



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)  
Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Randy Weekes  
Speaker



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

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

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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Beck, Carla</b> — Regina Lakeview (NDP)                    | <b>Love, Matt</b> — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)                        |
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| <b>Bowes, Jennifer</b> — Saskatoon University (NDP)           | <b>Marit, Hon. David</b> — Wood River (SP)                          |
| <b>Bradshaw, Hon. Fred</b> — Carrot River Valley (SP)         | <b>McLeod, Tim</b> — Moose Jaw North (SP)                           |
| <b>Buckingham, David</b> — Saskatoon Westview (SP)            | <b>McMorris, Hon. Don</b> — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)              |
| <b>Carr, Hon. Lori</b> — Estevan (SP)                         | <b>Meili, Ryan</b> — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)                       |
| <b>Cheveldayoff, Ken</b> — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)         | <b>Merriman, Hon. Paul</b> — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP) |
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| <b>Docherty, Mark</b> — Regina Coronation Park (SP)           | <b>Mowat, Vicki</b> — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)                      |
| <b>Domotor, Ryan</b> — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)              | <b>Nerlien, Hugh</b> — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)                       |
| <b>Duncan, Hon. Dustin</b> — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)           | <b>Nippi-Albright, Betty</b> — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)               |
| <b>Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn</b> — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP) | <b>Ottenbreit, Greg</b> — Yorkton (SP)                              |
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| <b>Friesen, Marv</b> — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)              | <b>Ross, Alana</b> — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)                   |
| <b>Goudy, Todd</b> — Melfort (SP)                             | <b>Ross, Hon. Laura</b> — Regina Rochdale (SP)                      |
| <b>Grewal, Gary</b> — Regina Northeast (SP)                   | <b>Sarauer, Nicole</b> — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)                  |
| <b>Hargrave, Joe</b> — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)             | <b>Skoropad, Dana</b> — Arm River (SP)                              |
| <b>Harpauer, Hon. Donna</b> — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)           | <b>Steele, Doug</b> — Cypress Hills (SP)                            |
| <b>Harrison, Daryl</b> — Cannington (SP)                      | <b>Stewart, Hon. Lyle</b> — Lumsden-Morse (SP)                      |
| <b>Harrison, Hon. Jeremy</b> — Meadow Lake (SP)               | <b>Tell, Hon. Christine</b> — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)            |
| <b>Hindley, Hon. Everett</b> — Swift Current (SP)             | <b>Vermette, Doyle</b> — Cumberland (NDP)                           |
| <b>Jenson, Terry</b> — Martensville-Warman (SP)               | <b>Weekes, Hon. Randy</b> — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)                 |
| <b>Kaeding, Hon. Warren</b> — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)         | <b>Wilson, Nadine</b> — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)                  |
| <b>Keisig, Travis</b> — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)          | <b>Wotherspoon, Trent</b> — Regina Rosemont (NDP)                   |
| <b>Kirsch, Delbert</b> — Batoche (SP)                         | <b>Wyant, Hon. Gordon</b> — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)                |
| <b>Lambert, Lisa</b> — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)      | <b>Young, Aleana</b> — Regina University (NDP)                      |
| <b>Lawrence, Greg</b> — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)                | <b>Young, Colleen</b> — Lloydminster (SP)                           |
| <b>Lemaigre, Jim</b> — Athabasca (SP)                         |   |

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

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

**Deputy Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyk

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Sean Darling

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Makowsky:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce in the west gallery, there's a group of grade 10 students from F.W. Johnson Collegiate that I'm very happy to represent here at the legislature. They are part of a social studies class. Look forward to having a chat with them after routine proceedings. I ask all members to help me welcome them here this morning.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce someone seated in your gallery. Laurie Cole has joined us today, Mr. Speaker. She is seated next to one of her sons, who is one of my favourite people, Nathaniel Cole. He's a member of our caucus staff.

Mr. Speaker, Laurie lives on a farm just south of Gainsborough. She is a retired RN [registered nurse] but came out of retirement to help with the COVID vaccination process. When the call was made for more support and more help, Laurie stepped up to the call and did all she could to help vaccinate the province.

Mr. Speaker, she spent over 30 years as the administrator of the Gainsborough Health Centre. She's been a community leader for a very long time, very active in her community, and also very active in her local United Church, Mr. Speaker. I understand she's played the piano there for a very, very long time. She's also a huge fan of her two fur babies, Theo and Archie, who she visits as much as she possibly can while she's not wintering in her home in Arizona, which I know she also quite enjoys.

Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to have her here today in her Legislative Assembly, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming her here today.

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

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today we have, seated in the west gallery, 20 grade 12 students from Riffel High School — give us a wave — accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Clayton Ford. I look forward to having an opportunity to visit with them, and I hope they enjoy today's proceedings. So welcome to your Legislative Assembly. Thank you for coming.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for 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.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in your gallery, it's my great pleasure to introduce someone who's pretty special to me, my brother Vaughn. Many will know Vaughn and his great success in the auto industry. Seventeen dealerships, Mr. Speaker, and associated businesses employing over 500 people in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia — one of the largest automobile groups in the country.

At 32 he acquired his flagship dealership in Saskatoon, Jubilee Ford, in 1983. And prior to that he owned dealerships in Beiseker and Carstairs after honing his acumen in business at Zephyr Mercury Lincoln in Vancouver where he was the youngest Ford general manager in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, he envisioned the creation of the Auto Mall in Saskatoon and is recognized as one of the saviours of the Great Western Brewing Company in Saskatoon, having shepherded it through some very difficult times to what it is today. He's a commercial real estate developer, Mr. Speaker. He's self-driven, self-reliant, and strategically focused. Today he's still intimately involved with the operation of his businesses with his sons Phillip and Michael, and he's always looking for new opportunities.

His success in business has afforded him the opportunity to contribute significantly to his hometown. A list of philanthropic endeavours is too long to mention but include major sponsorships of Black Tie Bingo, Special Olympics, the Junos, World Junior Hockey Championship, the Remai Modern, the children's hospital, United Way, the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] Home Ice Campaign, and recently the STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service] Pegasus Project, details of which we'll hear more from in a member's statement.

Vaughn has been referenced as having a crazy love affair with our city, and there's lots of proof of that, Mr. Speaker. And his list of awards is also impressive, including ABEX [Achieving Business Excellence] Awards, twice EY Entrepreneur Of The Year, United Way community recognition, Top 100 business awards, and the JA [Junior Achievement] Business Hall of Fame, just to name a few. Culminating, Mr. Speaker, and we're very proud of this, in his recent investiture into the Order of Canada, an honour he now shares with our late father.

Mr. Speaker, I can't begin to tell you how proud we are as a family of all of Vaughn's achievements, from business to philanthropy to being a great family man and a terrific brother. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all my colleagues to please join me in welcoming my brother Vaughn to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join with the minister in welcoming Vaughn to his legislature. It is a long list of accomplishments, and in particular that love affair

with our city is something we have in common. And we greatly appreciate the contributions to arts, culture, and the development of that exciting town that we call home. Thank you very much for your service, Mr. Wyant. I ask all members to join me in welcoming Vaughn to his legislature.

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

**Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the minister and the member opposite in welcoming Vaughn to this legislature.

I've known Vaughn since 1986, back when he was just a one-car-dealership guy, you know, just a poor, lonely Jubilee Ford on 8th Street. You know, it was a lonely dealership. But I was with the Bank of Montreal at the time and we financed Vaughn. We were his bank at the time, and so we spent a lot of time there. And we've developed a strong friendship over the years.

I'm proud to say that Vaughn now owns two dealerships in Prince Albert. One was formerly mine. And he's made it look pretty pretty here lately. He spent a few dollars in renovating the dealership. And we were successful with it, and I know he's successful with it as well.

As well he employed two of my family members, both in Prince Albert. And for a while there he paid me a little bit of rent, and that was really nice. I'm kind of missing getting those cheques since he bought the building and renovated it. But anyway, all members to join me in welcoming Vaughn to his legislature. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce two guests seated in the Speaker's gallery.

Mr. Geoff Atkins is the managing director of Vital Metals Ltd. Vital Metals is a publicly traded company headquartered in Sydney, Australia that specializes in mineral exploration and development. Vital Metals is building a rare earth metallurgical processing facility in Saskatoon.

Mr. David Connelly is the vice-president of strategy and corporate affairs with Cheetah Resources, a subsidiary of Vital. Cheetah is Canada's first, and North America's second, rare earth element producer. Their world-class REE [rare earth elements] mine in Northwest Territories commenced production in 2021 and will supply the feedstock to the Saskatoon processing facility.

Vital's Saskatoon facility is in phase 1 of development and nearing completion. It is a \$20 million investment that will create 40 skilled, local jobs and help to grow Saskatchewan's role in this emerging sector.

I look forward to meeting with Mr. Atkins and Mr. Connelly later today. I ask all members to join me, thanking Vital for their investment in the province and welcoming them to this Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take the opportunity to join with the minister and, on behalf of the official opposition, welcome Mr. Atkins and Mr. Connelly to the beautiful Saskatchewan legislature here today.

