, and the government at that time . . . well the time it was the minister, I believe, was the Premier at the time when they were going through that. In the end, another minister carried out the cutting of it and gutted that program so terribly.

So I don't know that I have much more to say on this bill. Like I said, I'm prepared at this point to adjourn on Bill No. 61, *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2021*. Thank

you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 62

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

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise today and enter comments into the record on Bill No. 62, *The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act*. And this is a piece of legislation where I do, in fact, have a bit of a song in my heart, but in addition to that, some feedback from stakeholders and practitioners that I would like to leave on the record for their behalf.

To begin of course in summary, the proposed changes to Bill No. 62 will allow for dental hygienists, therapists, and assistants to practise independently through, I believe, it's a repeal of section 25. And you know as noted, I believe, extensively by the minister, the intent in this is of course to expand access to dental care certainly in more rural and remote parts of the province where access is not what it should be.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, this is certainly a laudable goal, as we know the importance of dental care to primary health care and in many cases in preventing an additional downloading of services onto acute care and critical care. And folks presenting in emergency rooms or physicians' offices with dental-related issues is certainly not only laudable but ultimately economic as well, Mr. Speaker. And of course we are, on this side of the House, happy to see that.

I would note, as I'm sure the minister is aware, certainly some feedback from stakeholders such as, you know, the College of Dental Surgeons and others in Saskatchewan who do have, have had concerns with the proposed removal of section 25.

[16:00]

I understand the college has itself since their last AGM [annual general meeting] been reaching out to stakeholders and doing that important work themselves, and as always would urge and expect and understand that the ministry is undertaking that critical work as well to ensure that that outreach and engagement has undertaken stakeholders in the province such as the CDSS [College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan]. You know, they provide strong leadership and education to members and work collaboratively with other bodies and certainly with government to provide a good industry and a safe and robust work environment for the many who are employed in this sector across the province.

And the second point I'd like to speak on specifically is in regards to labour force. And with the goal of expanding access and in opening up this piece of legislation, there are a few issues that have been raised by stakeholders which I would like to just put on the record for consideration by the minister, and I certainly know that the critic will be raising in committee.

In Saskatchewan, for dental hygienists we have a robust and we have a strong education program notably offered by Saskatchewan Polytechnic. It's a three-year degree program, and my understanding is that there is consideration of looking at expanding it even to a four-year program similar to that which is offered by nursing.

And the concerns that I've heard raised by stakeholders, and specifically dentists and those working in the field, is that the additional year being contemplated and the year that was already added onto what was previously a two-year program isn't necessarily even hands-on training for these future practitioners and for these future hygienists. It's more in-class training.

And, Mr. Speaker, of course while we recognize the importance of education and skills training and development, other jurisdictions in Canada have programs that are 18 months to 2 years. Ontario is a notable example, where individuals who are looking to work as dental hygienists — which is a good profession, Mr. Speaker — for individuals entering the field and looking at a degree, upon successful completion and follow-through with their exams, they can walk into a good, stable, mortgage-paying career and salary.

However recognizing the mobility of our population and specifically young people, which we've seen unfortunately in this province with many leaving, as it relates specifically to dental hygienists there is a concern that has been expressed that by adding additional years of study onto the existing degree program, more and more young people interested in pursuing this career are looking at their options. And they're saying, look, I can take an 18-month program in Ontario for a similar cost and then be working in my field for the same salary two full years sooner than I can in Saskatchewan. And this is posing a real challenge for recruitment and retention when those additional years of study here in Saskatchewan are not even practical, hands-on study.

