



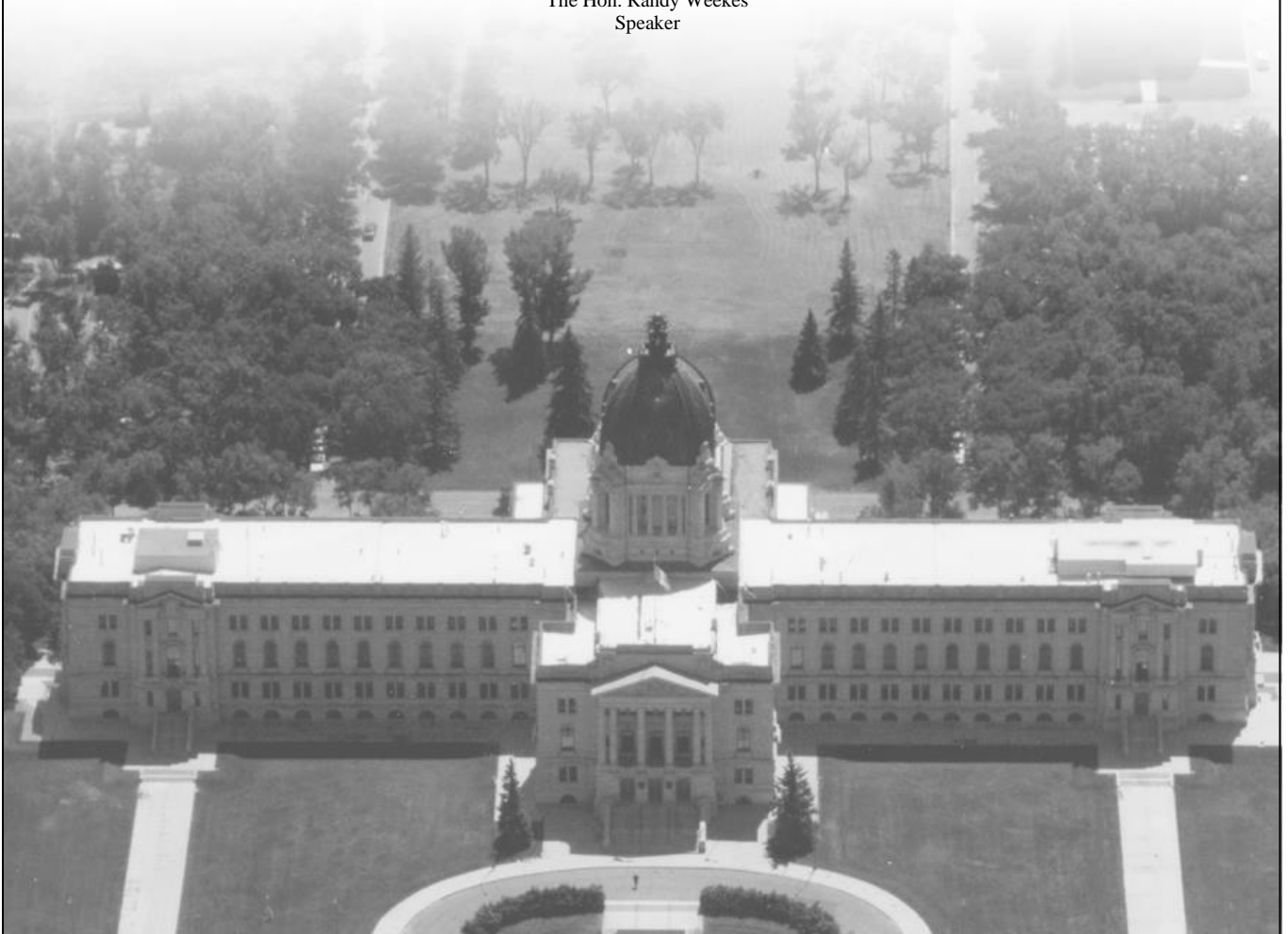
SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

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



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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

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

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

Hansard on the internet

Hansard and other documents of the
Legislative Assembly are available
within hours after each sitting.

<https://www.legassembly.sk.ca/Calendar>

CONTENTS

POINT OF ORDER

Lemaigre.....	2395
Mowat	2395
The Speaker.....	2395
Young, A.	2395
Harrison, J.....	2404
Ritchie	2405

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ross, L.	2395
Wotherspoon	2395
Tell	2396
Eyre	2396
Young, A.	2396
Grewal	2397
Skoropad.....	2397
Goudy.....	2397

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Wotherspoon	2397
Sarauer	2397
Ritchie	2398
Nippi-Albright.....	2398
Meili	2398

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Saskatoon High School Hosts Fundraiser for Sister City in Ukraine	
Dennis	2398
Perogy Paradise Fundraiser Held in Saskatoon	
Beck.....	2399
New Inductees to Prince Albert Sports Hall of Fame	
Hargrave.....	2399
Celebrating a Regina Bookstore on Canadian Independent Bookstore Day	
Young, A.	2399
Notre Dame Hounds to Compete in Telus Cup Western Regionals	
Stewart.....	2399
Remembering the Rwandan Genocide	
Docherty	2400
Saskatchewan Forestry Sector Update	
Ross, A.	2400

QUESTION PERIOD

Provision of Security at Legislative Building	
Sarauer	2400
Tell	2400
Cost of Living and Resource Revenues	
Wotherspoon	2401
Harpauer	2401
Eyre	2402
Health Care System Capacity	
Mowat	2403
Merriman	2403
Highway Washouts in Northern Saskatchewan	
Vermette	2404
Bradshaw	2404
Suicide Prevention Strategy	
Vermette	2404
Hindley.....	2404

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 85 — <i>The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act</i>	
Wyant.....	2405

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 85 — <i>The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act</i>	
Wyant.....	2405

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 85 — <i>The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act</i>	2405
--	------

THIRD READINGS
 Bill No. 85 — *The Taxpayers’ Fairness (CPR) Act*
 Wyant.....2406

MOTIONS
 Committee Membership
 Mowat2406

ORDERS OF THE DAY
GOVERNMENT ORDERS
ADJOURNED DEBATES
SECOND READINGS
 Bill No. 81 — *The Labour Mobility and Fair Registration Practices Act*
 Young, A.2406
 Harrison, J. (referral to Economy Committee)2406
 Bill No. 82 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2022*
 Beck.....2407
 Bill No. 83 — *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2022*
 Vermette2407
 Harrison, J. (referral to Crown and Central Agencies Committee)2410
 Bill No. 84 — *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2022*
 Ritchie2410

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — State your point of order, please.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Lemaigre: — Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I had an opportunity to review the *Hansard* of last Thursday's section 21 debate on the subject of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Subsequent to my speech supporting the government's motion providing our support in working with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations' effort to address this issue, the member of Regina University spoke in response to my remarks. What she said was disturbing. She said that, and I quote, that "Misogyny and white supremacy are here in this Chamber every day."

Mr. Speaker, this accusation is such gravity, it could very well have been brought forward as a question of privilege, specifically as a contempt of the House. I suspect Mr. Speaker may have seen it as such. I decided though to bring this question of order such that it could be dealt with in the most expeditious manner possible.

Comments such as this are obviously not accurate, cast a dangerous aspiration to all members of this place. I would ask the member for Regina University to do the right thing — stand in her place, withdraw, and apologize for her comment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was present in the Assembly last Thursday, was listening quite closely. The member from Regina University certainly wasn't talking about any individual members and was making a comment on systemic problems that exist within our society. I would ask you to review and delay your ruling.

The Speaker: — I find the point of order well taken. According to 51(f):

When a motion is under discussion, no Member shall:

make a personal charge or accusation against a Member except by way of a substantive motion with notice.