All people in the province, and I believe all members in this House, certainly appreciate the interest and the investment that you're making in our province, the commitment to helping Saskatchewan develop and grow in this innovative, incredibly exciting emerging market, as well as the investment in our cities and the creation of good-paying jobs here in Saskatchewan.

So on behalf of the official opposition, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these two gentlemen to the legislature.

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

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would also like to join the member opposite inviting Laurie Cole to her Legislative Assembly today, along with her son Nathaniel. Welcome.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents in the northeast of the province in around Preeceville and Hudson Bay and in through the region, with respect to what they describe as the deplorable condition of Highway 9 between Preeceville and Hudson Bay. This of course is such an important artery and an important part of our province. This is important to the farms and the businesses in the communities. It's important to the residents. It's important to tourism.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately address the inadequate condition of Highway 9 by working with and listening to the concerns of municipalities, residents, and industry.

These petitions today are signed by good folks of Hudson Bay. I so submit.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today once again to present our petition calling for access to universal birth control in Saskatchewan. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan has some of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in our country — that's those ages 12 to 20; 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; and finally, that sexual and reproductive health and rights are human rights.

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 contraceptives available to all Saskatchewan people.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: that one in six couples in Canada experience infertility and that these treatments are prohibitively expensive for many, Mr. Speaker. I was discussing this with a family this week who spent over \$60,000 and thankfully, as a result of that, have a beautiful daughter. But \$60,000, Mr. Speaker. This is prohibitively expensive, and as all members know, fertility challenges are a health condition.

Investing in people determined to grow their families here in Saskatchewan makes economic sense. And these challenges deeply impact individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation and their socio-economic status, and families' ability to conceive should not depend on that.

I will read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition today are from Humboldt, Saskatchewan. I do so present.

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present this petition calling on the government to designate the west lawn as the Chief Piapot Cultural Learning Grounds.

[10:15]

The folks that signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following: in 2018 the Justice for Our Stolen Children camp stood for 197 days on the west lawn, bringing national and

international attention to systemic discrimination of Indigenous people; in 2020 the group Walking with Our Angels walked 630 kilometres to the west lawn where Tristen Durocher carried out a grieving ceremony and fast in response to government inaction on suicide prevention.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly call upon the government to recognize the west lawn of the legislative grounds as the Chief Piapot Cultural Learning Grounds, a designated site for cultural celebration, education, Indigenous ceremony, and peaceful demonstration.

The signatures of this petition reside in Fleming and Regina. I do so present.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Recognizing Shift Development's Commitment to Urban Infill Projects

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again to recognize and give thanks to the Shift Development team: Curtis, Brett, Carrie, and Naomi. Mr. Speaker, Shift Development was founded in 2009 and has grown and produced a rapid succession of urban infill projects and ventures. Each is situated in the core of Saskatoon.

Last fall I moved my offices to one of their properties named the Two Twenty in the heart of my constituency. Naomi, the community manager, made the process of moving into a new office almost seamless. As many folks know, I have a visual disability and a consequence of that disability is that I have issues with my eyes being very sensitive to light. This extreme sensitivity makes it a challenge to find a suitable space to work where it does not cause me pain or strain my eyes too much. Naomi was a big help, Mr. Speaker. She worked with my CA [constituency assistant] Shane and I to find a suitable method to control the light easier, almost completely solving the issues I was having.

Mr. Speaker, Shift Development and the Two Twenty have become part of Saskatoon Centre's landscape, and I couldn't be more proud. I ask all members to join me in thanking Naomi and the whole Shift Development team for doing so much for Saskatoon Centre.

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

#### New Senior Hockey League in Eastern Saskatchewan

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another weekend in Saskatchewan, and what to do? Why not head down to the local hockey arena and watch some fantastic senior hockey? In the middle of a pandemic, a group of dedicated volunteers started a new hockey league in Saskatchewan — the Saskatchewan East Hockey League. This brand new league consists of teams from

Theodore, Rocanville, Canora, Whitewood, and Ituna. The member from Canora-Pelly, Mr. Speaker, did a great job coaching the Canora Cobras.

Not only have organizers provided all of their communities with countless hours of entertainment at a time, Mr. Speaker, when we truly needed it, but they also encouraged youth to get active and be active members of their community. Senior hockey all across Saskatchewan is a great community-building time. Hockey not only encourages neighbourhood members to take in a game but also provides the opportunity to meet new members of the community, especially since COVID.

I would now like to ask all members to join me in congratulating all those involved in starting a new league and congratulate the Rocanville Tigers on becoming league champions. Thank you for the countless volunteer hours involved in organizing a new Saskatchewan East Hockey League. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Population Number in Saskatchewan

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the disappointing annual growth rate in our province has Saskatchewan reaching this government's target population of 1.4 million people by 2068, a full 38 years later than 2030, the year promised in the Sask Party's last election.

In 2021 with the Sask Party's hands on the wheel, they drove Saskatchewan into 13th place, last place, Mr. Speaker, among all provinces and territories for growth. Over the last decade the Sask Party has presided over an entire Moose Jaw's worth of people leaving for greener pastures. Suitcases are packed; U-Hauls are rented as our best and our brightest leave for other provinces.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have statistically fewer young adults in Saskatchewan than at any time in the last five years, and this comes at great cost to our province — fewer people to fill jobs, to care for each other, and to contribute to the services we rely on. And with the extent that this government relies on federal money to clean up their messes, we are getting a smaller piece of that pie.

While population growth isn't the only thing that defines success, the members opposite sure hung their hats on it. So to recall the 2003 Sask Party "Get Saskatchewan Growing" platform, it's time for a change.

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

#### Prince Albert Rotary Club Receives Service Award

**Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently the Rotary Club of Prince Albert was awarded the Premier's Service Club Award. The award recognizes non-profit service clubs that perform charitable work, either through hands-on efforts or fundraising. It was an honour for me to present the award, as I'd been a long-time member prior to being elected.

Mr. Speaker, for over 100 years the Rotary Club of Prince Albert has made many positive contributions through social events like Lobsterfest and wine night. I'm reminded of a long list of projects that had been supported, including the Rotary Trail, E.A. Rawlinson Centre for the Arts, Alfred Jenkins Field House, Victoria Hospital, Little Red River Park, Pineview Lodge, Max Power Ball Parks, Mont St. Joseph Home, not to mention meaningful experiences like the Model UN [United Nations] and international student exchange program. There's also the upcoming outdoor Rotary Adventure Park and Alfred Jenkins centre.

Mr. Speaker, I have a personal philosophy that I strongly believe in, and that is, if you want to make a difference, you have to get involved. Mr. Speaker, members of the Rotary Club of Prince Albert continue to make a big difference in Prince Albert and across Saskatchewan. It was a privilege for me to be involved with them, and I encourage others to consider joining a Rotary Club near them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Swift Current.

#### Saskatchewan-Made Documentary Wins Cannes World Film Award

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year Saskatchewan is getting some recognition on the big screen. A Saskatchewan-made documentary is one of the monthly winners of the 2022 Cannes World Film Festival. *Wild Prairie Man*, by Swift Current's Overtime Studios, featuring George Tsougrianis and Carol Andrews, has been chosen as the February monthly winner for Best Nature or Wildlife Film.

The film focuses on author and wildlife photographer James R. Page and his passion for Grasslands National Park. George, the film's director, met Page back in 2018 while working on another project. And over a period of time he got to hear about and see Grasslands National Park through Page's lens, and so the idea for a film was born.

Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that this province is home to some of the most beautiful landscapes and diverse ecosystems in the entire country, and frankly, in the entire world. Thanks to our talented creative film industry and companies like Swift Current's own Overtime Studios, Saskatchewan can really show its stuff to the rest of world.

Mr. Speaker, the \$10 million Creative Saskatchewan production grant program announced with this year's budget will go towards seeing more work showcasing our province coming out of our top-tier local film studios. Thank you to Mr. Page and George Tsougrianis and Carol Andrews from Overtime Studios in Swift Current for their hard work on *Wild Prairie Man*, and congratulations on all of their success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Recognizing Baseball Saskatchewan's Coach of the Year

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge a baseball coach from my constituency. Blair Beck has received the 2021 Baseball Saskatchewan's Coach of the Year Award. Blair has been a coach since 2002 when he started



his teaching career in Carnduff. Blair often coaches more than one team at a time, Mr. Speaker.

In 2019 he began coaching the SouthEast A's 15U [15 and under] AAA team. This past season Blair helped lead them to an impressive 25-9 record, which included a 3-1 record at provincials and eventually a Regina 15U AAA league title.

Mr. Speaker, Blair's love of baseball is obvious. He is constantly learning more about the game and adapts to any changes that may help him become a better coach. He is great with the kids and quickly earns their respect, instilling a love of the game. Mr. Speaker, Blair was instrumental in bringing the Rally Cap program to Carnduff. In the winter he offers an indoor baseball-specific training program, and in the summer he offers daily batting practice for all ages.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for Blair and his contributions. And I would now ask all members to join me in congratulating Blair Beck on this well-deserved Baseball Sask Coach of the Year Award. Thank you.

