



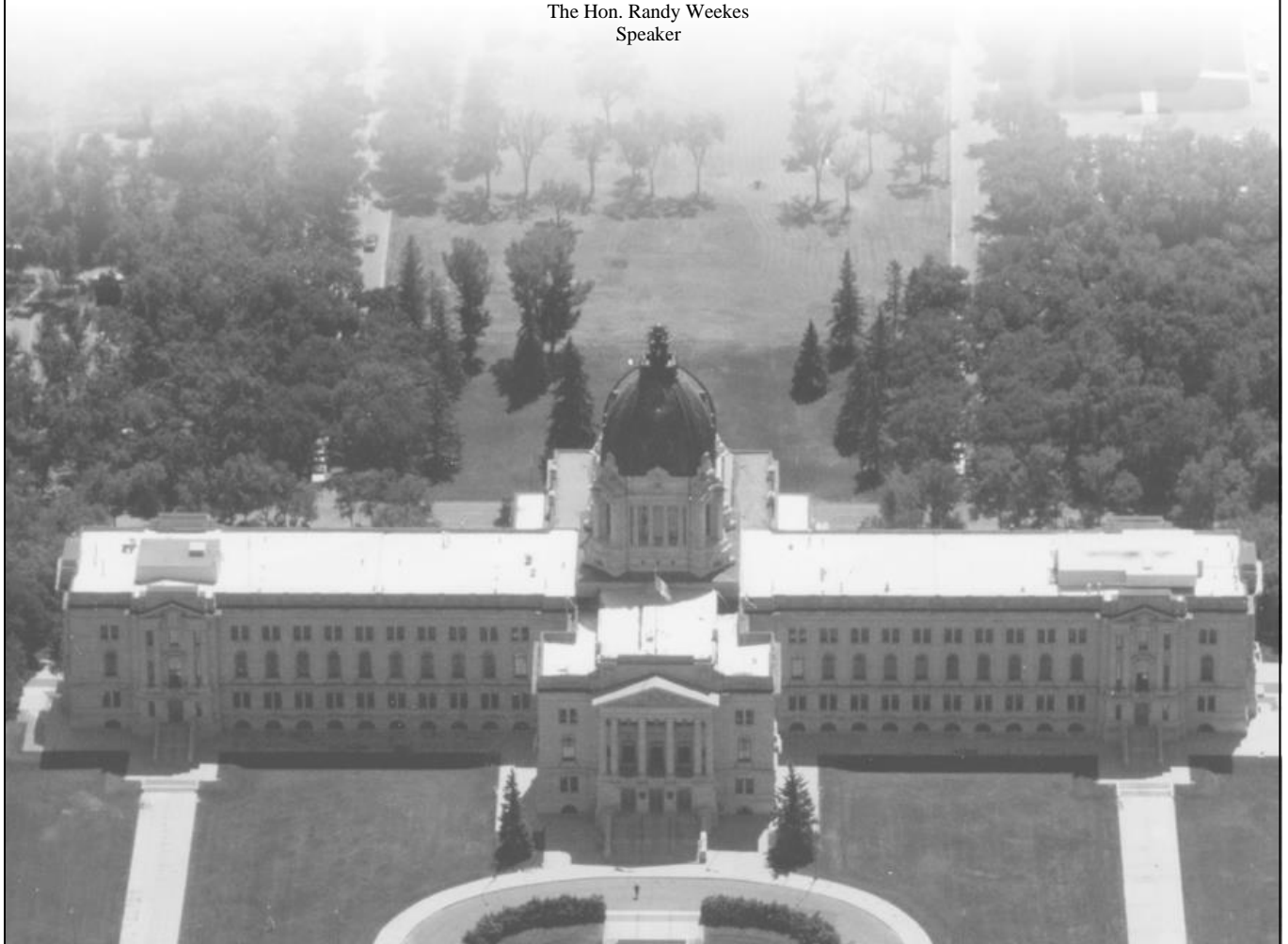
SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

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

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

Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Sean Darling

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I would like to start off introductions. I would like to introduce two of my staff joining us in the Speaker's gallery today.