I ask the member from Regina University to withdraw and apologize.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let the record show I withdraw and apologize.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning we were joined by 20 members of team Smoke from the Regina Rebels cheer organization, seated here in the Speaker's gallery. Those here today along with family members and loved ones are: we have coaches Eric Bestvater, Becky Middleton; and athletes Elizabeth Hwang; Anna Doig; Nikol Ostrovski; Vanessa Berg; Ainsley Remple; Faith Hillsden; Cassandra Moyer; Brooklyn Douglas; Ava Probe; Marlee Easton; Mackenzie Exner; Crystal Husband; Holly Dunville; Julianne Kaufmann; Keaira Kaufmann; Kendall Robinson; Venice Mitchell; and Jaylen Nurse.

In April these individuals proudly represented their country and our province at the 2022 International Open Level 5 division Cheerleading Worlds in Orlando, Florida. The three-day event features over 10,000 athletes from 25 different countries.

It gives me great pride to congratulate team Smoke and the entire Rebels organization on becoming the first Saskatchewan team to take home first place at this event. Team Smoke gained an early lead in the competition and continued to perform to their highest standard throughout each day of the competition. Today they proudly wear their medals, well deserved.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a privilege to meet with these young athletes who have put in countless hours of hard work and personal sacrifice to make this victory possible. I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's an honour to join with my friend on the other side of the floor to welcome team Smoke and the Regina Rebels cheer organization, a legendary organization in this community

to their Assembly along with some very proud parents and community that supports this team. To win Worlds is something remarkable, and it's a tremendous honour to welcome team Smoke to their Assembly here today.

Your province is so proud of you. Our city is so proud of you. What you've accomplished is remarkable. And we know behind that accomplishment, behind that victory are so many hours of training and practice and efforts. And obviously you're extraordinary athletes, you're an extraordinary team, but that hard work and that planning, that makes a success like this happen. And that's why you're world champions.

So to all the athletes, we just say thank you for making us so very proud. To the parents that are here today and the community that supports them, thank you so very much. Any one of us that are involved in sport, regardless of what that sport, knows a little bit of what that looks like. I know this team's commitment is a significant one. So thank you to those parents, those supports for these young athletes. And to the coaches that are here today — coach Eric, coach Becky — thank you for being here. Thank you for your leadership and thank you for helping Saskatchewan be so proud of this victory. I ask all members to join with me in extending our congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, it's a pleasure to join or to welcome two friends of mine to their Assembly: Dennis and Judy Zawyrucka, who I was watching . . . I think there's tears in Judy's eyes, in Dennis's eyes as we speak, as their granddaughter was being introduced as a member of team Smoke here today. Dennis and Judy Zawyrucka are friends of mine. You won't find more earnest folks who give back to their community, hard-working, Mr. Speaker, who care for their grandchildren and our community. If they're not working, if they're not supporting family, you'll find them giving back to community in so many ways.

I think of our Rosemont outdoor shack — well the shack is indoors, Mr. Speaker, over at the outdoor rink — where they're there to support the community and those that are getting out in their outdoor hockey league. These are two remarkable friends and community leaders that I'm so happy to welcome. And I know they're so proud of Venice Mitchell their granddaughter, a member of team Smoke. I ask all members to welcome Dennis and Judy to their Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fun day for me because I've got lots of guests here today. And it's a real honour to welcome, seated in the east gallery, 45 grade 5's — brilliant, bright students that have come to their Assembly here today. Give us a wave, folks. They're from St. Joan of Arc. I look forward to visiting with them and taking their questions and hearing their ideas shortly after question period here today.

And I want to thank their amazing teachers that are here with them today as well: Ms. Amanda Drotar, Ms. Courtney Geiss, and Ms. Jordan Manastyrski. Welcome to your Assembly. Thank you to the teachers, and looking forward to our conversation after question period. I ask all to provide a very warm welcome to these amazing students.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am requesting leave for an extended introduction, please.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with my colleague and Minister for Parks, Culture and Sport in welcoming the athletes and family members of Regina Rebels cheerleading team, Smoke.

I would specifically like to recognize the family members with us here today. The tremendous sacrifices that families in all sports make, especially at high-level competition, is courageous and commendable. Mr. Speaker, while all the family may not be able to be with us here today, there are a few that I would like to recognize: Darren Mitchell, Jen Mitchell, Noreen Hillsden, Michael Hillsden, Sonya Remple, Kelly Remple, Colin Middleton, Brooklyn Dunville, Tamara Moyer, Alison Easton, Ryan Easton, Tina Robinson, Kim Robinson, Fiona Hwang, In Young Chang, Heather Probe, Shawn Probe, Shawna Koch, Shawna Nurse, Tracy Exner, Mel Exner, Devin Laslo, Patti Laslo, and Darryl Laslo.

Let us all please join together and welcome these amazing parents and family members of amazing athletes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Mines.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In your gallery I'd like to welcome Darlene Cooper and Mel Hunter. Please give a wave. They do very important work, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatoon and Regina respectively with Express Employment Professionals, a leading global staffing provider, and are great ambassadors and a crucial gateway for newcomers to this province.

The Minister of Trade and Export and the Minister of Advanced Education and I met with Darlene and Mel earlier this morning to discuss everything we're doing and can still do to attract and retain skilled international workers across our sectors to Saskatchewan.

Darlene is a passionate advocate for everything she does. She's worked with Global Gathering Place, St. Paul's Hospital Foundation, Parkland Regional College, just to name a few. And she's mom to one of our own, David Cooper, Mr. Speaker.

Please join me in welcoming Darlene and Mel to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take the opportunity, to you and through you, to join with the minister in welcoming Darlene and Mel to their Assembly as Immigration critic on behalf of the official opposition.

Immigration has and will continue to play such a critical role in Saskatchewan's history and Saskatchewan's future. And I wanted to take the opportunity to rise and thank you and join with the minister for all the work that you do for helping good, skilled, earnest, hard-working people make their way to this beautiful province we call home. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Darlene and Mel to their legislature.

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

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you, through you, it is my pleasure to rise and welcome a grade 5 class from Henry Braun school sitting in the west gallery right there. Welcome to your legislature. I hope you enjoy the proceedings today and I look forward to seeing you afterwards. Mr. Speaker, now I will ask all members to welcome these wonderful people sitting in the west gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to make an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I am thrilled to introduce and welcome an entire family of constituents of mine seated in the west gallery. Mr. Speaker, meet the Turtons: dad Justin, mom Amber, 13-year-old Caleb, 10-year-old Nicholas, and 8-year-old Jonah.

[13:45]

The Turtons are truly a special family as they are a family of community leaders. Justin sits on the town council in Outlook and on the local Legion. Caleb and Nicholas, well they're leaders in their school's SRC [student representative council].

Jonah is the family spokesperson. A couple of weeks ago, I had a great opportunity to talk to Jonah when I was out in Outlook at a town function. And I asked him, I said, listen, boys . . . Actually I met with all three boys. I said, listen. As your elected Member of the Legislative Assembly, like give me something I can take back. Is there something you want to see changed? And quickly Jonah stepped forward and said, less school days. Less school days. So I pose that to the Minister of Education. But then he said . . . he went on quickly and he said, and also, Dana, the Premier needs to do something about the weather. And I'm not sure he can do that, but I certainly pass that message on.

And Amber, well Amber just keeps the whole thing together there. So the entire family belongs to the Equinox Theatre group and routinely volunteers around the town of Outlook. Clearly community is important to the Turtons. I am certainly honoured to have them here today. And with that, I would ask all members to help me to welcome the Turtons to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a fellow up in your west balcony there, Dalen Brueckner. When he was coming as one of the staff this summer, I said, you can't say that you know me. And I don't know you. And so he hasn't messed up too badly.

So I'm going to say that that guy's like a son to me and has spent a lot of time at our house. He's spent a lot of time mentoring my youngest boy and taking him out to football, basketball. Dalen, I really appreciate all the things you've been for our family, and very proud of you being here.

The guy is a very politically motivated, servant-hearted man, and I'm just expecting not to screw up while he's here. So to you and through you I'd like to welcome Dalen to his legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents of the east side, east central, northeast of the province, Mr. Speaker, as I have throughout session with respect to the horrible condition that Highway 9 is in, Mr. Speaker.