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

#### **Pegasus Project Raises Funds for STARS Air Ambulance**

**Mr. Friesen:** — Mr. Speaker, in the spring of 2018 our province experienced tragedy when the Humboldt Broncos' bus crashed. Today I'd like to acknowledge the work of those who endeavoured to see something good come from that day. In collaboration with STARS Saskatoon and a number of Saskatchewan-born celebrities, the Pegasus Project was born in August of 2019. So far it has secured \$1.6 million through fundraising and charitable donations.

Mr. Speaker, Robyn and I have a personal connection, as STARS air ambulance saved our oldest stepson. We are fortunate to have this great service. Mr. Speaker, without the generosity and compassion of the people and businesses of Saskatchewan, the Pegasus Project would not have been so successful.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a car guy, and this '68 Mustang fastback that was built and sold for charity is nothing short of amazing. I would also like to take a moment to further recognize the Co-Chairs of the Pegasus Project. Vaughn Wyant, Wayne Halabura, Byron Thiessen and many more dedicated much of their time, making the Pegasus Project such a success.

Mr. Speaker, my sincere thanks to all those that have worked on and donated to the Pegasus Project and STARS air ambulance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Surgical Backlog**

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the minister had nothing to offer to assure the tens of thousands of Saskatchewan patients awaiting surgery that all of the federal dollars earmarked for that purpose would go to getting them the

care they need.

Can the minister do any better today? Will he commit that the 62 million federal dollars will go to improving access to surgery in our public system? Or will we just see this government once again funnel public dollars to the pet projects of their corporate pals?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working to address the surgical backlog that exists in this province, and we are doing that through some significant budget investments in the 2022-23 budget, Mr. Speaker. We welcome any additional investments in this area to complement the funding that we have already previously announced.

Mr. Speaker, the funding, as the member knows, amounts to approximately \$62 million for Saskatchewan. It's my understanding that the federal bill has yet to pass. We are awaiting further details and information from our federal counterparts with regards to that funding and the parameters of that funding and how it can be used, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, it is a straightforward question: yes or no, they will commit all those dollars to surgery. Mr. Speaker, this government pats themselves on the back for a recycled \$20 million announcement, nowhere near enough to fix a problem created by their total mismanagement of the pandemic. Mr. Speaker, since that Premier took office, 14,000 people have been added to the surgical wait-list.

The federal minister has indicated this money might not come if it doesn't go to surgical care. Is the minister really willing to miss out on the opportunity to invest in what the Premier called his top priority? Is he willing to miss out on that or misdirect that money to private companies at a time when the need is so urgent and so great?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 2022-23 budget we are committing \$21.6 million to address our surgical backlog. It's additional funding, Mr. Speaker. \$12.5 million is committed to an additional 11 ICU [intensive care unit] beds, first of our three-year strategy to add 31 ICU beds across this province. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned yesterday in question period about the work that we are doing to address and increase surgical volumes by 38,000 surgeries, compared to pre-pandemic levels, by 2025.

Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House, the government, has . . . We have faced surgical backlogs before in this province. We have set targets to address those backlogs, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to do that, and we'll address the current backlog that we face in this province for surgeries so that people across this province get the important surgeries they need in a timely fashion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:30]

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

### Government's Fiscal Management

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, they won't get those surgeries they need in a timely fashion if this minister chooses to divert that money away from what it's intended for.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are struggling right now. They're paying upwards of a hundred bucks to fill the tank and much, much more to fill a cart of groceries, Mr. Speaker. With windfall revenues from oil and potash, with windfall revenues that are directly connected to those rising prices that families are paying, Mr. Speaker, why is this government adding 32 new taxes and fees, taking an added \$20 million out of the pockets of hard-working families at a time when what they need is a break?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, the outgoing Leader of the Opposition has heard the answer to this question I don't know how many times in this House. He talks about our recycled policies that worked, quite frankly. This is a recycled question that he's had the answer to on more than one occasion, Mr. Speaker.

I'll tell you what we're not going to do, Mr. Speaker. We are not going to increase our fuel taxes, which is something that the newly harmonized Justin Trudeau Liberal and NDP [New Democratic Party] federal government are going to do. Has that member contacted his counterpart and said, hey, now is not the time? Now is not the time to increase that carbon tax. Now is not the time to increase those taxes and burden people further on those fuel prices.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is not the time to increase the carbon tax. And it is not the time to add 32 new fees and new taxes, at \$20 million more in costs from this government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, well clearly this minister is doubling down on that tax. Windfall revenues, so she doesn't need to do it. Sixty-two million for what she said she needed it for, for that 20 million for health care wait times. She's not going to spend it on that.

So clearly, though this minister feigns reluctance, pretends not to want to add this tax, she's thrilled to add this added \$20 million burden onto Saskatchewan families. If she can't see a way right now, at a time when families are struggling right now, to ditch this awfully timed tax, Mr. Speaker, what concrete measures will she take this spring to get some dollars into the pockets of Saskatchewan families at a time when they need it so badly?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that that member opposite has raised concerns about surgical wait times. He's raised concerns about lack of staff within our health care system, Mr. Speaker. He's raised concerns about the number of

ICU beds that we have, Mr. Speaker. We are addressing all of those issues, along with emergency services, urgent care beds, expansion in many areas within health care. All of that costs money, Mr. Speaker. All of that costs dollars, and we are definitely prioritizing health care in this particular budget, Mr. Speaker.

But he has yet to give one indication that, should they be government, how they would pay for it. They want more money for education. They want more money for health care. They want more money for social safety net programs. They want more money for every single area within this budget but not once, not once have they said how they're going to pay for it, Mr. Speaker. It's just like their election platform where they did not account for how they were going to spend the money, Mr. Speaker, and the people of Saskatchewan don't believe them.

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

### Affordability and Cost of Living

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — People across the world have watched in horror as the Putin regime has invaded Ukraine. Saskatchewan, with deep roots in Ukraine, continues to be deeply impacted by this senseless invasion. This conflict has sent our resource revenues soaring, but the extraordinary impact this has had on the cost of living here for Saskatchewan people and workers simply cannot be overlooked. The war's impacts on commodity markets has made the affordability squeeze so much worse.

Why won't this government get with the reality that people are facing and take the steps to make life more affordable for Saskatchewan people and families today?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, affordability is something that our government has addressed not just today, but yesterday and the day before that, Mr. Speaker. I've read the list of initiatives that we have undertaken as a government since we had the privilege of becoming government, Mr. Speaker. If you add all of those initiatives together, Mr. Speaker, it is over \$2 billion in either direct payment to citizens in our province or forgone revenue to make that expense less, Mr. Speaker. So it isn't just today — we understand there are challenges today — but it is each and every day that this government considers affordability.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, more tired lines from a very tired government. If that list of past deeds was good enough, people wouldn't be suffering today. Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. It's in times like these that governments show their worth, whether they step up and help Saskatchewan people or not. Gas is sky-high, inflation is up, food is up, and so much more.

Later today we're introducing an emergency motion for this government to bypass tax revenues from fuel for the first quarter starting tomorrow, the start of the new fiscal year, to provide some desperately needed to Saskatchewan families, families that are facing a buck seventy at the pumps today. Will that

government commit to this today?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — You know, I find it rather interesting listening to speeches to the budget, Mr. Speaker. I listened yesterday attentively to the members opposite, and there was a member opposite who obviously has disdain for right wing people, right wing parties, and would have nothing good to say about Alberta, I'm sure, should she have the opportunity. And yet this other member, who just brought forward the question, obviously thinks Alberta is now the bee's knees as far as their policies go. It's the first time I've ever heard them talk in favour of Alberta.

The challenge is when a \$1-a-barrel-of-oil change in Alberta means they benefit or lose \$500 million. Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan \$1 change is 14 million. So it's considerably different, their capacity that they have within their province to what Saskatchewan has.

But let's talk about NDP British Columbia, Mr. Speaker. In NDP British Columbia they start paying income tax at 11,300. Here in Saskatchewan they don't pay income tax till 16,600. I'm looking forward to the next question.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, snarky political lines from a tired government in face of this extraordinary pressure. A buck seventy at the pumps today is what folks are facing. Saskatchewan families are stretched and struggling, and this government is out of touch.

This government has been provided new fiscal capacity as a result of this horrible conflict and has so far chosen not to act. They have an opportunity to act today, to right this wrong, to provide some relief. Will this government vote in support of our motion later today to give Saskatchewan people a break starting tomorrow?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I am grateful to finish my previous answer. In Saskatchewan an individual doesn't start paying income tax until they've made \$16,615. What is it in NDP British Columbia? Well they start paying at \$11,300, Mr. Speaker, considerably sooner and more taxes.

Mr. Speaker, PST [provincial sales tax] obviously here is 6 per cent. PST in BC [British Columbia] is 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker. What are we doing here? We have, through our auto insured customers, are all getting a \$100 rebate, and in British Columbia it's 110 but their fuel prices are much higher. Mr. Speaker, does he think that BC, NDP BC, has got it wrong?

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — A pretty simple question. A chance to stand up for Saskatchewan people and give them a break, and I

guess we see where that government stands today. Members opposite know their government is off track with the needs of Saskatchewan people. I know they're receiving the same kind of calls that we're receiving right now — calls from families and working people who are doing everything right but their paycheck is buying less and less.