And I raise these concerns not to denigrate the important work that is being done by these degree-granting institutions, but to flag for the minister and all concerned members that there are those practitioners and dentists, as I'm sure many of the members know, across this province who are concerned with their ability to train and retain specifically dental hygienists, when the program offered in Saskatchewan is three years, and individuals interested in entering this field can take an 18-month comparable program study with additional practical, hands-on learning and be that much closer to working, employed, earning a salary in their field. From what I have been told by stakeholders, it is leading to some challenges for recruitment and retention which have a particular impact on those offices and those individuals practising outside of our bigger urban centres.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, it was flagged with me by stakeholders that in opening this piece of important legislation, again there are some labour force concerns, not necessarily as

they relate to dental hygienists, but specifically to dental assistants. And you know, there would be many in this House who would be familiar with the staffing challenges that many dental offices are facing. But the staffing challenges don't relate to dental hygienists but rather to dental assistants. And this is of particular note outside of Regina and Saskatoon. And I did want to take the opportunity as we do this important work of adjourned debates, to leave those comments on the record.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, the song in my heart on this is in particular, of course, of great importance of access to dental care, a privilege we all enjoy as members in this Assembly. But unfortunately not all in this province do, but many used to. And of course, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about the children's dental program.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, in preparing for this piece of legislation — because believe it or not I do enjoy adjourned debates as an opportunity to learn about the breadth and scope of government and the important work that so many drafters and Clerks and others undertake in doing the actual business of this legislature — and so I went through the archives and did some reading on the dental program. And this was a free program. It was accessible. It allowed children in school, regardless of circumstance, equitable access to dental care which of course, as we know, has consequences for health, for economic prosperity, and for self-confidence and a number of other things, but most importantly for health going forward.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, this program was brought in under former Premier Allan Blakeney. And in reading his memoirs — as I've been working my way through the memoirs of many politicians who've served in these halls, not just New Democrats — you know, he noted in particular, following the defeat in 1982, that one of the things he was worried about the most was the children's dental plan. And you know, with good reason, Mr. Speaker. This was a program that helped children get that much closer to an equitable start.

And following the cancellation of this program, I quote from a *Leader-Post* article from June 1987, the take-up rate for in-school dental clinics, which was previously 90 per cent, was now . . . Pardon me. While the rate for those visits to the dentist for those aged 14 to 17 now eliminated, the program, previously covered for the visits to private dentists, was now only 30 to 40 per cent.

A drop from 90 per cent access to 30 to 40 per cent. And of course, Mr. Speaker, this is particularly prohibitive for working families and, as cited in 1987, for those living a long distance from major centres with dentists. You know, these concerns were raised by then critic Pat Atkinson, who was skeptical of the suggestions that the then government could get the same work done by the private sector for less money.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, the former member was right because dental care was removed from school. Parents were less likely and less able, less economically able to take their children to the dentist. And you know, during this whole episode there was no significant cost reduction, Mr. Speaker.

And I quote again from the *Leader-Post* in July of 1987: "Utilization is key. In 1986, 90 per cent of the children eligible were enrolled and receiving dental care in this province. This will never be the case with the government's proposed new plan."

And indeed, Mr. Speaker, what a shame it never was.

There were no concerns with quality of service. There were no concerns with cost overrun. And during this whole episode the reasons for the removal of this program can at best be described as conniving, unjust, and irrational.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, before I conclude my remarks, I'd like to read again from some of the memoirs of Allan Blakeney, particularly to the dental plan.

Former Premier Blakeney goes on:

The children's dental plan was dismantled for no good reason. I would regard it as still a very sound and cost-effective way to deal with the dental needs of Saskatchewan children and with the looming shortage of dentists in rural small-town and small-city Saskatchewan.

He goes on:

I am not upset when an idea that I championed has served its purpose and passed from the scene. I am not very upset when an idea I've championed is discarded in favour of another approach which someone feels will work better. I am upset when changes are made which don't make any sound business or sound government sense but rather are made largely on ideological grounds.

So, Mr. Speaker, here we are some 34 years later and *The Dental Disciplines Act* is before this Assembly and open again. And you know, while I laud the sentiments shared by the minister in his introductory comments on this bill, truly if there is a desire to expand and truly improve access to dental care, the place to start is with children and the place to find them is in school where they are.