Today the petitioners are within that area of Preeceville to Hudson Bay. We know the stretch along Highway 9 is, you know, in bad condition as many other parts as well, Mr. Speaker. This is a vital artery for this very important part of the province. There are serious safety concerns for all those using it: the local farming community, local businesses, residents, Mr. Speaker. And certainly petitioners have been bringing their concerns forward.

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 concerned residents of Hudson Bay. I so submit.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, Bill 70 would turn the Sergeant-at-Arms into what

would largely be a ceremonial role. Bill 70 breaches tradition in how issues of security at the legislature have been handled in the past. And historically, Mr. Speaker, all security concerns have been discussed at the bipartisan Board of Internal Economy, and strangely that's not happening today.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing the petition today come from Regina and Biggar. I do so present.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition that I think many in this gallery, this Assembly, care very much about, and that is calling for real action to fight climate change. And when I look up into the gallery and see the guests, the future of our province, sitting here watching these proceedings today from St. Joan of Arc and from Henry Braun school, I know that this is an issue that is impactful to them, that they care very much about.

And when we think about what can the Premier do about the weather, well let me tell you, what he can do is take real action to fight climate change. The United Nations has declared climate change the defining issue of our time. 195 member governments of the United Nations has clearly established the role of human influence on the climate system. Rapid and far-reaching transitions in land, energy, industry, buildings, transport, and cities are required to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees. And I will let you know, Mr. Speaker, that parliamentarians have a vital role to play in tackling the climate crisis. What this petition asks . . .

The Speaker: — Make your petition. Time's running out.

Ms. Ritchie: — I will read the prayer as follows. What the citizens who have signed this petition are asking for is for:

The provincial government to enact a credible climate action plan and allocate appropriate funding to ensure real reductions in Saskatchewan's greenhouse gas emissions that are consistent . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed. Next petition. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following.

This government hasn't been meaningfully consulting with impacted communities when they've been selling off Crown land and leases to the highest bidder. We only have 10 per cent of Crown land left, and this government has been leaving the taxpayers of this province footing the bills for its mistakes and losses in courts. They've also been breaching the treaty relationship and restricting access to traditional hunting, fishing, trapping, and medicine picking. I'll read the prayer:

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

The folks who signed this petition reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to read a petition calling for real action to fight climate change. In this petition, those who have signed the prayer that reads as follows:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly . . .

The Speaker: — Sorry . . .

Mr. Meili: — It hasn't been submitted, Mr. Speaker. It hasn't been submitted, Mr. Speaker. Can it be read?

The Speaker: — Well I'm making the assumption that her petition will be tabled. So you can't submit two of the same petition, so I'm ruling it out of order. We can discuss it later.

Mr. Meili: — If it can be tabled, I'm fine with that.

The Speaker: — Yes.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Saskatoon High School Hosts Fundraiser for Sister City in Ukraine

Mr. Dennis: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon's sister city of Chernivtsi has become a safe haven to Ukrainians fleeing from the east of the country from the Russian invasion. Thousands of Ukrainians have arrived in Chernivtsi on their way to the neighbouring Romania after being displaced by the conflict.

Last week a Ukrainian fundraiser hosted by the Bethlehem Catholic High School in Saskatoon raised \$250,000 to assist the city of Chernivtsi in caring for these refugees. Bethlehem Catholic is one of the many schools in the province with a high demographic of Ukrainian students, and their curriculum contains a bilingual Ukrainian program for all students.

Mr. Speaker, about 400 businesses and owners attended and community members attended this luncheon, along with myself, put on by a Saskatoon committee of Ukrainians. Thirteen-year-old Kateryna Tokarska performed a song for the attendees during the lunch.

Many of the Ukrainian students in this province have had their mental health negatively impacted by this invasion. They are our neighbours, our friends, and our family. Mr. Speaker, the money collected will go a long way towards shipping and purchasing essential supplies for our sister city of Chernivtsi.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating the committee, the

Bethlehem Catholic, on raising this money and thanking the attendees. Slava Ukraini.

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

Perogy Paradise Fundraiser Held in Saskatoon

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, after a two-year hiatus, the Perogy Paradise fundraiser returned April 30th, and I was pleased to attend. This fundraiser is hosted by Nashi, a completely volunteer-run organization whose name means “ours” in Ukrainian.

For 15 years, Nashi has raised funds and raised awareness about human trafficking, but more importantly the organization has raised hope and opportunity for young girls in Ukraine. In 2015 the Saskatoon-based non-profit opened Maple Leaf House across the ocean to house and educate young girls at risk of being human trafficked.

This year Nashi’s remarkable efforts took on a new urgency with the Russian invasion and the devastation in Ukraine. This was top of mind for Savelia Curniski, the coordinating force behind the event and her dedicated board and team of volunteers. In addition to the silent auction and live auction, attendees were treated to a feast of over 1,200 perogies, all handmade by volunteers over five weekends. The event raised over \$60,000 for the twelve 6- to 17-year-old girls who have now been safely evacuated to Poland.

In the words of guest speaker Victor Malarek, “Everyone on this fragile planet has an opportunity to reach out and touch the soul of someone less fortunate. If everyone did this, what an amazing world it would be.” Mr. Speaker, thank you to the organizers.

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

New Inductees to Prince Albert Sports Hall of Fame

Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recently had the opportunity to bring greetings at the Prince Albert Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Mr. Speaker, this was a very special occasion with nine athletes, builders, officials, and one organization being inducted.

The new inductees were Dalyce Emmerson, a multi-sport athlete who was a U of S [University of Saskatchewan] national basketball champion; Andy and Merle, the Kozun brothers, both well known in the city of Prince Albert for their years of volunteer work and fundraising; Barry Schrader, an umpire and the referee-in-chief for the Prince Albert Minor Hockey Association for many years.

The late Wendel Whitter, a passionate football coach who was key in helping start the River Riders football club; the late Bill Watson, who was heavily involved in the football scene in Prince Albert, particularly as a coach; Martin Ring, a scratch-handicap golfer who has competed nationally and who volunteers at many programs and events; Dwayne Gareau, a very successful professional soccer player and coach; Scott Byrne, one of the best bullfighters in the history of rodeo; and the Prince Albert

Lacrosse Association.

The Prince Albert Sports Hall of Fame is a wonderful way to celebrate the people and organizations who have helped to build a strong sports community in Prince Albert as well as inspire upcoming athletes. Mr. Speaker, this is another great group of athletes, builders, and officials and organizations. Congratulations to each and every one of the inductees.

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

Celebrating a Regina Bookstore on Canadian Independent Bookstore Day

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Canadian Independent Bookstore Day that took place on Saturday, April 30th, and to profile a remarkable local business here in Regina. Spafford Books was opened in the Queen City 50 years ago by Richard Spafford. Sadly Dick passed away last year, a resident of Parkside Extendicare.

This magical and hidden bookstore is now run by Leah Spafford and her dog, Oxford. Spafford Books is a leader in rare and antiquarian tomes here in the province and internationally, and it is home to an honest-to-goodness treasure trove. The upstairs hosts a collection of books and antiques, things like first editions of Virginia Woolf, scarce Canadiana, 150-year-old Cree and Dene bibles, and rare political literature. Our province is enriched by independent bookstores that continue to operate thanks to people like the late Dick and Leah.

Small businesses play such a vital role in our economy while history and literature make unquantifiable contributions to the richness of our lives and our understanding of both ourselves and our society. I invite all members to join me in recognizing the contribution of Spafford Books and all of Saskatchewan’s independent bookstores in celebration of Independent Bookstore Day.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lumsden-Morse.

Notre Dame Hounds to Compete in Telus Cup Western Regionals

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, the Notre Dame Hounds are on their way to the 2022 Telus Cup Western regional championship game. This year’s Telus Cup final will be hosted in Okotoks, Alberta from May 16th to the 22nd. Mr. Speaker, the Telus Cup brings together the best under-18 AAA squads from across Western Canada.