That government has soaring resource revenues as a result of commodity markets. Those resources belong to the people of this province, not the Sask Party. And in extraordinary times like these, we should be providing some much-needed relief to families. How will that government tell those they represent that they had a chance to ease some pressure, to give Saskatchewan families a break, and chose not to?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to see in that member's question that we have something that we can absolutely agree on, and what he said was the people of Saskatchewan have got everything, they've done everything, right. And that we couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker, including how they voted in the last election.

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

### Funding for Education

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, a \$6 million operating increase for education will not cover inflation, contracts, and increasing enrolment, not to mention class size and complexity. I know the minister himself hasn't figured out that math. School divisions are. And here's what Chinook School Division had to say about the budget, and I'll quote. They will:

... face one of its greatest challenges in developing the budget for the upcoming school year. This will not come close to offsetting the anticipated increase in inflationary costs in 2022-23 and will result in an ever-increasing funding shortfall for the division.

Does the minister recognize that he has put school divisions in a position where they will have no choice but to make another round of deep cuts?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize and I recognize that school divisions' operating grant is up \$29.4 million, and not the number that the member opposite quoted. On top of that, there's \$7 million to establish 200 additional EAs [educational assistant] in the classroom, Mr. Speaker.

And I also recognize that if we took the advice of the members opposite and increased operating funds based on the change and the adjustment to the EPT [education property tax], that that would in fact mean \$16 million less than what is actually provided in this budget, Mr. Speaker. So we're not going to take the members opposite's advice on that.

Mr. Speaker, school divisions have had their specific numbers

here for about four days and they have the next three months to determine their budgets, Mr. Speaker. So I look forward to seeing their submissions come in June. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, this budget left Chinook School Division with a \$4.2 million deficit. This is shameful.

Now the other day, the minister read some quotes from previous budget years. Well I've got a quote from a school trustee who understands what the history of these cuts mean, and he said, "It is my personal view that this budget doesn't go far enough to address the classroom complexity issues that our staff and students face."

Well if the minister would listen to his colleague from Moose Jaw North, seated just a few rows behind him, he would know what these cuts mean. And that member used to stand up for education until he got elected under the Sask Party banner.

Well wait, there's more from that member. He said: "I believe we're applying a band-aid where surgery is required." Mr. Speaker, our kids need more than band-aids. Will that minister recognize our kids deserve the support for a full pandemic recovery and provide the funding divisions need to help them get there?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, after two years of enduring a pandemic, and which has stretched over three academic years, the most important thing for our students is to actually be in a classroom, Mr. Speaker, which those members opposite, those members opposite fought this government tooth and nail on initiatives that this government put in place to ensure that school boards could keep kids in front of teachers in the classroom. They wanted to divide students based on choices that were not even those students' choices, Mr. Speaker. That is the reality, Mr. Speaker, from those members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget provides for \$1.99 billion, record level of investment in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker. It provides for additional EA supports, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, it provides for capital funding in this budget to advance the record work that this government has been doing on building brand new schools all across this province.

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

[10:45]

### Minimum Wage

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, on April 1st, tomorrow, Saskatchewan will once again have the lowest minimum wage in the nation — a whopping \$11.81 an hour. It's what this government thinks Saskatchewan people's hard work is worth. The members opposite have no empathy for the lowest wage earners in our province and in the country. Why does the minister think the labour of hard-working Saskatchewan people is worth

so little?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's addressed this a number of times in the House. A number of years ago, a formula was adopted to do increases to minimum wage, Mr. Speaker, which I believe was endorsed by the members opposite as well. Mr. Speaker, since that time there's been 13 consecutive increases to the minimum wage.

Cumulatively, Mr. Speaker, since we were given the privilege to form government in 2007, cumulatively 49 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker. And in addition to the minimum wage increases, Mr. Speaker, since we've formed government, over 100,000 people have been removed from the provincial tax rolls, Mr. Speaker. That's putting money back into people's pockets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, the tired talking points are just enough. We know it's the lowest minimum wage. We know it doesn't keep up with the actual cost of living. That's a fact. I wish this drop to the lowest minimum wage in Canada was just some poor-taste April Fool's Day joke, but in reality more than 16,000 workers in our province are stuck working in this government's poverty minimum wage trap.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of minimum wage earners are not teenagers like the Sask Party would like us to believe. The majority are in fact adults, with 30 per cent between the ages of 35 and 64. Why is the Sask Party so content with being the best at being the worst?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's just simply not the case. The fact of the matter is, they want to talk about best or worst, Mr. Speaker. Minimum wage earners in Saskatchewan don't pay income tax, Mr. Speaker. In many of the provinces they do. That wasn't the case under the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

My colleagues who were in opposition, Mr. Speaker, when the members opposite were in government, they tell me that at that time there was no formula, no formula adopted by both sides of the House like there is now, Mr. Speaker. It was simply at the whim of the government. Whenever the government decided potentially to do a minimum wage, that NDP government would periodically decide to do that.

That's no longer the case, Mr. Speaker. It's a formula. People understand what's going to happen, both the citizens of the province but also business, Mr. Speaker, because businesses also are struggling right now, and they need some consistency as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, the only thing consistent from this government is poverty wages. Why do people in Saskatchewan deserve so much less than everywhere else? And again, why does this government think that hard-working Saskatchewan people are worth so little, the bottom of the barrel?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, again just not factual, Mr. Speaker. Since we formed government in 2007, there's been a 49 per cent increase to minimum wage, Mr. Speaker. You look at the job creation growth that . . . The best opportunity for people at minimum wage, Mr. Speaker, is opportunities for more and better jobs that are higher paying. That's the target of this government, Mr. Speaker. Again, when the members opposite were in government, no formula — just at the whim of the minister and the government, Mr. Speaker. There's a formula now that's been adopted, that people understand and the members on that side of the House endorsed at the time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, that formula is broken and this government knows it. In the middle of an affordability crisis, why will this government not look at providing living wages that match the actual cost of living for Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the minister has answered this question many times in the House, in fact not very long ago, Mr. Speaker, in this session. And as I pointed out there's been 13 consecutive increases to minimum wage since we were given the privilege of forming government, Mr. Speaker. Cumulatively 49 per cent since then. And again, Mr. Speaker, while most other provinces charge income tax to minimum wage recipients, that's not the case in Saskatchewan. That's putting real dollars into the pockets of Saskatchewan citizens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Suicide Prevention Strategy

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With so many families struggling in our province — and I think of all the families who have lost loved ones, the struggles that are real for our young people, those that struggle with addictions, mental health, and those that we lose, and those families that lose loved ones to suicide — I'm going to ask this question again.

Mr. Speaker, this is the third day I rise on behalf of the Saskatchewan families who have lost a loved one to suicide. When will we see a real plan to save Saskatchewan lives?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the

Government of Saskatchewan expresses its deepest condolences to every family that's been impacted by suicide in this province. Mr. Speaker, suicide prevention is not a one-size-fits-all approach and it requires a long-term effort by people across this province: provincial government, municipal leaders, First Nations leaders as well.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to make a number of investments in previous years and in this year's budget. The 2022-23 budget, Mr. Speaker, provides for \$2.25 million for suicide prevention initiatives. And those funds will support a number of key initiatives in this province such as continued work in the Pillars for Life strategy and other prevention initiatives that have announced in previous budget years, Mr. Speaker, that are designed to try to provide as much support as we can to people across this province, regardless of where they live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the minister is sincere when he sends his condolences, but there are so many families who are struggling and asking his ministry for help. There are many organizations asking for help. Our leaders are speaking out. Our families are speaking out. They're coming here asking.

I am asking you, please, please have a concrete plan. It's time. Families are waiting. They want to work with you. Please tell us what the plan is.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have launched the Pillars for Life plan, which in May of 2020 was released by the provincial government to address and prevent suicide, Mr. Speaker.

We're continuing to provide more funding for that particular strategy, now bringing us to a total of \$3.24 million in its first three budget years, Mr. Speaker. That includes a number of actions that are part of that plan: improving psychiatric access across this province, Mr. Speaker; further expanding mental health first-aid training across this province; enhancing research to support local suicide prevention, with a specific focus on northern youth.

We've signed a letter of commitment with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations]. Mr. Speaker, we fund Roots of Hope, Mr. Speaker. We provided one-time funding to the Muskwa Lake Wellness Camp up in the Pinehouse area of northern Saskatchewan which I had an opportunity to meet with individuals earlier this year, Mr. Speaker. We know that there is more work to do in this area, but we are committed to doing that, and must also acknowledge the steps that we've taken thus far. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

#### Question of Privilege

**The Speaker:** — Before orders of the day, this morning at 7:55

a.m. I received a letter from the Government House Leader in which he raised a question of privilege in accordance with the provisions of rule 12 of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*. The Opposition House Leader has been informed of the details of the case and the proposed questions of privilege. As Speaker, it is my duty to carefully examine the case and the context of this Assembly's practices and precedents to determine whether a *prima facie* case of privilege has been established. As I have not yet had sufficient time to view all matters relating to this case, I shall defer my ruling at this time.

I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

### MOTION UNDER RULE 61

#### Suspension or Rebate of Fuel Tax

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to orders of the day, I request leave to move a motion under rule 61.