You know, Mr. Speaker, to reiterate the comments shared with me initially as it relates to section 25, as it relates to skills training and development for dental hygienists, and again the labour force shortage as it relates to dental assistants have been shared with me by many in the sector. And I am confident that the minister is doing that good outreach that needs to be done with stakeholders across the province. And I am confident that my colleague, the critic, will be raising concerns and questions shared in committee.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I thank the members for their rapt attention, and I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 62, *The Dental Disciplines Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 63

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

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Much to the delight of members opposite, I too have a song in my heart on this bill. Now of course, it is a new piece of legislation before this Assembly and there's not a great deal to compare it to. But of course it is, as always, a privilege to rise here and enter some comments onto the record on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan — our duty here in opposition — as it relates to the considerations of Bill No. 63, *The Reviewable Transactions Act*, 2021.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I recognize the comments made by the minister as it relates to the introduction of this bill and understand it's a full repeal-and-replace of the previous . . . well not the previous piece of legislation but another Act, *The Fraudulent Preferences Act*, and I believe he said the 1571 statute of Elizabeth which sounds riveting. But in its place this new piece of legislation is being put forward. As I understand it, it was recommended by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, which of course is an important body that does significant work on law reform.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, as we look at fraudulent preferences involving transfers of property and failures to adequately address modern commercial transactions, I think it's safe to say that this is a good and important piece of legislation. Many of my colleagues have entered comments into the record already on Bill 63, *The Reviewable Transactions Act*.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would conclude by saying, while I of course support the intent of the bill and the modernization, I do look forward to the comments and the strong oversight that my good friend and the critic, the member for Regina Douglas Park, will provide on this legislation.

With that I move to adjourn debate on Bill 63.

[16:15]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 64

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

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As always, it's my privilege to stand today and enter some comments onto the record as it relates to Bill No. 64, *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments Act*. This

bill of course as we know by its name, contains consequential amendments to the bilingual legislation necessary to implement *The Reviewable Transactions Act*, which has of course been discussed already.

And as I understand from the comments made by the critic, this clarifies remedies that can or cannot be sought under the co-operatives and non-profit corporations Acts. Of course, Mr. Speaker, bilingualism in legislation is important, and it is of course important that all legislation is clear and concise to ensure full understanding and that the correct remedies and terms are being used.

It's safe to say, Mr. Speaker, that we are in support of this legislation, but I understand, as always, my astute colleague from Regina Douglas Park will provide critical and important oversight on this piece of legislation when it does eventually move to its next stages. But at this point, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 64, *The Reviewable Transactions Consequential Amendments 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. 65

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 65 — *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief here with respect to Bill No. 65, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2021*. I know our Justice critic has been engaged on this piece of legislation. I've observed her comments. I've read the minister's comments. I understand that this bill implements recommendations of the 2020 Provincial Court Commission, and I understand the suggestion is that this will reduce costs and complexity and uncertainty of commission processes.

Certainly any time we're talking about the judiciary, we need to recognize the importance of its independence from executive government, Mr. Speaker, and I know our Justice critic will be prepared to deal with this bill at its stages of consideration, Mr. Speaker.

With that being said, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 65, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2021*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 67

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

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 67, *The Emergency Planning Amendment Act, 2021*. With this bill, amendments will provide enhanced protection from liability to individuals and organizations who comply with applicable public health orders. It also provides clarified liability protection for the Crown and its agents against COVID-related litigation.

You know, Mr. Speaker, with the increase of unfounded threats of litigation against health care workers and organizations, this legislation is welcomed by the opposition. Those that have been obeying public health orders that used to exist and had been acting in good faith shouldn't have to deal with the stress of litigation.

It is highly unfortunate, I think we can all agree, that there is so much misinformation, disinformation, and polarization that has really erupted throughout the pandemic, but of course we know the government has such a strong role to play in counteracting that. And I'll just be honest. I think, and I'm trying to be fair here and objective, but during the start of the pandemic we saw that quite well from the government, and I'm happy to concede that.

But as time has gone on and as we've gone further and further into the pandemic, and most recently with the current wave, we've seen the Premier's tone change, and we've seen it change in such a way that it has caused an increase in polarization. And I think that's hugely concerning to many people in our province.