To qualify, the Hounds had to first play through some tough competition — the Winnipeg Wild and Southwest Cougars. After a come-from-behind 3-2 win over Winnipeg to open the tournament, the Hounds improved their record to 2 to 0. They scored a convincing 3-0 triumph over the host Southwest Cougars the following day at Tundra Oil and Gas Place in Virden.

Mr. Speaker, the Hounds outshot the Cougars by a 48 to 17

margin and the Cougars' impressive goaltending just wasn't enough to keep them in the game. Swift Current Broncos prospect Van Eger opened the scoring for the Hounds on a power play late in the first period, while Ishan Mitto-Khulbe and Owen Thomas found the back of the net on a pair of pretty slick shots.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in wishing the Notre Dame Hounds the best of luck in Okotoks next week at the Telus Cup final.

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

Remembering the Rwandan Genocide

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was joined by the member for Regina Rosemont where we marched to recognize the events of 28 years ago. The world witnessed horrific events in Rwanda, a small nation within the Great Rift Valley of central Africa. Over 1 million innocent people were mercilessly butchered and killed by a Hutu extremist militia who dominated the Rwandan government army at the time. Mr. Speaker, their primary targets were mainly from the minority Tutsi community and moderate Hutus.

It's estimated that more than 2 million Rwandese people have fled their homes for fear of persecution. It has become one of the darkest periods in modern world history. Many of them found shelter here in Saskatchewan where they have founded a thriving diaspora of culture that has embedded itself in the social framework of this province.

Today Rwanda is a healing nation with a rapidly growing GDP [gross domestic product], but there are still growing pains related to human rights that the nation struggles to overcome. The Rwandese people have shown their own commitment to reconciliation within their once-fractured communities, a commitment that much of Canada can take to heart. Mr. Speaker, one of the ways the Rwandese do this is through memorialization, either through the development of physical memorials or remembrance.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me to remember those Rwandans who were killed or displaced by the events of 1994. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Forestry Sector Update

Ms. A. Ross: — Mr. Speaker, last September our government announced timber allocations for four mills in the North. This triggered over a billion dollars in committed investments and will create over 2,600 jobs.

I am pleased to announce that work is under way at these mill sites. In fact, I joined the Minister of Energy and Resources, the Minister of Environment, and the member for Kindersley in P.A. [Prince Albert] for a Paper Excellence tour last week. We also saw the co-location for One Sky's new OSB [oriented strand board] mill.

Mr. Speaker, PE [Paper Excellence] is nearing the completion of winterizing their site, a \$500,000 project — the largest investment in the history of our forestry sector. They are expecting 145 workers on site this summer as they complete pumphouse dredging and demolition work.

Mr. Speaker, Dunkley Lumber's Carrot River expansion is also in the first stage of construction. They are investing an additional \$60,000, with 20,000 going toward the construction of a biorefinery next to their saw mill.

Mr. Speaker, under the NDP [New Democratic Party], between 2003 and 2007, five mills were shut down and 1,300 forestry jobs were lost. Our government's record remains one of supporting and promoting our forestry sector, and I look forward to more updates soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Security at Legislative Building

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, inflation is at a 31-year high. Families are struggling to make ends meet with the rising cost of food and fuel. Food banks are seeing unprecedented demand. People are struggling to keep a roof over their head. Businesses and community organizations are trying to recover from the challenging two years of the pandemic.

And what has been the Sask Party's legislative focus? Well it has been a bill to create a partisan security force here at the legislature. This government couldn't possibly be more out of touch with the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, Bill 70 is not a priority for Saskatchewan people, so it shouldn't be one for this government.

Will the minister scrap the bill today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will obviously have discussions about Bill 70 at committee tonight, and the answer to the question is no.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Hoping we actually get some answers in committee tonight, Mr. Speaker. That's the first straight answer I've gotten from the minister on this bill. For months we've been debating the necessity of Bill 70, and for months we've been asking the same questions and getting the same non-responses from that minister.

Mr. Speaker, we still don't know what threats this bill was created for, or what apparent barriers exist that the Sergeant-at-Arms and his team can't handle. We also don't know why this government is choosing to bypass the non-partisan BOIE [Board of Internal Economy], where historically all matters of security have been discussed and agreed upon.

Will the minister finally tell the people of Saskatchewan what the plan is with this bill and why it's supposedly so desperately needed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Our government is committed to making the area around the Legislative Assembly and within the building safe and secure for everyone. The legislative district security unit will be comprised of uniformed and armed officers who will be able to provide expanded security coverage in the legislative district, Mr. Speaker.

Things and the times have changed, Mr. Speaker, from when we lived in the '80s to where we are today. It is a series of events, discussions that happened that we realized that a change is necessary to ensure the safety and security of all who use the building, outside the building and beyond. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, if times have changed from the '80s to today, then my question to the minister is, why are we going back to the way security was run in the '80s?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And that statement by the member opposite is curious. This unit will be very similar to the model currently used in Alberta, where sheriffs employed by the Ministry of Justice — or in this case the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety — and provide security at their Legislative Building and surrounding grounds, Mr. Speaker. So Alberta's wrong. BC's [British Columbia] wrong. Every other province is wrong as to where they need to move to address the pressing needs and necessities that are occurring within our country, within our province, and within our city, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, a former premier often quipped that the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has had no problem with surveilling people in this building in the past, and that was when they weren't even in charge of security. How are the people that work and visit this building supposed to be comfortable with a new security force that answers to a government with such a questionable past? Why is there nothing in this bill to prevent it from being used to monitor the goings-on in this building?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to get into the legal aspects of what the member is asking. Obviously there's legalities with respect to surveillance and monitoring. I'm not going to get into that. This is about a security

service to keep the people in this building, outside this building, as safe and secure as possible. I'm not buying into the conspiracy and the hair-on-fire of the members opposite.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Bill 70 goes to committee later today, where we plan to introduce an amendment. It's a very simple amendment, Mr. Speaker, but it is crucial to maintaining the long-standing parliamentary custom that security be independent by reporting to the Speaker, not to that minister, not to that government. Will the minister support our amendment later today and ensure that the security of this building remains independent, like it has been for decades?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the member is suggesting is that all 2,400 of the employees working in the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety — some enforcement, some in security — are not unbiased, Mr. Speaker. They work under my ministry, but they do not answer to me. I do not involve myself in any operational decisions, operations on a day-to-day basis. What this member is saying is absolutely ridiculous.

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

Cost of Living and Resource Revenues

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, already sky-high gas prices shot up another 15 cents this last week, back to nearly a buck eighty a litre, record highs at the pumps — not a few cents, of course, as the Premier's dismissed it as — and no corresponding help from that government.

Just last week the World Bank released a report indicating that as a result of the war in Ukraine, commodity prices are expected to remain high until late 2024 at least. This is an unprecedented situation that warrants unprecedented action to help the people that are bearing the brunt of the crisis.

We've introduced a common-sense plan to redirect this government's soaring revenues and some windfall profits to help people who are being crushed by the cost of living. The Sask Party have ignored that call and instead slapped on new taxes onto Saskatchewan people. Will this government finally commit to getting an affordability rebate back to Saskatchewan people today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — As the member opposite knows, in the last fiscal year we had a rebate through SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance]. And there will be another rebate fairly soon through SGI, which is not unlike what NDP BC has done as well.

I know the members opposite has asked for us to forgo the fuel tax, such as Alberta. However if you do the math on what Alberta

is doing and you average 150 litres per month of consumption, then, Mr. Speaker, they will save \$58.50. And in Ontario they also are forgoing part of that tax. And if you do the math in Ontario, they will save \$51.30. In Saskatchewan the rebate will be \$100, which is more.

We are only one month into this fiscal year. We don't know what the average price will be, and we will be watching that closely as we get farther into our fiscal year, to know where we have better data to gauge the average price over the year, and we will make decisions going forward.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this government is not being transparent about the already high revenues they're receiving as a result of Putin's unforgivable invasion of Ukraine. And they aren't telling the whole story when it comes to those revenues and what they mean for the Saskatchewan potash producers.