**The Speaker:** — Will the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion?

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, as I identified earlier today, I have a motion that I'll be bringing to this Assembly to provide some needed relief to Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan people who are facing a crushing cost of living. Mr. Speaker, it's an extraordinary situation that's been made much worse by the conflict in Ukraine, Mr. Speaker. The government has the resources with resource revenues soaring, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people, though, need the relief.

The motion reads as follows:

That the Government of Saskatchewan suspend or rebate fuel tax collection for the first quarter of the 2022-23 fiscal year.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has not been granted. Next order of business.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SPECIAL ORDER

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour, it is an honour to rise in this House and respond to the budget. And it's an important conversation. It's an important conversation as we're talking about the spending choices, the revenue plans for this province in the year ahead, choices that will have huge impact on the lives of Saskatchewan people.

And as this will be the last time I do this as Leader of the Opposition, I certainly am honoured to be able to rise today, and understand how important this conversation is while the . . . The members have said . . . and I hear a particular member chirping from his seat across the way. He has a lot to say often. But I listened to his speech the other day, and he said something that members across the floor said over and over again: that they wanted us to be more positive about their budget, that they thought we should be congratulating them on a job well done, that they thought . . . Not only has that member sat in opposition, he understands the job.

But it's not only that. It's not only that understanding of the difference in the job. It is so important that we scrutinize this budget, that we actually look at what has been put forward before us. The members across the way complain that we complain. They complain that we want to criticize the work that is done in this budget, but the people of Saskatchewan depend on this being well done.

And the idea that this government would just plunk it in front of us and everyone would say, wonderful job, congratulations, there's nothing to examine or scrutinize here, well it's just so indicative of the lack of humility and the lack of understanding of how important it is that this budget be truly scrutinized.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know the member won't thank us for doing our jobs. And that's fine, just as we won't thank him and congratulate him for a job well done, because it's important that we have this debate. It's as important that we have this debate as it is that they put the budget together in the first place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will take a moment here, as is tradition in these matters. And in particular given as Leader of the Opposition I won't be doing this again, I do want to recognize some people who are very important in my life. And first I want to talk about my family.

You know, it was a year ago, it was a year ago that I was running from the ICU, visiting my dad, to come ask the Premier about why the ICUs were double-bunking. And I want to say something that I really appreciate about members across the way. A number of those members have reached out over the last months and asked how Dad was doing.

And you know, Wally's very important to me, and to our family of course. And I do have the good news that Wally is, you know, is changed. Things are different when you had a stroke, but he's with us. He's well. And we're so proud and happy to have him with our family.

[11:00]

You know, it's a lot. It's a lot of work for him and Lea, and they

put so much into supporting the whole family. And particular to my mom, the work she is putting in to helping dad recover has been amazing to see. And it just reminds us, you know, how valuable those relationships are and how much we need to take care of the elders in our families.

I want to talk a little bit about the family that lives with me as well. We've got our two little guys, Abe and Gus. Abe's in grade 5 at Caswell School. He's doing the SAGE [Saskatoon Public Schools academically gifted education] program this year. Got into debate, actually finished . . . He and his pal, Devin, they got second place in provincial debate competition a couple of weekends ago. So it's good to know that at least one member of the family is going to be good at debating.

We also have Gus, he's four and a half. He goes to École canadienne-française and is lucky to have that all-day pre-K [pre-kindergarten] there, great experience for him. He is excited about summer and Timbits soccer and more time with his mom and dad.

And of course Mahli. As you all know, Mahli's a pediatrician. This year she took on tuberculosis. And with huge outbreaks in tuberculosis in the province, she's really been diving into responding to the needs of communities, in particular far North communities, that are being hit hard by TB [tuberculosis]. That has taken her up to northern communities.

And the other night she showed up, having flown up North and came back. And she showed up with a puppy that she brought from the reserve, without mentioning that that puppy was going to come back to the house, which I just can't imagine how that would have gone if the roles had been reversed. And I'm getting texts through the week that she's getting more attached to this we're-just-fostering-it-for-a-couple-of-days puppy. I think Carl might be joining the family. We'll be debating . . . There'll be some debates going on this weekend at home. That's how Abe likes it, yeah.

Now I do want to also recognize some other people that are really important in my life and in this work. My constituency assistants, Jason Hicks and Graham Reid, you guys are amazing. I know you watch closely, and you do so much work for me and for Vicki as well as you move back and forth between our offices. The people who come into our office get incredible care from you. And I just can't imagine doing this job without your support. Thank you so much.

And of course we have our staff here in the building. We've got Cheryl and Jannet, who've been with us for so long. And you know, we could not keep things going. It would not be the tight ship that you see over on this side without the support of Cheryl and Jannet, and we're so grateful for their long service and care for us and for the people of Saskatchewan.

As well we have Nathaniel Cole who's in here with his mom today, and Kelsey Morrison in our issues shop. And on the comms side we have Andi Bauer and Landen Kleisinger, who just joined us recently. Really enjoying their contributions. It's a great team. Kerri Martin is here, covering for Mitch Bonokoski who has done something really cool. He's taken some extra months to be home with his little one, Gwen, and something not enough dads do, taking that special time. But Kerri's been a

terrific addition to the team. And of course we have Brock as our communications director. That's a guy with some spark, some real fire, great ideas. Love working with Brock.

And of course our chief of staff, Kat Norton, came on as chief of staff a few months ago. She's worked with us for years and years, but it's amazing to see how she has stepped into this role, shown incredible dedication and effort and aplomb in challenging times. And I just couldn't be happier with the work that Kat Norton is doing. She is terrific.

And you know, there's these guys as well, who are a pretty neat bunch to work alongside, these MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] who know their communities, represent their communities with heart, who come into our caucus meetings and come into this House with a dedication to service, to truth, to working for what's best for Saskatchewan people. And I admire and respect every single one of them and am grateful for the chance to work alongside them.

And each of us is here representing, of course, the people who elected us. The people of Meewasin, I'm grateful to them for having had the confidence to send me back to this House. And to the members of the New Democratic Party who chose me four years ago to serve as leader, I thank you for that honour. It's been an incredible honour to lead the opposition and to lead the New Democratic Party. And you know, there'll be some bittersweet feelings as roles change, but I know I'll look back on this time with a great deal of gratitude and pride to have been part of this group.

I also want to thank a group that I know we've thanked often but I've been thinking about them a lot, and that's the health care workers in this province. This is a time when health care workers have been put in situations, went from jobs that were hard — too hard, understaffed, overwhelmed — and just had more and more piled on in the last two years. And they stayed. They kept coming to work. They gave it their all.

And we listened last night as the member for Eastview and for Fairview and I were on a call last night with folks from across Saskatchewan, health care workers. We were just talking about how much it's changed. You know, people have been in the profession for decades and just have never felt this level of stress, this level of hopelessness. And you know, it is so impressive and so amazing the work that they do, but also just such a call for help. And you know, we'll talk about today whether that call for help has been answered.

But I do want to thank in particular some health care workers that I get to work alongside more regularly. Every Friday morning I do a clinic at the Lighthouse shelter, and I get to work with Jeannie Coe, Dionne Stroo, and Leslie Shoemaker, and a much bigger team of people who are there working in the core, working with people who are the poorest of the poor, the most vulnerable in our society, people who have been in so many ways left behind, forgotten, dismissed. And these folks, they don't dismiss them. They come every day with compassion, with grace, with a sense of humour. And the days are tough, and they come back the next day.

And I was thinking about this and thinking about the Lighthouse. I was there on Friday and I was sitting down with one of the

residents there. And I'm going to call him Elmer, just to give him a name. It's not his real name of course. But Elmer's from a far North community but he now lives at the Lighthouse. And he came in to get bandaged up. Minor thing. Would've been, you know, the easy thing just to bandage him up and say good to see you, see you next week.

But I just was picking something up that he wasn't doing so well and I asked how he was doing. And he wasn't doing well. In fact just a couple of days ago he'd nearly died by suicide, a couple of days before, and he was really down. And he talked to me. We sat and talked for, you know, nearly an hour and he told me his story.

He told me about getting taken away from home in handcuffs at the age of eight to go to school in P.A. [Prince Albert] by the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], about seeing one of his friends die right before him at school and being unable to do anything to help him, a trauma that he carries from such a young age. He's been attacked in his life so he's got serious mental and physical disabilities as a result. And now living in poverty. Rejected by his home community. Rejected by Saskatoon. Rejected by pretty much anywhere but the Lighthouse and those few organizations that help those in the hardest situations. He's constantly subject to the abuse that is tied to living in poverty.

And you know, I spent that hour with him and I did what I could. You know, we patched up a couple things. We made a few calls, tried to get some help, tried to just be that listening ear and tell someone that whatever anybody says out there, in here we love you and we care about you, and try to at least give that message. That's all I have.

And I'm worried about him, and I'm going back to the Lighthouse tomorrow. And the first thing I'm going to do is call and see how he's doing and see if there's ways we can get him more help. So we'll keep trying; it's what we do.

But the truth is there's no fixing what's gone on. There's no time machine. You can't go back and undo the trauma. People who are broken by their past, live with that past for the rest of their lives, and those lives are harder. Those lives are far too often shortened. Those choices that have been made around them have caused them pain and suffering that they have to live with.