Savanna Smuk has joined us as our summer student through high recommendation. She previously worked as a hockey referee and is now a referee working for a referee. This fall she will be continuing her education in business at the University of Saskatchewan. After completing her degree, she will be applying for law school in hopes of becoming a criminal defence lawyer. In her spare time, she enjoys getting back to her rural roots by spending time outdoors.

I would also like to introduce Twyla Wilson. Twyla joined the office September of 2021. Prior to joining our team she worked as an office manager for a law firm in Moose Jaw. Twyla hit the ground running during the fall session. In her spare time she is kept busy with her young daughter and enjoys travelling.

Please join me in welcoming Twyla and Savanna to their legislature.

I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would 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.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government this week was proud to proclaim May 15th to 21st as Victims and Survivors of Crime Week in Saskatchewan, with the theme “The Power of Collaboration.” This week focuses on raising awareness about the issues facing our province's victims and survivors of crime.

It's also a chance, Mr. Speaker, to thank the 126 volunteers who serve with police-based victim service programs and community boards across Saskatchewan over the past year. In '21-22 these volunteers dedicated over 6,200 hours to help 14,215 victims and survivors of crime in Saskatchewan.

Today I had the honour of recognizing five outstanding volunteer victim support workers who are celebrating 20 and 25 years of service in our communities. So, Mr. Speaker, with us today, the 20-year recipients — and I'd ask that they give a little bit of a wave when I mention their name — Joyce Warriner from Punichy with Regina region Victim Services; and Vicki Coxford, Beverly Kinshell, and Cecilia Robertson with

Saskatoon Victim Services. We also have one 25-year recipient, Shawna Lumgair from Loon Lake with Gateway Regional Victim Services.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize these volunteers during Victims and Survivors Of Crime Week, but we thank them every day for their compassion in supporting others during times of crisis. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm thankful that we're able to celebrate their achievements here today, and I would ask all members in the legislature to help me join them, welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these guests to their gallery. I want to thank them for their decades of humble service helping those victims and survivors across the province. It's truly remarkable that we have 126 volunteers who have dedicated over 6,200 hours of service, but in particular, thank you for dedicating so much of your life to this very worthy cause.

We say this often in this Chamber, but I think it bears worth repeating time and time again, that volunteers are truly the backbone of our community. The work that gets done in the justice system would be deficient if not for the hard work that volunteers like yourself do. So thank you very much once again for your dedicated service.

And once again I'd like to ask all members joining me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome some very special guests from my constituency today. Seated in your gallery are Dr. Suhyb Abulibdeh and his wife Oksana Pietushkovah. You want to give us a quick wave? Suhyb and Oksana have made their home in Martensville after fleeing Ukraine, and I'll be speaking a little bit more about them in a few minutes.

Joining them today, Mr. Speaker, is Steve Halabura. Steve is part of the Sunflower Network here in Saskatchewan. It's a group of volunteers from across the province who are working to freely connect displaced Ukrainians with host families here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Sunflower Network is a group that works with all levels of government and other agencies in assisting and

arranging transportation to Saskatchewan, finding safe and secure housing, connections with other aid groups, education and child care, medical services, employment — and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, I was privileged to spend some time before this afternoon's proceedings showing Suhyb, Oksana, and Steve around the legislature and look forward to spending more time with them following question period today. In a word, they're very grateful to be in our province.

Mr. Speaker, the work the volunteers with the Sunflower Network does is to be commended, and I'd like to welcome Steve to his legislature and ask that all members of this Assembly join me in welcoming Suhyb and Oksana to not only their legislature, but also to Saskatchewan. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Suhyb and Oksana to their Assembly here today, as well as thanking the Sunflower Network for the important work that they're doing.