The numbers don't lie. In the first quarter of 2022, producers posted record-breaking profits, windfall profits. This is incredible news for those vital industries. These important companies deserve high profitability. But these are Saskatchewan people's resources, and they too deserve a fair return on those windfall profits from their resources to be used out to help them in a time of need. Why on earth won't this government do the right thing and help people out, and instead continue to pile on with new taxes and cranking up the cost of living?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — It's interesting that the member opposite knows how much will be made in the first quarter when we're only one month in the first quarter. And so it is interesting that he has these solid numbers that he's saying that he knows. A quarter is three months. We're only one month in, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

But we're always mindful that investor confidence is extremely important to attract investment in Saskatchewan, and that's confidence in taxes and in policies, Mr. Speaker. We have worked very hard to gain that confidence, and it is shown in the just about \$14 billion worth of committed private sector investment to our province. We need to be competitive, Mr. Speaker, and we have to be mindful of that because this is jobs. The main thing that we're looking for is jobs here in Saskatchewan, well-paying jobs and opportunity for people here in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the Finance minister should just open up the old internet and take a look at the earnings reports filed last week by the potash producers. You know, what you'll find is that the numbers are clear in black and white. Between our two largest potash producers, sales increased by \$4.6 billion; combined profits of \$2.6 billion in just the first

quarter. Both demand and production are high. This is set to be the case this year and next. Of course this is good news for these vital companies and their shareholders.

But Saskatchewan people, the owners of those resources, also deserve a fair return on those windfall profits. Failing to do so, failing to act on this front is fiscally irresponsible by that government and shorting Saskatchewan people of the return they deserve. Why won't the minister simply do the right thing, adopt a windfall-profit surcharge to deliver a cost-of-living dividend to Saskatchewan people today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If recent events have taught us anything, it's the nature of volatility. And to the Minister of Finance's point, that is certainly something that we are confronting in the potash sector . . . around the world is confronting the flux of market forces. What of course we need is security. What we need is stability. And when it comes to that, consider their latest bombshell, Mr. Speaker, the energy surcharge. A humble change they call it, a humble charge. The energy and resource sector is calling it the worst kind of tax. And I can tell you, our phone is ringing off the hook. I assume their phone is also ringing off the hook.

That side said they would not call for a royalty review or a hike and then they see dollar signs. You've heard the expression, eyes bigger than the stomach. This applies. That leader has been signalling a royalty review for years, Mr. Speaker. It puts our stable, consistent royalty and tax structure in direct jeopardy. And the kicker is the structure we have is already price sensitive, so when commodity prices are high, Mr. Speaker, the contribution through royalties and the surcharge are also high. This is a dangerous, grandstanding, virtue-signalling experiment.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, that's coming from the minister who cranked up royalties in a massive way when the industry was in decline. We're talking about an increase only when those sectors are in very serious windfall.

Last year our GDP declined. Unemployment is on the rise. Meanwhile the Sask Party's nickel-and-diming Saskatchewan people and sticking them with new taxes, all while they're facing a crushing cost of living, the highest in 31 years by way of inflation increase.

These two potash companies posted over a billion dollars in net earnings in the first three months of this year, nine times the profit from this time last year. This is a very good thing for these very important companies and their shareholders, but it's the Premier's job to deliver for his shareholders, Saskatchewan people.

Saskatchewan people are the owners of our natural resources. Why won't the Sask Party act to get some needed relief with a fair return from windfall profits today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and

Resources.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's just doublespeak from the tax-and-spend crew over there.

Let's be honest. Mr. Speaker, the change previously was about simplifying tax deductions to make sure that the people of Saskatchewan receive fair value from the flat-based payment rate which had become eroded and valueless because of the deductions. Mr. Speaker, as I said previously, in this case the structure we have is already price sensitive. That's extremely important, so when commodity prices are high, the contribution through royalties and the surcharge are also high.

Mr. Speaker, the economic illiteracy which they put out to the world really should apply only strictly in one direction, and that's theirs. Mr. Speaker, they had undertaken, on the record, that they would never entertain a royalty surcharge hike or royalty review for precisely, we believe, the reasons they are now saying are so important, which is stability. Mr. Speaker, this absolutely threatens that stability for our potash sector, for our potash market, and for the people of this province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, what's economically illiterate is a failing to understand that these very important industries are in windfall profits, Mr. Speaker.

Failing to understand that her job as the minister isn't to stand up for the shareholders of those companies but to stand up for all of Saskatchewan, her shareholders, the people of Saskatchewan, which includes these important industries and the jobs attached.

Mr. Speaker, why won't the Finance minister do the right thing and act with a windfall-profits surcharge that can deliver in a meaningful way on reducing the cost of living today, all while leaving a legacy for tomorrow?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, the economic czar, a.k.a. [also known as] Leader of the Opposition, had signalled a few months ago that he wanted to launch a task force to examine the future of jobs. Mr. Speaker, that task force is on this side. We're all about the future of jobs all the time, not only when they're profitable — and so when they're suddenly interested in windfall profits — all the time in terms of attracting an investment climate for BHP, for K+S before that, for exploration companies in this province which are active and alive and coming to this province in terms of attracting them.

And speaking of the future, we are on the cusp of being a critical minerals powerhouse, Mr. Speaker. We're already there. That's our strategy, and we can only build on it. In uranium, in potash, in copper, in nickel, in lithium, in helium — we're it. And that's because of the investment and the climate that we create all the time, not just when there's suddenly a profit to be had.

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

Health Care System Capacity

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we have had people travel from across the province to their legislature to get answers from this government on when they can get their surgeries. People shouldn't have to come to this building to get those answers. We need transparency around the surgical wait-list and what the plan is to get this under control. And we still haven't gotten an answer from the minister a month after we asked in committee. Exactly how many people are on the surgical wait-list today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm actually very happy to report back to the House that overall capacity in surgery is at about 97 per cent, Mr. Speaker. This is over the last three months. And three months ago we did have some challenges, so we are meeting those challenges.

But some areas of the province are actually exceeding their scheduled surgeries, Mr. Speaker. I speak of Humboldt specifically, 166 per cent of their scheduled surgeries. Moose Jaw, 125 per cent; Weyburn, 119 per cent; 117 per cent in Regina private clinics; 112 per cent in the Saskatoon private clinics. We have cranked up our surgical procedures, both in the publicly funded private sector but also the public sector, Mr. Speaker, to be able to meet those needs.

Mr. Speaker, the surgical — as I've identified in the House and in committee — the surgical wait-list does fluctuate because there are people that are taken off there and people that are added on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, it's a very simple question that the minister is not answering. How many people are on the surgical wait-list today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've identified before, we have between 34 and 35,000 people that are identified on the surgical backlog. Now some of those are day surgeries that can be done very quickly. And some of them are more complicated, like the orthopedic surgeries that have a longer stay, Mr. Speaker.

But that's specifically why we did . . . in our budget, Mr. Speaker, to be able to increase our ICU [intensive care unit] capacity, the high-acuity beds, the urgent care centres, all of the stuff that we put in here to be able to deal with our surgical backlog, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite voted against.

We continue to be able to hear from the people of Saskatchewan that surgical lists are a priority and they want to get their surgeries done. That's why we have areas like Humboldt that are at 165 per cent of their surgical capacity, Mr. Speaker, to be able to meet the needs of people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — It's still not a direct answer to the question, Mr. Speaker. The minister should have that information on hand. He should report the exact number today to the House.

But since he's in such a giving mood today, what are the current emergency department waits that we've also been waiting for?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Again, I find it very interesting that they've run out of questions again, Mr. Speaker, that they continue to ask you questions about in committee . . . that were there two weeks ago, that we said when we have that information in committee, we will present it to the entire committee, Mr. Speaker.