And I know this is a story. You know, you've heard some version of this story from me before. You've heard me talk about determinants of health and the things we do upstream. But I keep telling that story, not because I like to repeat myself. I really wish I didn't have to talk about it anymore. I wish this is how we saw a government approaching their budgets, understanding just how important it is that we act upstream.

These are the reasons I've come from medicine to be in this place, to try to fight for decisions to be made through that lens, that understanding that our primary purpose in this job, the whole reason any of us are sitting here, the whole reason any of us are sitting here is to improve the lives of Saskatchewan people. And the best measure, the best way to know if we're doing that is if people are healthier, if their lives are longer, their lives are happier, their lives are better.

And I just think about the decisions we're making right here. And

you're in this building, but you just imagine out across the province, right now there's a kid in care. Right now there's an elder alone. Right now there's somebody starting their first job. And they face a divergent path, a path on which they can be happy and healthy and well or one in which they'll struggle the way that Elmer has struggled. And their experience today, and as a result their health tomorrow, is deeply impacted by the choices we make in this building today, and that's always true. That is always true.

But usually we think about these things in years, right, the choices we make. We build a school today. Those kids have a better education. Maybe they have a better job and their kids are healthier. It's 10 years. It's 20 years. It's that long cycle. That cycle has been shortened in an incredible way these last couple of years where, instead of months or years or decades down the road, the decisions we make on one day were having life-and-death consequences within a week, within 10 days.

And we witnessed a government who demonstrated in real high-speed time that they had never understood that lesson, that they never understood that their primary goal needs to be the health of Saskatchewan people. And they demonstrated it not once, not twice, but over and over again in wave after wave. Where clear guidance coming in from the people who understood what we needed to do to keep people healthy, to make sure local businesses did survive, to make sure kids did still get a decent education in a challenging time, instead of heeding that advice, they ignored the signs over and over again and hundreds of people lost their lives as a result. Hundreds more people would be with us today if this government had approached these last two years understanding that the health of Saskatchewan people is and must be their primary goal.

There's a direct link between the choices this government has made and the loss now of over 1,200 people in the numbers that we've seen, and who knows how many more as we look at excess deaths and try to dig into the truth of what's going on. But we know it's over 1,200 have lost their lives. Thousands more have been sick. Thousands more are waiting for surgery or have been unable to get necessary care. Thousands more have seen their lives, their incomes, their educations disrupted.

And I do have to respond. Every time we raise these things, every time we talk about challenges in business and challenges in schools, we hear what we heard from the minister today, this crazy spin that somehow we would have locked down everything forever, that somehow we didn't want people to be getting back together and getting their lives back. No. We asked for quick, serious action early. When you think back to last year when we were in our session lockdown, when we spent six weeks steady here going every day and we were there, we were in those longer term shutdowns because this government failed to act early and failed to act wisely in the beginning.

[11:15]

So not only did they fail to save lives, they hurt the economy. They hurt people in so many different ways. And now because they know it was a disaster, because they know that this is spin that is out of control, you see it in a very clear way in their response to the request for an inquiry, that we see a government that has no interest in an independent eye, an objective eye on



what has gone on these last two years. They don't want people to know what Dr. Shahab truly recommended. We don't want to know what decisions they made in the face of every evidence that said that was the wrong thing to do. They don't want us to know the true impact, the long-term damage that has been created by their choices.

You know, just as with Elmer, we can't fix the past. We can't go back and undo what's been done. But this government doesn't even want to learn from the past. They don't want to even learn the lessons. In fact there's a member across there, the Minister of Finance, who really loves to say, I won't take any lessons from the member opposite, as though that was something to be proud of. The last thing we'll do is learn — that's what she wants to say. You know, this is a point of pride and it's ridiculous. What a revealing statement, that we won't take any lessons, and it's really sad.

But it's sad right now more than ever, because we truly need to be focusing on learning the lessons. Because what happened this last two years? The troubles in health care, the outbreaks in our seniors' homes, the struggles faced by kids in our classrooms, the way people living in poverty wound up many more of them homeless and sick, the lives lost to overdose, the damage to local businesses, the workers who are unable to make ends meet, the growing personal debt and mortgage arrears and bankruptcies. The way that people are struggling because of the last two years didn't start in the last two years. We were in trouble long before COVID-19.

COVID-19 didn't create these problems. It revealed the problems caused by a government that has neglected what matters most. And if we want a healthy future, if we want things to be better, we need to be honest about the state of things. We don't need to be falsely positive. We don't need sunshine and lollipops and self-congratulations. We need to be honest and act in a way that is proportional to the challenge of the day.

And so when I look at health care for example . . . And you know, nothing has been more clearly demonstrated to be under pressure than health care these last two years — tens of thousands of people waiting for surgery; emergency room wait times that had people waiting in the hallways for hours and hours on end for doctors to say, every bed is taken because there's no room on the ward, you might as well go somewhere else; redirects constantly.

Pediatric care right now today, full in Regina, full in P.A., full in Saskatoon. Nowhere to admit a kid. Long-term care with buildings that are crumbling, with frequent outbreaks of infectious disease long before COVID and obviously so much more since, and with the people working in those settings under tremendous, tremendous pressure. Mental health and addictions, my colleague from Cumberland speaks so eloquently to the challenges faced by families worried about loved ones or mourning those who have left them behind. The closure of rural facilities only sped up these last two years but something that's been under way with this government for years.

The problems in our health care system are huge. It's a mess. And this budget comes nowhere near the proportion of investment that's required. Take the very simple example of nothing for long-term care. Outbreaks that lost hundreds of lives within long-term care, and nothing to fix the problems in that sector.

And when we look at wait times, wait times that have grown by 14,000 since the Premier became premier, wait times up so much because this government had the worst fourth-wave response in the entire country and those wait times ballooned. We see \$20 million recycled, re-announced at a time when we've got 62 million coming in from the federal government to fix that problem.

We look to our classrooms, classrooms that were complex and overcrowded, challenged long before the pandemic; teachers, parents stressed out beyond belief trying to give kids the care and support they need to succeed long before the pandemic, those gaps that have grown. The kids who were struggling before are struggling far worse now. And what does this minister do? He brings forth a budget that will result in cuts to the classroom — cuts at this time.

You talk about getting them back on track. If anybody needs support to get back on track, it's Saskatchewan children. Cuts right now — nothing could demonstrate more clearly how off track this government is with the needs of Saskatchewan schools, the needs of Saskatchewan people, the things that matter the most.

I do want to touch on social services as well. You know, we care for everyone. We want everyone in this province to do well. But there is a preferential option for the poor, as the theologians would say. There is a need to triage in our investments, and the people who need the most help should get the most help.

But it's the opposite with this government. The people who need the least help, the people who are doing great, that's the folks who always wind up getting the breaks, getting the subsidies, getting the tax cuts, whereas the people living in poverty . . . And what could be more revealing than a minister who stood up and said that anyone who's homeless in this province, we've got a bed for them, when we know there are hundreds of people that go homeless on any given night in our major cities and increasingly in smaller communities as well?

We have an extra duty to those in the worst circumstances. And we know that before the pandemic we saw some of the highest rates of poverty, the highest rate of child poverty nationwide. We see the huge impact that that poverty has on our communities and a government uninterested in addressing it. And now through the pandemic, even through this challenging time, nothing woke them up to that reality. In fact, they doubled down on the failed SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program that is pushing people out of their homes, that is taking away those essential supports that are needed.

And now in this budget, they give them a buck a day. You know, toss a loonie as you walk by. That's the message from this government. Not any interest in addressing poverty, the root causes of poverty, getting people out of that generational cycle. No, it's a buck a day and say, thank you and get lost. That's the message that this government gives to those who are struggling the most.

And we saw revealed through the pandemic . . . You know, we went into this pandemic in a recession, and we've only seen more display of the vulnerability of so many sectors, the small businesses who struggle. The workers, paid the lowest minimum

wage in the entire country, working so hard as costs have risen so much, and yet this government just says, well we like the consistency. Well consistent poverty, consistent food bank use for somebody working full-time is not the kind of consistency that a province like Saskatchewan should be delivering.

And what did they do to this budget to help people who are struggling, having a hard time paying the bills? Thirty-two new taxes and fees, huge hikes, and hikes on businesses that were struggling, businesses that we need to be bouncing back. Instead of doing what they should have done — drop the PST on restaurant meals; help that sector — instead they continue to hurt them, and now let's add that hurt onto fitness. Let's add that hurt onto Rider games and rodeos and rock shows. Let's add that hurt onto fishing and hunting and curling. Let's make everything that's fun more expensive and harder to do. Let's make everything that people are struggling to pay for harder to achieve.

And today the member for Regina Rosemont stood up and introduced a motion asking for a little break, asking for a quarter of a year of removal of the fuel tax or rebating those dollars to families. It's a simple measure that we could afford right now. And this government, what did they do? They talked about something they did 10 years ago as though that would somehow deal with the problems that people are facing today.

So we heard from the members across the way that they wanted some more positivity from us. I am positive about Saskatchewan. We are a place of incredible wealth. We are a place with incredible people. We have the opportunity to do so much but it comes down to, what kind of a place do we want to be?