I look forward to hearing more about what roles you will be filling, although I believe it will be helping with addressing the doctor shortage in the community. So I want to thank you for not only, you know, making the trip to Saskatchewan, but also filling an important role throughout the pandemic here and as we face doctor shortages. So thank you for that, and a big welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce you and the members to some friends of mine who are here from Saskatoon. They are down for a family visit. Seated in your gallery — and I'll ask them each to give a wave — is Darlene Chamberlain, who has brought her husband, Jim. And they are here with their daughter Shannon Waldman, who has brought along her husband, Ron Waldman.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the interesting thing about this family is Ron and Shannon have got three children. Their oldest son, Zac, works in Vancouver as an emergency room nurse, and the other two, Max and Molly, both work in this building. Max is the chief of staff in GR [Government Relations] and Molly is the chief of staff in Parks, Culture and Sport.

Mr. Speaker, when this family travelled before, they went to restaurants, hotels and quite legitimately requested and received a discount, a family discount of 5, 10, 15 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we now have Max and Molly on the public payroll here, and I think it's only appropriate that we look to them and say, will you give us a family discount as well? So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that all members welcome the families to their legislature today.

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too will join with the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments

Corporation] in welcoming these fine folks to their Legislative Assembly. I'm not going to ask for a family discount because both Max and Molly are worth their weight in gold, so I'm not asking for a discount. But I do want to welcome their parents, Ron and Shannon, to the Legislative Assembly — we had a wonderful visit today — and the grandparents Darlene and Jim.

Now my understanding is this is the first time that Darlene and Jim have been to the Legislative Building, and in our discussion they were very impressed with the facility and really were just so pleased to have the opportunity to meet so many of us here today. So thank you very much for coming to the Legislative Assembly but also for making sure that you raised really fine children, because Max and Molly, they do us proud. So thank you so much.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and this Assembly a number of visitors seated in the Speaker's gallery here this afternoon. In honour of National Police Week, which takes place from May 15th to 21st, we are joined today by the membership of the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police.

This includes president of the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs, the chief of Moose Jaw Police Service, Rick Bourassa; commanding officer of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] "F" Division, Rhonda Blackmore; chief of Saskatoon Police Service, Troy Cooper; chief of Regina Police Service, Evan Bray; chief of Estevan Police Service, Richard Lowen; chief of the Weyburn Police Service, Jamie Blunden; chief of the Prince Albert Police Service, Jon Bergen; staff sergeant and second in command of the File Hills First Nations Police Service, Jeff Laforte; and executive director of Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police, Bill Millar.

We are joined also by Treena Sikora and Corey Zaharuk, the Chair and executive director respectively, of the Saskatchewan Police Commission.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Police Commission and the ministry represent every level of our province's policing community. They work in our cities, towns, rural areas, First Nations, and across government to make our province a safer place to live. I do not think it would be a surprise to members that I believe we have the best policing leadership in the entire country represented here in our galleries. The knowledge and experience they bring to the Legislative Assembly here today is unequalled across Canada, and I am honoured to have them here with us today. I had the pleasure of meeting with our guests earlier today to talk about how we can continue to work together to address many issues, and I look

forward to further conversations with them.

In addition it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you — it's all part of the same thing, Mr. Speaker; work with me — and this Assembly individuals from the Saskatchewan Women in Policing organization, or SWIP for short.

SWIP is a non-profit organization founded in December of 2020 that offers mentorship and guidance to women in law enforcement positions across the province. SWIP works to empower female officers to break systemic barriers and advocate for women as they advance in their law enforcement careers. They also offer female-centric training opportunities, conferences, and networking to connect with other female law enforcement professionals, including sworn, civilian, and retired members in Saskatchewan and across Canada.