My officials are working on this, Mr. Speaker. For them to bring it up in the House? This is not something that we should be addressing in the House. This was addressed at committee already, Mr. Speaker . . . Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working on our emergency capacity, our surgical capacity. That's why we invested a record amount in our health care budget. This side of the House will continue to work with those front-line health care workers that are able to perform all of those duties. We appreciate the work that they're doing. We'll continue to support them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Highway Washouts in Northern Saskatchewan

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, rainfall in the North has created serious issues on our northern roads. Highway 905 near Southend is washed out, and there are sections of Highway 165 washed out near La Ronge. Highway 135 near Sandy Bay is washed out as well. It's serious, and with more rain in the forecast, it could get worse. What's the minister's plan? Can he give us an update on what's being done to support communities isolated from the washed-out roads?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, the spring snow melt and additional rain in the area over the weekend was causing water to run over the roadway. And we've got the water going over in at least 10 locations. Portions of Highway 905, 135, 165, 939, and 950 are closed due to multiple washouts. And the crews are on the site, so they're working hard, and additional crews have been brought in early to help reopen the highways, Mr. Speaker. They're working hard, and we hope to have most of the affected highways reopened today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — These communities need help and they need it now. These washouts happen every year but never as bad as this year. It's an emergency that requires urgent action. Will the minister commit to reach out to northern leaders and support any emergency responses needed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you for that question, Mr. Speaker, but I thought I just answered that question. I said that we had the crews. The crews are going up there. They're bringing in extra crews. They're working hard on those highways to get those highways back, reopened, as I said, today. So, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what more I can say to that. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Very clear: will you reach out to northern leaders and see if they need any emergency response help in their communities?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have previously stated, I don't know how many times I have to say it. Yeah, I guess this is . . . I'll say it for the third time. We have extra crews going up there. We have extra crews going up there to work on these highways to be able to fix up these washouts that we have. I don't know how many more times I have to say it to the member, what he doesn't quite understand. This is what we are doing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Suicide Prevention Strategy

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, this is the 17th day this spring I rise on behalf of Saskatchewan families, today the Irwin family, 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 for Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I extend my sincerest condolences to the Irwin family.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, earlier today the provincial government, we released an update on the Pillars for Life suicide prevention strategy by the Government of Saskatchewan that details some of the updates as to what's happened over the first couple of years of this particular plan and ongoing work that's going to continue, Mr. Speaker, as we engage with people across this province, First Nations leaders, as well with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] and outside of the FSIN as well, as we continue to work on developing and expanding upon the suicide prevention initiatives that we have across Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Point of order.

The Speaker: — State your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, a point of order arising from question period . . . During the preamble, during routine proceedings, presenting petitions I

believe, Mr. Speaker made a ruling with respect to the member for Saskatoon Nutana. Subsequent to that ruling, the member for Nutana took to Twitter. And what she did was both comment on and criticize the ruling from Mr. Speaker, using a GIF from an American judge to criticize your ruling.

So I would be happy to table a screenshot, but the member should just do the right thing, stand in her place, withdraw and apologize.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize and will withdraw the tweet.

The Speaker: — Why is the Minister of Justice on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* immediately.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* immediately. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 85 — *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move second reading of this bill.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 85 — *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act*

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* be now read a second time.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act*. Is the Assembly

ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* be committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills and that said bill be considered in the Committee of the Whole on Bills immediately.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Committee of the Whole on Bills.

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for the Assembly to go to Committee of the Whole on Bills.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 85 — *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act*

The Chair: — The item of business before the committee is Bill No. 85, the taxpayers' fairness Act. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clauses 1 to 11 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 85, the taxpayers' fairness Act. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that the committee report the bill without amendment.

The Chair: — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 85, the taxpayers' fairness Act without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you again, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

The Chair: — It has been moved by the minister that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of Committees.

Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 85, the taxpayers' fairness Act without amendment.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 85 — *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act*

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that the bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 85, *The Taxpayers' Fairness (CPR) Act* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask leave to move a motion to change committee membership.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has asked leave to make changes to a committee. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS

Committee Membership

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the name of Matt Love be substituted for the name of Carla Beck on the Standing Committee on House Services.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Opposition House Leader that the name of Matt Love be substituted for the name of Carla Beck on the Standing Committee on House Services. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Everyone agreed. Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 81

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. J. Harrison that **Bill No. 81 — *The Labour Mobility and Fair Registration Practices Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have a committee scheduled shortly where there will, I'm sure, be a delightful discussion on the contents and the intent of Bill No. 81, *The Labour Mobility and Fair Registration Practices Act*.

Extensive stakeholder consultation has been ongoing, so with that I think I will leave any further questions or discussion to the aforementioned committee and will allow this bill to proceed to its next stages.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 81 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

Economy.

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

Bill No. 82

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 82 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into second reading debates.

Today I'm speaking on *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2022*, Mr. Speaker. Some notable changes with this bill, as mentioned in the minister's second reading comments. It implements income tax incentives announced in the budget, increases the tax credit for value-added agriculture incentive from 15 to 30 per cent for projects between 400 and 600 million and 15 to 40 per cent on those projects above 600 million, Mr. Speaker.

Of course the value-added ag incentives and industry within this province, something that really has to be part of a brighter future in this province, and encouragement to see that industry invested in and incentivized, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that that has been an issue for members on this side.

Also it proposes to increase the annual credit cap from 2.5 million to 3.5 million for the technology start-up incentive program, Mr. Speaker.

And certainly if there were two things, if I could only pick two in terms of opportunity in the province, these would be front-runners there, Mr. Speaker, looking at using what we have and have always done or have done for many, many, many decades in this province, be leaders in agriculture to retain some of that value-here process and create good jobs, Mr. Speaker. I think you have agreement from all members about that.

And again, of course, the technology start-up incentive program. The future is technology. It's important that Saskatchewan use our expertise, our history as, you know, punching above our weight in terms of being innovators, and continue to build on that, Mr. Speaker.

But one of the things that many of my colleagues have raised, and I'll enter a few comments in about this as well, is that the incentives to create those jobs and bring those investments here are very, very important. But there have to be people who work in those jobs, Mr. Speaker.

And what we've seen in this budget is an increase of 32 fees and tax hikes that undoubtedly will go further to deteriorate the quality of living for people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and something that we've heard directly from people at our offices and on the doorstep has contributed to our having the lowest population growth in the country, that those quality-of-life, affordability issues are really crucial to retaining and attracting people to work in these industries, something that many

industries in this province are struggling with right now.

[14:45]

And in fact, within that low population growth, the folks that we seem to be losing most in this province right now — and this really is a tragedy and really makes those jobs in tech and value-added ag, you know, in question — are those people, those young people who are 18- to 25-year-olds, Mr. Speaker.

Over the winter I had opportunity to meet with a number of young people, friends of my kids, friends of my friends and, Mr. Speaker, it really concerned me the number of those kids who told me that they weren't sure that they saw a future here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And that unfortunately has been borne out by census data and by immigration data, Mr. Speaker. And it's something that needs to be turned around.

So if you think of those tech jobs, one thing . . . I'm not sure all of the levers that will attract those tech jobs here, Mr. Speaker. But I know something that won't, and that is, you know, the comments that we've seen as of late from members opposite around, you know, anti-science comments, you know, making comments against health care workers, Mr. Speaker. And that's something that is doing nothing to attract those researchers, those tech jobs to the province, Mr. Speaker.

I will state that also in addition, Mr. Speaker, the place where we have agreement — Saskatchewan has what the world needs — it's too often though, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, with this Sask Party government, that Saskatchewan residents find that their government is not willing to provide what they need. Incentives are great, Mr. Speaker. In this budget, residents were looking for some relief. Instead, what they found were 32 fee and tax hikes which was the exact opposite of what was needed by Saskatchewan people.

I'm not sure that I've got anything novel to add, Mr. Speaker, to these comments. I think my colleagues have canvassed it very well, and we'll continue to have opportunity in committee to ask about the particulars of this bill, Mr. Speaker. But with that I am prepared to conclude my remarks and to adjourn debate on Bill No. 82.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 83

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 83 — *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill 83, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act*. You know, I've already spoken to this bill, which is okay because when I'm done concluding my remarks, it'll go to the process and the good work

that needs to be done, and our critic will ask a lot of questions. But, Mr. Speaker, bear with me a little bit because I'm going to try to be a little flexible here on some of the comments I want to talk about, about taxes.