We have two very divergent paths. We have the Sask Party path of robber barons and paupers, the path of some getting extremely rich and others continuing to live in extreme poverty, a path of privatization and degradation of public service; or a path where we invest in each other because we know that's how we grow for everyone. The better path is the path of equality. We know that working to lift everybody up improves the lives of all, that whether you're wealthy or poor, if you live in a more equal society, your health is better; your life is better.

But to achieve that, to be positive, to be positive about our future, to be hopeful, we have to be honest. We have to be honest because right now things aren't going well for so many people. If we want to be growing, we can't be leaving people behind. We have to be clear about the problems that are with us right now. You don't make a patient better unless you make a good diagnosis first, and that honesty matters.

And I do want to touch on something quickly here. And I hope the Speaker will be all right with this, but a while ago he gave me some heck for using the term "deliberate disinformation," and he was right. He didn't let me talk about it either, and he was right about that too. Now I'm going to bring you into debate, but you know, I just want to say this. He's right; you shouldn't say that. It's the same as saying somebody's lying, and in fact it's worse in a way. You know, you're misleading the public in a way that is deceitful. It's not okay and that's against the rules. That's unparliamentary language. That's unparliamentary language and that's a good rule. That's a good rule that we shouldn't be able to say, hey, so-and-so is a liar; so-and-so lied. It's a good rule. It's important. We should be able to assume good character on the

part of our colleagues, of our opponents, on the part of all members.

But there is a way that this gets tricky because that rule, it's a good rule, but it carries with it a responsibility. It's an honour system. Now the rule against stating that a member is lying isn't a free pass to lie, isn't a free pass to mislead people, to make things up, to fabricate, to distort. It's a rule that assumes at its heart that people will do everything they can to avoid lying. It's an honour system. It's like a take a penny, leave a jar. It's a great system unless somebody comes in grabbing handfuls of pennies. It's an honour system.

And I was thinking about Donald Trump. I know he's got some admirers over on that side. I'm not a fan. Donald Trump lied. Donald Trump lied a recorded number of 5,276 times publicly as president. He didn't care about the truth. He believed that you could lie with impunity. And I think this is an important use of my time, Minister. Thank you for asking. Because he didn't just ignore the honour system; he demolished it. And we're seeing that spread. We're seeing that spread through Republican politics, through right wing politics, through some of the movements like the recent barricades that the members opposite were so excited to support.

This isn't what we want. We don't want a post-truth Saskatchewan. We don't want a Saskatchewan where we have alternate facts. We want the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth. You've heard the lines. Well that's what we want. And we have seen a disturbing drift. And I want to talk about this responsibility because it is a responsibility I don't believe this government is taking as seriously as they should, and that honour system is suffering as a result.

You get a premier who makes promises, then changes the promise and says that that was what he promised all along. You get a premier . . . The quote in the newspaper, and I can't believe this quote in a newspaper, but "Premier repeats falsehoods on vaccines." That's something that was written in the *StarPhoenix* on the front page because that is what happened. Information that was completely false was repeated and then doubled down on here in this House.

One of the ministers across the way accused me of getting arrested at a pipeline protest. That's not a thing that happened. It's just not a thing that happened. You can't simply invent information. And I hear it not just in straight-up failure to stick to the facts, but in incredible spin. We hear over and over again ministers across the way stand up and say, oh, if those members were in charge, everything would be locked down, knowing that the only lockdown we've seen in Saskatchewan is the health care lockdown caused by this government's failure to act in time. But they say those things.

And this is the one I love, and you'll all have heard these in the budget responses. If you don't support the budget, if you don't vote for the budget, you voted against that one thing that you like. Well that's not true, right? That's not true. You can't say that. The rules are good rules. The rules are good rules, but there is a responsibility and there is work to do to make sure that that honour system is honoured. And frankly that starts with the front bench of that government. That is where it needs to start.

[11:30]

Now we will do our part as well. We'll be careful with our quotes and we'll, you know, make sure we double-check our facts and explain clearly. For example, the member for Carrot River yesterday was talking about code black. He's right. Code black is a bomb threat, but it's also the code used in our hospitals when they're overfull. And it comes from that green, yellow, red, black of ICUs being overwhelmed during this government's complete mismanagement of COVID. That's become the terminology. I didn't explain that clearly, so he had to say something that wasn't the case.

So I have to do my part. And I have to do my part to be honest about this budget. It's not all bad. There are some things we can like about it. I like a health care agency for recruitment. And we've got 1,600 vacancies and a government that hasn't been successful in filling those roles, makes promises about new positions but doesn't fill them. Hopefully this agency can achieve some of that.

There are things to value. It's not all bad. But the reality is, this budget is not honest about the challenge we're facing. It's not honest about the revenues that are coming in. It is nowhere near proportional to the needs of Saskatchewan people. And for that reason, I stand here to declare I'll be happy to support the amendment brought forth by the member for Regina Rosemont and to vote against this government's inadequate budget.

**The Speaker:** — It is my duty pursuant to rule 31(8) to warn the Assembly that the minister's about to exercise her right to close the debate, and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. Therefore if any members wish to speak, let them do so now. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour to yet again rise to my feet and talk about the budget and a number of other things.

Mr. Speaker, I would like this opportunity to thank my family: my partner, Tom, who keeps the things going well in the home front of Humboldt. And unfortunately through the budget process, we don't see a lot of each other, so I want to thank him for that. I want to thank my daughters and their families. They truly are the reason why I do what I do. They're my inspiration, they're my fan club, and they're my critics, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker. But they are the ones that make this worthwhile and who are most important in my life.

I want to thank the constituents of Humboldt-Watrous. I've represented that area for a number of years now, and I lived there throughout my entire childhood. Mr. Speaker, I was raised on a small farm and then left for some years to work at the Royal University Hospital, and then returned to that area and never regretted a moment of it. I love the Humboldt-Watrous area and have so many stories.

But the constituents . . . Through this job, you meet people that you may not have met prior if you weren't doing this job, so I truly appreciate them. I thank them for their confidence in me now for a number of elections. And the person that gets to talk to those people more than I, quite frankly, is Susan Dunne, who sits in my constituency office and does amazing work. She is always

a smile, always helpful, and always there for the constituents.

Here in my office here in Regina, I have Ashley, Jennifer, Sofiya, and Kara, and without them I couldn't do what I do. They ensure that I have the material that I need for meetings, whatnot, before I even know I need it. They definitely keep me on track of what I need to be doing on a day-to-day basis, so I thank them.

The ministry officials, the Finance officials, are amazing. It was disappointing to hear the outgoing Leader of the Opposition suggest that the numbers were inaccurate in the budget, because the officials in Finance work extremely hard at those numbers. So it's very disappointing, and this budget more than any other, they deserve our gratitude and our respect. They went through some very challenging times, having lost a key member of that team. But I want to thank Rupen Pandya, the deputy minister, for his work and for his team and all of their work.

I want to thank my treasury board members. I don't do this alone. There's a number of us that look through all of those budgets and crunch those numbers, and there's a lot of difficult decisions that need to be made each and every year.

And I want to thank all of my colleagues. You know, on our side of the House there is such a diverse group. There is so many different life experiences. There's so many different professions that they hold, as different cultures, Mr. Speaker. I try to be as open to any of the members that want to speak to me as possible. My schedule's quite challenging. And the Agriculture minister said, except me, and that's because he keeps coming for more money.

And so, you know, Mr. Speaker, they think that I'm doing it as a favour to them, and actually I'm doing it because I'm selfish, Mr. Speaker. By meeting with them I learn so much. You have no idea how much I learn from all of my colleagues. Like, what they bring forward is many times something I didn't know or a life experience I didn't know about, and that knowledge goes into budgets. It goes into policies. Everybody is a contributing member to that budget. And I enjoy the time that I can have a supper with them or just sit down and chat. My door is open as possibly can, and I welcome each and every one of my colleagues to sit down and have a chat.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the leader of the Saskatchewan Party, our Premier. Premier of Saskatchewan, I thank you for your wisdom, your guidance; your team-building skills are phenomenal; the steady demeanour that he has; and most of all, I want to thank him for being a really good friend.

You know, throughout this I have had stakeholder meetings and other meetings. And I haven't been able to listen to all the speeches, but I've listened to many of them. And there's been some great speeches, and there's been some interesting speeches, and there's some with some humour in them. But you know, there's not enough time, quite frankly, to correct all of the information that maybe was misunderstood or inaccurate when you listen to the NDP's speeches. There just simply is not enough time, and it's unfortunate that they need to cut and paste, and they need to do perhaps a misinterpretation of information available. And that's unfortunate, but I would be here all day if I started to correct all of that.

But I do want to follow up in something that the member from Indian Head-Milestone touched on, and that was misunderstood by the outgoing Leader of the Opposition. The stark contrast is attitude. It is amazing. And when he was referencing the negativity, the difference between the government side of the House and the opposition side of the House, he wasn't talking actually about the budget. He was talking about the negative attitude they have towards this province. And it's astounding. The tone and the negativity of their comments is astounding to me. This is an amazing province, Mr. Speaker. It's an amazing province.