Last week SWIP announced the winners of this year's Saskatchewan Women in Policing awards, who are also seated in the Speaker's gallery. Here today, Caitlin Lee, conservation officer with the provincial protective services branch and winner of the Officer of the Year Award; Robin Petkau, constable with the Regina Police Service and winner of the Lifesaving or Critical Incident Award; Sherese Tardif-Cress, detector dog handler with the Canada Border Services Agency and winner of the Mentoring and Leadership Award; Monica Deters, supervisor of intelligence analysis with the RCMP "F" Division and winner of this year's Civilian Mentoring and Leadership Award.

From SWIP we also have Danielle Stephany, Colleen Reddekopp, Marlie Frei, Melinda Mintenko, and Lisa Simonson. All of these women have distinguished themselves in their careers, demonstrated a history of excellence, and gone above and beyond the call of duty to support their colleagues and protect the people of the province.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, as many in this Assembly know, I was a police officer for over 25 years before I had the honour of becoming part of the government. I remember the pride, the camaraderie, the commitment, especially with other female police officers. At that time, Mr. Speaker, women represented approximately 4 per cent of all police officers in Canada. Today that number is 22 per cent. We have come a long way, and we have gotten this far thanks to strong female officers like our guests here with us today. They should be proud of their achievements and of the work they do every day to keep the people of Saskatchewan safe. We are so grateful for the work, and I am proud to see Saskatchewan is home to such exceptional officers.

I had the pleasure of course meeting with the SWIP group earlier on today, and our police leaders, and I'm happy to recognize them in today's Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming our guests, recognizing their accomplishments, and thanking them and all police officers in Saskatchewan for the work they do to keep Saskatchewan communities safe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming all of her guests to this Legislative Assembly. I'll try and catch all of the groups that are here.

First of all, the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police. Thank you so much for being here. Thank you so much for all that you do every single day. And a special thanks to all of your members who work hard throughout the province to keep us safe every single day. Thank you for being here.

And to the two members of the Saskatchewan Police Commission, thank you for your work as the oversight body in Saskatchewan. I appreciate it very much.

And to the members of SWIP who are here, I'm a fan of your work on LinkedIn, so it's nice to finally meet you in person. I'm so happy to see you here. Thank you for all the work that you do advocating for women in non-traditional professions like policing. Excited to hear the growth that the minister opposite has described in terms of women who have entered the force. Looking forward to seeing that number continue to grow.

Thank you, all of you, for all the work that you do every single day, all of the folks that you work with, all of the people in our community who you serve. And I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce, sitting in the west gallery, 47 good-looking, enthusiastic grade 8 students. Yeah, give us a wave. They are from the Dr. Sylvia Fedoruk School in the Evergreen neighbourhood in Saskatoon. Dr. Fedoruk school is a new school, recently built. I remember being at the sod turning there. And it's great to have this group here. The school is named after Dr. Sylvia Fedoruk, who was a former Lieutenant Governor, a world-renowned researcher in the area of nuclear medical science.

Joining them today are teachers Andrew Kitchen, Wayne Gering, chaperones Jeff Froese, Trina Cochrane, and Jody Klimkiewicz. Mr. Kitchen is no stranger to the legislature. He tries to bring a school group every year. And I look forward to joining the group for pictures and maybe some ice cream after the question period. They may need it by then, Mr. Speaker. So through you, please welcome these students to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I would like to join the member in welcoming Andrew and his class to the Chamber today. Andrew is a past participant of the SSTI [Saskatchewan Social Sciences Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy] and has served for several years as a member of the Saskatchewan social studies teachers' institute steering committee. Thank you, Andrew, for your valuable contribution to the SSTI program. Please join me in welcoming Andrew and his class to their Legislative Chamber.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with yourself and the member for Saskatoon in

welcoming one particular chaperone with the group, Jeff Froese. Jeff is formerly of Meadow Lake. He'd been a well-respected pastor in our community, and also had worked as a CA [constituency assistant] in my office. I wish all members will join me in welcoming Jeff Froese to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to introduce someone that's very special to me. That's Sawyer Nast, seated in your gallery. Sawyer is my constituency assistant in the great state of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. She is highly organized . . . It's a joke, for the members that are asking a question. It's not a state; it's just a constituency. But it's our little inside joke, our version of a nation in a nation, yes.