And I want to talk about northern Saskatchewan. I want to talk about the Cumberland, but I also want to talk about Athabasca riding. The Athabasca riding, you know, there was a by-election. And people in that community of Athabasca were asked, come out and vote for a member to be a part of government and we'll get things done. And you know, unfortunately, those members only . . . whether it's I think a very poor number came out, 23 per cent maybe of voters came out to vote. And what they voted for was somebody that would help them in their community with tax relief, the affordability.

They're struggling. In northern Saskatchewan, like the rest of our province, people are struggling. But the North has so many added costs, especially in Athabasca. I think about some of the members in Athabasca, and they elected a member that will be a part of the government and they're hoping in this budget they would see relief, they would see some benefits.

But you know what they got, the member from Athabasca, the constituents? The member, you want to know what he got for them? Thirty-two new taxes and fees to the members, for the constituents of Athabasca. That's what they got. So they were truly looking for relief with affordability. They're struggling. Our seniors up there are struggling about food, gas, rent, everything.

But you know what's interesting? And I want to talk about it because I think this is so crucial and I think this will play out big when another election comes. Here we have situations where unfortunately the member who was previously from there, you know, who's now left and we had a by-election. That member was there for many years. The member from Athabasca was there many years serving the good constituents of Athabasca. He worked hard on their behalf in government and in opposition. But he fought hard in opposition to try to get the government to do some things. But what he got from the government, let me tell you. Hang on. Here's what we got. And they were hoping, you know, more cuts, less taxes, and they needed help. They needed help. Mr. Speaker, here's some of the things they got. And it's interesting because, you know, I want to do justice to it so, you know, I struggle sometimes.

But you know what they got? Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre, closed under the Sask Party. That's what they got. That's what they got. Remote housing programs for northern people to help them, they got from the Sask Party government, they got that shut down. But they were looking for relief, okay, with taxes. But they were told, you know, if you vote for a member and you elect that member, we're going to do things for the constituents. Well you'll be a part of government and we'll get things done.

Well so far I was hoping maybe a bill like this, a tax bill, we'd get less taxes but we'd have new bills and legislation that, you know, the member from Athabasca could've fought hard on the government side now that he's a way backbencher. He could've fought hard with the new budget coming and come up with legislation that says, we're going to reinstate the correctional centre; yes, we're going to get that. We're going to . . . Instead of

just a culvert on your roads, with the tax money we're charging northern people and all the royalties, what we're going to do, not just Highway 155, it's not just going to get a culvert. We're going to actually fix those terrible, unsafe roads, is what they thought they were going to get. Well in this budget, they didn't get that delivered, so we'll see where we go with it.

Now I know that there was a member's statement brought into this House today. And I want to come back and talk about the bill, Bill 83, and taxes and relief that people back home were trying to get. And we had a member from P.A. Northcote read a member's statement about forestry and about how exciting it is. And we want forestry sector to do good, but we want those northern municipalities, where they're impacted, where that forestry is in their yard, in their backyard . . .

You know, they had a term supply lease, a licence. They had that one time and the Sask Party took it away from those northern west communities, ripped it away from them, just took it away from them and said, no, you don't use it; you're losing it. Well that could've been millions to help those communities, could've generated . . . But we were hoping maybe the member from Athabasca, the new member, could've got that in the budget and could've got some things done. And people are going to wait and see all these things that he's going to get done for that area. You know, it's very interesting.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. There's just too much side chats going on here. Please, order.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was getting hard. I was having to raise my voice because I know they're really paying attention over there, because they really like this stuff, eh, when it shows the taxes that they're charging our northern leaders, our northern communities.

Our northern leaders are fighting for their residents. They're fighting for them. They're saying the cost of living is too much. The North is not getting treated fair when we look at our suicides, when we look at the challenges that we have. They're very proud people. They work hard. They want to be a part . . . They want to be true partners, but unfortunately we see a government who gives them more taxes, more, more, more, more, almost more debt, more taxes to the people of northern Saskatchewan — Athabasca, Cumberland ridings — and that's not the way it should be.

When our province is doing good, we should all take part in some relief. And the government could do that, you know, Mr. Speaker, in taxes like this tobacco tax. We're going to get more taxes. A lot of people are going to pay more taxes to help the government. But I look sometimes, you know, and the government says, well you guys keep crying. You guys want us to do more. The poor people, the people that are really asking to help to save lives, seniors trying to decide whether they can afford to pay the rent, medicine, or groceries, they have no clue.

I know. I know, and I hope some of the backbenchers are hearing it. And I hope they can get it across to cabinet that it's time cabinet looks at some of these issues seriously. And I hope they can do that. And I mean that. I hope they can do that. Because I

see something going on that really bothers me, when I see a cabinet . . . I don't know who gets . . . I'm hoping, I'm hoping I'll get through to them shortly, that we'll get through to them, that the backbenchers will tell the government, hey, we've got a serious crisis when it comes to mental health, addictions. We've got resources coming in. You're charging more taxes, tobacco tax. You're bringing in more tax — 32 new taxes and fees. You're generating more money. We have a crisis. We're losing people from the overdose, addictions, mental health, suicides. It's alarming. It's shocking.

And the government should all be saying, we need to do something. Let's deal with this. Let's work together. Now maybe the member from Athabasca could try to get some of those extra dollars that they're charging and get some of the programs put back into the North. So I wish him well on that, you know.

And I did, I did sincerely say congratulations when he won the seat, when 23 per cent of people came out to vote. I don't think that's going to happen next election. Trust me, I really think . . . Pay attention. I think you're going to get people woke up and saying, okay, now we were looking for relief; we're struggling. And I mean this.

Mr. Speaker, I'm being sincere when I say people are struggling to pay groceries, to make ends meet, fuel, everything. It's too much. I've seen some of them. I've seen people just saying, Doyle, I don't know how I'm going to do it. How do I cover this? I've got my kids. I've got all this. And some of them are single parents. Some of them are seniors. And they're struggling, and my heart goes out to them. And I try to help where I can help, Mr. Speaker. I do. But these taxes are more and more taxes on people, are causing so much grief.

And it's not just in the North. It's not just in First Nations and Métis communities. It's rural. It's urban. It's everywhere. It's happening. We're hearing it. I believe the backbenchers must be hearing this. They have to be. They cannot tell me that people are not saying . . . [inaudible] . . . And then to tell people, but you know what we have for you? Thirty-two more taxes and fees. This is the relief we're going to give you. How do you justify that? And then, you know, people struggling just to make ends meet.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I could go on on this stuff for hours on this because I see the struggles that people are having, you know. And I know that members opposite, the backbenchers, you must be hearing it; you have to be. And I mean maybe cabinet is busy all over, and I've said this before. Cabinet has a busy job, you know, and some of the cabinet ministers are really busy. I wish the cabinet minister for Northern Affairs, First Nations and Métis Relations would really get out there and do some . . . really talking to the people and advocating for us because we need that.

And I hope he's pounding at the cabinet table saying, they need more and we got to help them. We've got a crisis going on. I hope he's doing that, but I really don't know. I'm hoping, you know. I could ask him I guess a question and say, have you ever hit the cabinet table and asked for help for northern First Nations and Métis people? I probably could answer it but I won't because I don't want to, you know, get ahead of myself.

But when we talk about people struggling, Mr. Speaker, to make

ends meet and we see more taxes, and then we ask for a little bit of, you know, our resources . . . And I want to thank my member colleague, critic for finances. He says passionately, when we're in a . . . What is it? A wind . . . What is that called? Wind . . .

An Hon. Member: — Windfall.