The other thing that's astounding, and I've heard it time and time again, is the stereotyping. They love to stereotype, and they do it with disdain to right wing people. I listened to a speech yesterday, Mr. Speaker, with the perception that I am a right wing female, obviously. Then they know what I think, what I say, what I do, my actions, my intentions. All of that is stereotyped. They don't know a thing about me. They don't know where I came from. They don't know how I was raised. They don't know my struggles. They do not know my life. They do not know my relationships. They know nothing. But somehow, somehow they have stereotyped me and everybody that is perceived to be a right wing person.

Do they know? Do they know that, like myself having conversations with everybody, I have an opportunity — it isn't just these members — I enjoy talking to all people and learning. You can learn so much. Even when you may not agree on certain things, you can learn something from everyone.

Do they know their constituency offices represent every constituent in their riding? Do they know that? And how do they possibly, possibly represent those people when they have so much disdain for right wing people? Because they are superior. They believe they are superior. And so it's interesting to be told what I think, and if I do think that way I need to go back to my previous profession. Mr. Speaker, it is a phenomenal contrast between this side of the House and that side of the House.

You know, Mr. Speaker, everyone had a chance to speak to the budget and I went through the budget in great detail, so I'm not actually going to touch specifically on budget items. But I would like to say that with any budget — and I have now been able to have the privilege to introduce a couple of budgets — we always are aware there's more work to be done. We have never put forward a budget and said okay, we're done. Things are perfect here. You know, let's just move on. We always know there's more to be done. And with each and every budget we hope to improve on some other area in this particular budget.

We prioritized health care while doing smaller things in other areas. Previous to that, I think mental health and addictions was a huge priority in the previous budget. And each and every budget, we know; we're aware there's more work that needs to be done and we're all going to work together to get it done.

We also know, Mr. Speaker, that we have to pay for it. Mr. Speaker, you know, the members opposite, they want more for health. They want more for education. They want more for social safety nets. And they have not put forward one idea of how they're going to pay for it.

I know that the outgoing Leader of the Opposition said, you know, like why are the members opposite surprised when we're negative, when we're critical of your budget? That's our job. It is part of their job. It is part of their job. The other part of their job is to give alternatives. The other part of their job is to be seen as someone who has an idea of what they would do differently and how they're going to pay for it. But they didn't even do that in their last election, Mr. Speaker. They put forward all great ideas and great promises, but they had a \$4 billion hole on how they're going to pay for it. And the outgoing Leader of the Opposition said how, you know, you need to be transparent and you need to tell the people. Why don't they? Why are they not held to that standard, Mr. Speaker?

You know, it's an honour to serve in this House. It truly is, but it also comes with a responsibility. And it's a responsibility to respect and uphold the rules of this great institution. And before you can do that, Mr. Speaker, you've got to know what they are. You've got to know what they are. And I would encourage members opposite to start to learn them because, you know, it gets a little old. You can't always say you're new. And some of them are pretty weird. They're pretty quirky. I get it. But it's a fabulous institution. We need to respect it.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to close with something that a previous Finance minister shared with us, so many of us will have heard this, but there's some that are new and they haven't. And it was Rod Gantefer. And I want to go through Rod Gantefer's 10 commandments of political life.

And, Mr. Speaker, the first one is, your health and your family come first. And I couldn't agree more. They are our first responsibility.

The second is, stay close to the people who serve you. And I think we should all remember that, each and every day. Remember who brought you to the dance, Mr. Speaker, and that's our constituents — all of them, whether they're right wing or left wing.

Mr. Speaker, firmly plant yourself in the political centre — avoid ideological extremes.

Fourth one, don't panic. Just stick to your principles. Remember your principles at all times, Mr. Speaker.

Fifth one, surround yourself with honesty. Stay grounded in truth and reality.

Mr. Speaker, number six is, be a team. And I couldn't be on a better team. Listen to each other and respect and value your differences. And honestly this team's amazing.

Number seven, don't get a fat head. Don't let the pomp and circumstance claim your ego.

Number eight, remember the most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker. They are the reason why we see growth, and that I don't think the members opposite understand. Growth helps the most vulnerable. Opportunity helps the most vulnerable and they don't understand that.

Number nine, growth and profit are not bad words. Hard work

and entrepreneurship should be respected, not envied.

A. Young

Nippi-Albright

And ten, Mr. Speaker, remember to dream. Dream all the big dreams and the little dreams that you can. It's those dreams that will grow our province in the future.

**The Speaker:** — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 39]

[11:45]

It's a number of years now that I served on treasury board with then Finance minister, Rod Gantefer, and that he shared those 10 commandments with us. But you know what? They stand today. They're just as real today, just as important today.

McMorris  
Duncan  
Makowsky  
Ross, L.  
Harrison, J.  
Marit  
Fiaz  
Steele  
Young, C.  
Nerlien  
Grewal  
Goudy  
Jenson

Reiter  
Tell  
Cheveldayoff  
Carr  
Dennis  
Buckingham  
Lambert  
Ottenbreit  
Ross, A.  
Meyers  
McLeod  
Keisig  
Harrison, D.

Harpauer  
Wyant  
Bradshaw  
Eyre  
Hindley  
Hargrave  
Bonk  
Francis  
Lawrence  
Friesen  
Cockrill  
Lemaigre  
Domotor

Every member of this House loves our province, absolutely loves our province. It is disheartening when you listen to the members opposite that make it sound like it's a third-world country. It's not, Mr. Speaker. It's not. There are issues that we need to address. There are people that we need to take care of. But, Mr. Speaker, it is not a third-world country. We're not in dire straits in Saskatchewan. We have great opportunities ahead of us. There is always more to do. There will always be more to do. But, Mr. Speaker, our best days are still ahead of us.

**Procedural Clerk (Mr. Park):** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 11; those opposed, 39.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to move the budget motion and have it seconded by the member from Moose Jaw North. And I will not be supporting the amendment moved by the opposition.

**The Speaker:** — I declare the motion lost. The question before the Assembly, moved by Hon. Ms. Harpauer, Humboldt-Watrous, seconded by Tim McLeod, Moose Jaw North:

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly, moved by Trent Wotherspoon from Regina Rosemont, seconded by Nicole Sarauer, Regina Douglas Park:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

That all the words after "Assembly" be removed and replaced with the following:

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

does not approve the budgetary policy of the government because it does nothing to alleviate the incredible cost-of-living pressures faced by Saskatchewan people or to provide any relief on fuel costs; it adds a suite of new provincial sales taxes; and it fails to invest in classrooms, seniors, and others in desperate need of support; and further

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

That the Assembly has lost confidence in the government.

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

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Those in the favour of the motion, please say yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Yea.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

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

**The Speaker:** — Call in the members.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

[The division bells rang from 11:53 to 11:54.]

**The Speaker:** — Call in the members.

**The Speaker:** — All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[The division bells rang from 11:48 until 11:49.]

[Yeas — 39]

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

[Yeas — 11]

Meili  
Sarauer  
Ritchie

Wotherspoon  
Conway  
Beck

Vermette  
Love  
Bowes

McMorris  
Duncan  
Makowsky  
L. Ross  
J. Harrison  
Marit  
Fiaz  
Steele  
C. Young  
Nerlien  
Grewal

Reiter  
Tell  
Cheveldayoff  
Carr  
Dennis  
Buckingham  
Lambert  
Ottenbreit  
A. Ross  
Meyers  
McLeod

Harpauer  
Wyant  
Bradshaw  
Eyre  
Hindley  
Hargrave  
Bonk  
Francis  
Lawrence  
Friesen  
Cockrill

|        |             |          |
|--------|-------------|----------|
| Goudy  | Keisig      | Lemaigre |
| Jenson | D. Harrison | Domotor  |

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the motion, please stand.

[Nays — 11]

|          |                |          |
|----------|----------------|----------|
| Meili    | Wotherspoon    | Vermette |
| Sarauer  | Conway         | Love     |
| Ritchie  | Beck           | Bowes    |
| A. Young | Nippi-Albright |          |

**Procedural Clerk (Mr. Park):** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 39; those opposed, 11.

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

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

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till 1:30 on Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 11:58.]



# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

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**Hon. Scott Moe**  
**Premier**  
**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

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

**Hon. Lori Carr**  
Minister of Social Services

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**  
Minister of Education

**Hon. Bronwyn Eyre**  
Minister of Energy and Resources

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Finance

**Hon. Jeremy Harrison**  
Minister of Trade and Export Development  
Minister of Immigration and Career Training  
Minister Responsible for Innovation  
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

**Hon. Everett Hindley**  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,  
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

**Hon. Warren Kaeding**  
Minister of Environment

**Hon. Gene Makowsky**  
Minister of Advanced Education

**Hon. David Marit**  
Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

**Hon. Don McMorris**  
Minister of Government Relations  
Minister Responsible for First Nations,  
Métis and Northern Affairs  
Minister Responsible for the  
Provincial Capital Commission

**Hon. Paul Merriman**  
Minister of Health

**Hon. Don Morgan**  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister of Crown Investments Corporation  
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Power Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Telecommunications  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Water Corporation  
Minister Responsible for the  
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

**Hon. Jim Reiter**  
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Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor  
and Gaming Authority  
Minister Responsible for The Global  
Transportation Hub Authority

**Hon. Laura Ross**  
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

**Hon. Christine Tell**  
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General