But, Mr. Speaker, Sawyer keeps me in line, which is no small task, I know. No small feat, yes, sorry. No pun intended. She knows what I'm thinking, often before I am. She's very well organized; I am not. And most importantly, she has a huge heart. And she's the first point of contact for anyone that walks through our doors, and I speak often in this House about the hurt and the challenges and the difficulties of folks in Regina Elphinstone-Centre, particularly in North Central, where our office located on 5th Avenue.

Sawyer is that first point of contact, and she's incredible. She listens. She fights for people. She's detail-oriented. She's full of compassion. And I really don't know what I would do without her. And I really don't know what the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre would do without her, to be honest, Mr. Speaker. She's also an incredible advocate for reconciliation, both within our party and within the broader province.

She's a graduate of the U of R [University of Regina]. She's the recipient of many scholarships and awards from the Paul J. Hill School of Business. She's also a runner, a huge nerd in the best sense of the word, but I won't out her in her love of comic books and many other things, Mr. Speaker. She's a lover of Dr Pepper, I learned at her wedding this summer. And she brings to this work a big heart, incredible competence, and a dry wit, which I really appreciate. So I want to give her a warm welcome to this her Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

And while I'm on my feet, I also want to acknowledge the significant delegation of folks who are here today to talk about the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program, Mr. Speaker. We have several representatives from organizations that work with people with disabilities, as well as several people who themselves struggle with disability. I won't endeavour to name all of them because I'll inevitably miss someone, but I just want to acknowledge the work that they do in the community.

This is work that is significantly more challenging in recent years because we have a program, SAID, which does not provide enough to persons living with disability to meet their basic needs. So I would ask all members, joining me in welcoming the delegation here to speak to the SAID program.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sitting in the west gallery is a group of 43 grade 8 students from the Regina Huda School. Give us a wave. Awesome. And accompanying with them is their teachers Amber Garrity and Bernie Flynn. It's always great to have the representatives of the Huda School here, and I thank them again for making the trek down here.

Mr. Speaker, the Huda School is Regina's first Islamic school, and the families and parents of the students come from all over the world. They've enhanced the cultures and diversity of this city and this province. I look forward to meeting with them . . . [inaudible] . . . Last week I almost got stumped; this week I'm ready. I'm ready for all your questions. Studied up. But also I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming this excellent group from the Huda School to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join the Minister of Corrections in welcoming a dear friend of mine, Treena Sikora, who is here on behalf of the Police Commission. Treena and her husband, Dion, own a company called Saskatoon Metal, as well as several other companies in and around the Saskatoon area, and actually expanded just down into Lumsden area with Free Bird restaurant. And I would put a little plug in for them if anybody partakes. It is a great restaurant run by their nephew.

Treena and her family have been great friends of ours over the years. They are philanthropists within the Saskatoon area, and I just want to join the minister in welcoming her to her Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present a petition calling on the government to scrap Bill 70.

Those who signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: the independence of security at the legislature is of great importance to Saskatchewan people; it is a long-standing parliamentary custom that security maintain independence by reporting to the Speaker; the Speaker has a constitutional duty to defend the privileges of the legislature and its members; the Sergeant-at-Arms has successfully maintained the security of the legislature and its grounds since the 1980s in working with its partners; Bill 70 would turn the Sergeant-at-Arms into a ceremonial role, which breaches tradition in how issues of security at the legislature are handled.

As you well know, Mr. Speaker, historically all security concerns have been discussed at the bipartisan Board of Internal Economy, and it's very interesting that that's not happening anymore by this government.