Mr. Vermette: — Windfall. Oh, and things are coming up and companies are doing well with our resources — our resources — our resources that, you know, maybe we could, when there's a windfall and they're doing good . . . And we want them to do good, and the members have said that, you know. I think about the critic and he said, I want the companies to do good. I want them to have good profits, but I want to share, make sure, you know, the shareholders and the Premier and his cabinet are taking care of Saskatchewan shareholders who own those resources, that they're . . .

Now let me tell you this, and I'll get out of . . . And I don't want to move away from taxes because Bill 83 is very important. The government needs more tobacco money. Like they need more money because they've got some things that they want to spend more money on, like Bill 70, Bill 70. They need more money because they're going to hire these private . . . Well no, they're not private. They'll answer to the minister. But no, no, they're not going to answer to the minister. They're going to answer to some butterflies apparently — butterflies.

But having said that, I'll go back to Bill 83 and taxes. But they're going to use that tax money, and I was wondering about this. You know, they're going to generate some wealth from this tobacco tax, Bill No. 83. And they're going to take that wealth and they're going to say, Bill 70 needs some money. We've got to find some money.

Well all of a sudden, guess what? The light comes on and they say, you know what? We're a big majority. We can do whatever we want. And we'll get 32 more taxes and fees and we will generate money, and then we'll get all this money. And oh, they're excited and they were planning around the table. And a few of the backbenchers tried to get into the meeting and the cabinet said, no. No, you've got to get out. We're going to plan how we're spending all this new money that we're going to get from the people. When the people are struggling, we're going to get more, but we're going to use it for Bill 70 because we want to have different security, you know, because we don't want to be like in the '80s.

So, Mr. Speaker, truly I say this: this government picks and chooses what its priorities are. It does. I understand. They keep laughing at me, and I don't mind getting laughed at because I like teasing too. And they say, you know what? You guys are so small. You're just a small, little majority. But we're such a big, big majority, we do what we want.

[15:00]

Well that's fine. I get it, and I respect that. The good people of our province said that. But I would advise some of them to wake up because there's many people in our good province who are struggling. And I think that they're starting to look at things and wonder. And they're going, holy smokes, maybe we made this unbalance too big and something's not right, because look at the

way they're putting more taxes when we need help from our government. When we beg the government, we're telling them, help us, instead they give us more taxes. And you know, that's interesting.

The last thing I'm going to say, and then I'm going to allow this bill to get to the process it needs to go. And I know the House Leader and they'll work on this, getting this bill together because they've got to get, you know, go through the process because they've got to get their money because they're going to need it, eh. Because they got Bill 70, their committee tonight, they want to get through some stuff. So there's going to be some real work and nights in this building. They're going to be up till 10, maybe 11, maybe 12 because they're going to be spending that money.

But having said that, Mr. Speaker, I know that there's more work to be done. I love how they say that there's more work to be done. I would like to tell the government this: the member from Saskatoon Centre, who speaks so eloquent and meaningful and she speaks her heart and her truth and she says, the duty to consult and accommodate First Nations and Métis, you have failed miserably as a government to do that. As a Métis person, as an Indigenous person, as a grandfather of many First Nations grandchildren, you have failed them miserably. You've been told that and you don't want to respond, but that's okay. That's the way it is.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to come back to Bill No. 83, the tobacco tax, which generates money. I don't have much more I'm going to say. I think I'm prepared to just sit down here and be quiet and allow it to go through its process as the good work . . . We'll let the Government House Leader do the good work that I know needs to be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 83 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

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

Bill No. 84

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 84 — *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet and speak to Bill No. 84, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2022*. You know, this is a bill that many of my colleagues here on this side of the floor have already had the opportunity to speak on, and it is a privilege and an honour to have that same opportunity here to talk about the expansion of the provincial sales tax on admissions and entertainments and recreation charges that will come into effect October of this year.

And I don't think it'll come as any surprise to you, Mr. Speaker, that I will not be voting in favour of this bill. And I want to elaborate on that now and just explain a little bit about why I and the members on this side of the House are so fervently opposed to this bill.

It's a very curious proposal and bill that they've put forward here. You know, as I look at the range of services that are going to be taxed under this bill, we have here included sporting events, concerts, shows, movie theatres, zoos, historical sites, fairs, rodeos, trade shows, art and craft shows, conferences. I mean the list goes on.

The list goes on, and the thing that really strikes me as I read through this list is, you know, these are all of the things that, during a pandemic, we were asked to socially distance and isolate from in order to prevent the spread of the pandemic. And until vaccines came in, a number of these services, you know, out of service to their fellow citizens, Saskatchewan people did the right thing and stayed home and did not participate. It was a collective action that Saskatchewan citizens did to protect the overall health. And now in reward for all that good, collective action, what do we have here in this bill but they're being penalized, essentially.

It's like it's a double grab to take advantage, what is certainly going to be a surge in the drive to, you know, take advantage of all these things. And so I, you know, it feels really kind of sleazy that the government would anticipate that Saskatchewan people would be coming out in droves to these kinds of events and want to take advantage of that uptick and apply this tax.

So the fundamental underpinnings for it to me are a betrayal, a betrayal to the Saskatchewan people for doing the right thing when duty called, when they were asked to step away and socially distance in order to prevent the pandemic from spreading quickly through our population. And businesses took a hit, a very hard hit. Workers in these sectors took a hard hit. And you know, the anxiety that they had to live under at a time when they were prevented from going to work and doing their jobs — and thankfully there were economic supports brought in to alleviate a lot of that fear — but these sectors of the economy paid the price, and they were hit hard during the pandemic. And so it flies in the face of what a responsible government should be doing in such a situation.

And I mean, don't get me wrong. You know, I as much as the next person look forward to the opportunity to get out to these sorts of venues.

The latest Marvel movie is out in the theatres, Mr. Speaker, and I was so excited to see that announced. I read the reviews over

the weekend and I said to my son, I said hey, how about we go check out this movie? You know, won't this be fun to get out and enjoy a movie on the big screen? And then it occurred to me that, oh yeah, you know, it's going to mean another 6 per cent.

And you know, while certainly, you know, I'm privileged and able to afford it, there's so many here in Saskatchewan that are on fixed means, you know. I think of seniors on a fixed income and what this means for them. I think of folk who are receiving that abysmal, abysmal minimum wage, lowest or second lowest in the country, and their inability to be able to afford, and how these taxes create an additional barrier to access with the imposition of an additional 6 per cent tax on them.

Now of course the members opposite are probably thinking to themselves, well you know, we've just announced that we're going to increase the minimum wage. But it's too little, too late. You look at the cost of living and the cost of gasoline. We've asked them to remove or give economic relief in terms of the fuel tax. They refuse to do that.

The good member from Regina Rosemont brought forward a proposal last week for a surcharge on windfall revenues within our resource sector. You know, the resource sector is in a very strong position right now. The modest proposal that our Finance critic brought forward is a surcharge — a modest one — on it, you know, on these windfall profits. There's no question about the profitabilities of these sectors when you look at their first-quarter earnings for potash revenues.

And the same goes for oil and gas. And in fact when we look at those numbers, you know, it's the oil and gas sector that is benefiting the most, but it equally applies. You look at that resource sector and there are factors beyond their control, global political factors that are driving these record commodity prices.

Saskatchewan people deserve to be the benefactors of their resources. Why are they being penalized with these heartless tax increases that come at a time when we're emerging from a pandemic, when they have done their civic duty and socially distanced for the past two years for the benefit of everyone in society? And this is the thanks they get. Well it's a pretty thankless job that Saskatchewan people have done when these taxes are slapped on the very things that they have forgone and deserve that reward for their commendable collective action.

And I think it just goes to show that the Sask Party government doesn't care. It doesn't care. It doesn't get it. It's not listening. It's not consulting. They just tick the box when it comes to consultation. The only people that they're willing to listen to is the oil and gas sector and those that are funnelling money into their coffers to get them re-elected. It's a partisan play.

And as I said at the outset here, that is why I will not be supporting this bill. I will not be voting in favour. And with that I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 84.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House

Leader.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned till 1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:13.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

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
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement
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