I don't know what to attribute that to, the change in tone and the change in messaging from the Premier, but something's happened. Something's impacted how he's been speaking to the people of this province about the pandemic, including — as, you know, we've discussed here in question period today — some of the claims that the Premier has been making about the efficacy of vaccines for instance, some claims that he's made in relation to the convoys.

And I don't think that's been helpful for people in our province. I think that's stoked a lot of division. And you know, increased polarization is something that we certainly don't need any more of in our world today and that includes in Saskatchewan.

So I think, you know, we certainly need more clear and concise messaging from this government and a renewed focus on educating the public. And as I said, we did see some of that coming from the Premier earlier on in the pandemic, and that was good to see. And that's sort of fallen by the wayside.

And I think that's not right that the Premier has seemed to just sort of wash his hands of trying to educate the public further, of trying to provide the public with the information that they need to make personal risk assessments that, you know, he has said

that everyone can make on their own. And that's extremely difficult to do without having the adequate information to base those risk assessments on. You can't base risk assessments on zero information and information that has, honestly, been hidden from the public.

And I think we can . . . I would assume there's even members on the opposite side that would agree with me on that, that there's information that is critical for the public to have that is being withheld by this government at a time when we're still very much in the middle of a pandemic, at a time where our hospitalization rates have plateaued and where health care workers are increasingly leaving our province, leaving their jobs, leaving Saskatchewan.

We've seen some top leadership with the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] just throwing their hands up and saying, I can't do it anymore. And not just the top leadership. We're seeing people on the front lines who are throwing up their hands and saying, I can't do it anymore and I'm not willing to continue on in this role doing everything I can to protect members of the public when my own government won't take steps that are based on science, that are based on data.

That's a problem. And if people think that we're not at a crisis point here with our health care system, take a look at the numbers. I know they only come out, you know . . . Some of them come out once a week now. But talk to some health care workers.

You know, for myself, I'm not claiming to be an expert. However, I did represent health care workers for numerous years prior to being elected, people who actually do the work, the dirty work on the front lines, that we used to refer to these folks as heroes.

Well we don't hear much of that anymore from this government. In fact we don't hear much of anything about health care workers anymore. And their opinions, their expert advice has been disregarded over and over and over to the point where they're just done, Mr. Speaker. And I think that's extremely sad.

We had incredibly high rates of understaffing, chronic understaffing in our health care system. This has been building for years — over a decade, you know. I spoke with one stakeholder recently about the situation and she said to me, you know, we've been ringing these alarm bells for 12 years, and finally there seems to be some recognition that the health care system is at a breaking point, that it is not sustainable, and that something needs to be done about it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've called for a health human resources strategy, and so far those recommendations have not been acted on. Certainly for my part, newly as the full Labour critic, I would be happy to participate in a health human resources strategy in a proactive way, in a bipartisan way, on behalf of the people of this province. I don't think this needs to be a political issue. I'm saddened that it is. I'm saddened to see increasing privatization of our health care system, which no one in this province wants to see.

And I mean surely, you know, the government and the Sask Party knows that. They do their own polling; we do ours and they do

theirs. And the people of this province have zero interest in hacking away at our public health care system, which has been going on for years and is happening more and more.

And I mean, just as an example, the surgical wait times and the strategy to deal with that from this government and farming out, you know, these surgeries is a huge, huge problem. It's one thing to deal with a backlog in a very temporary manner, but the problem is, you know, one of the problems is that the surgeries that are being farmed out are the less complicated ones. And so the complicated surgeries are still being performed within our public health care system while at the same time staff from our health care system are being siphoned off into the private sector.

You know, we've seen commitments to eliminating wait times, and it just hasn't happened. So I mean, it's time for the government to course-correct on this. It's time for them to really put some priority and value on our health care system that we hold near and dear here in Saskatchewan, the first, the first jurisdiction in North America to bring in medicare. And what a shame to see the state of our public health care system today after pioneering medicare and after being an example to the rest of North America and beyond, who have adopted the medicare that was brought forward in Saskatchewan.

So I hope people are listening, and I . . . Not to me even necessarily. That's fine. But I mean . . . Yeah, it'd be nice to me too. But I hope you're listening to health care workers because they're speaking out more and more and they're speaking out publicly more and more at great risk to really their own professions. And you deserve, they deserve to have their government listen to them. They deserve to have their MLAs listen to them, and they certainly deserve to have the Premier and the Minister of Health listen to them.

And I hear the member opposite, you know, "bomp bomp bomp" about it. Like, it's not a joke. It's very critical that we maintain accessible, equitable public health care in Saskatchewan. And we will continue to push for that as the opposition, and I hope some of you will too. I hope all of you will. I hope people recognize how critical of a point we're at and start applying some pressure to this Premier and to this Minister of Health. What we're seeing is an absolute shame in terms of accountability to the people of this province, in terms of providing them information and providing them adequate health care.

I'm going to wrap up my remarks there, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for allowing me the time to say my bit. So with that, I'm going to move to adjourn debate on Bill 67, *The Emergency Planning Act*, 2021. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 68

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 68** — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act*,

2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll weigh in here with respect to Bill No. 68, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act*, 2021. I understand government is bringing this amendment that would give maintenance enforcement, the office, discretion to commence enforcement, so giving greater powers.

[16:30]

It's an unfortunate thing that a bill like this is needed, but that's a good thing to make sure that we have the tools for enforcement on these fronts. This will be for instances in which a payer has defaulted on payments more than once in bad faith. I think that's important to know as well, Mr. Speaker, where this is in bad faith, where it's this deliberate sort of abusive behaviour that we see, Mr. Speaker. And again it's just too bad that legislation like this is needed because the actions of somebody failing to live up to their obligations on this front leaves people in horribly desperate situations, and certainly is, you know, in a financially abusive sort of situation.

I understand that these changes are in response to some withholding payments for up to three months and only making minimum payments to avoid enforcement. And again, this is a horrible thing. You're leaving obligations unmet. You're leaving a former partner and often children without the support that they are deserved and that they're owed, and often leaving them in a destitute situation, leaving them in a situation where they're making very hard choices, situation where they're suffering, Mr. Speaker.

So you know, again it's unfortunate that legislation is needed on this front, but certainly we need to make sure the tools are there to make sure that folks live up to their obligations. It's disheartening that the number of situations like this, that exist in our communities and in our province. Families certainly should not have to undergo the financial stress and burden that this abuse causes, Mr. Speaker.

I know family law matters are extremely hard on families. And you know, it's good to see legislation that may lessen some of that hardship, and we should be looking, as well, to all the other actions and measures that should be brought about to support people on these fronts. Not least to address the cost of living that is crushing folks, Mr. Speaker, and making sure that people that are doing all they can, can keep their head above water, because the stress and hardship is real for so many, Mr. Speaker.

And of course, we need to make sure that we have access to justice as well, Mr. Speaker, something that's so hard to access for many. We need to make sure that access is there through the Legal Aid Commission or through legal aid. And we need to make sure that Legal Aid has the supports it needs. We also need to support and recognize the efforts of other organizations. I think of the pro bono law society, which used to be run by the now Justice critic for the official opposition, the MLA for Douglas Park. We really should be looking to do all we can to remove the

barriers to justice.

And certainly with respect to maintenance enforcement, we will be supportive of improvements and strengthening it, and our critic will be engaged in that scrutiny. She's been involved in that consultation, and as we move forward, we'll be looking for every opportunity to make improvements that are in the best interests of people and the public. With that being said, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 68.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committee this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:35.]

CORRIGENDUM

On page 1566 of *Hansard* No. 23B, Tuesday, December 7, 2021, the portion of the left-hand column following the ninth paragraph should read:

No explanation at all. I think that's a fair assessment of what the people of Saskatchewan have been given. No explanation at all.

The online transcript for December 7, 2021 has been corrected.

We apologize for this error.

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