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Those who have signed this petition today come from Regina. I do so present.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet today to present a petition on behalf of residents at Luther Heights seniors' residence in Saskatoon, as well as their friends and family and other concerned citizens.

The petitioners want us to know that the Department of Social Services is cancelling the government subsidy for 50 apartments in Luther Heights. The building contains 120 units providing vital housing care for seniors, and the decision to eliminate these subsidies will reduce the overall housing supply in Saskatoon, especially the supply available to seniors on fixed incomes.

I believe that the petitioners share a concern that older adults on a fixed income, who have been living here potentially for decades, will be forced to make a decision to either change where they live — to move residences — or to pay more out of pocket as they move from a subsidized rate into an affordable rate where it is going to create undue harm and very difficult decisions for them and their loved ones.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the Government of Saskatchewan to reverse the decision to eliminate subsidized housing and restore funding for the 50 units affected at Luther Heights.

This petition is signed by 20 individuals from Saskatoon and Melfort. And I do so present.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again in tribute to the youth present here today in the west gallery from Huda School and Sylvia Fedoruk, I rise on my feet to present a petition calling on the provincial government to take real action to fight climate change.

Mr. Speaker, residents want — here in Saskatchewan — want their government to show genuine leadership to address the climate crisis. They're worried about their children's future and a government that would rather pick fights with our federal counterparts if it suits their partisan agenda. The government's

failure to produce a credible economy-wide climate action plan risks devastating impacts on the province's economic productivity and human and environmental health.

The Premier may not care that Saskatchewan has the highest greenhouse gas emissions per capita, but I can assure you the citizens signing this petition most certainly do:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, call on the provincial government to enact a credible climate action plan and allocate appropriate funding to ensure real reductions in Saskatchewan's emissions consistent with the scientific consensus to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

It is signed by the residents of Unity. I do so present.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition calling on the government to implement an independent inquiry into the Sask Party government's handling of the pandemic.

[14:00]

These citizens wish to bring to our attention that modelling in June of 2021 predicted the deadly fourth wave that went unignored and the government rushed to remove restrictions following missing their own immunization target; that the offer of federal aid went unanswered until the province had to transfer ICU [intensive care unit] patients to Ontario; that the refusal to follow SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] back-to-school recommendations led to an offloading of responsibility to school divisions; that the comments the Premier made regarding the effectiveness of vaccines against the Omicron variant has led to the spread of misinformation; that the government refused to release the full recommendations provided by Saskatchewan's chief medical health officer; and that the total number of COVID-19 deaths is not fully known due to lagging reporting and an increase in excess deaths.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to commit to a full, independent public inquiry into the Government of Saskatchewan's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is signed by individuals from Swift Current today, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

The Speaker: — 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: the government has been auctioning off Crown land and leases to the highest bidder. The provincial government must immediately stop selling off Crown land and leases and fix their broken duty-to-consult process. We only have 10 per cent of Crown land left,

and this government must give . . . the first right of refusals needs to be offered to the First Nations in the treaty land entitlement process when Crown lands are being sold; and that this government has 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 Onion Lake. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Women Entrepreneurs Week

Ms. C. Young: — Mr. Speaker, this is Women Entrepreneurs Week in Saskatchewan, a time to recognize dynamic female business leaders and their contributions to our economy. Women entrepreneurs are bringing new ideas and innovations to the marketplace as they showcase our province's potential. According to most-recent available data, women entrepreneurs contribute \$23.1 billion to the Saskatchewan economy and create close to 192,000 jobs. When Saskatchewan women lead a business, they are more likely to headquarter their businesses in their province.

This year the Status of Women office commissioned a video showcasing three extraordinary women entrepreneurs who demonstrate drive, determination, and innovation. They are Callie Lisitza, co-founder and president, MeatMeatGo; Candina Elendu, founder and CEO [chief executive officer], True North Women's Safety Apparel Ltd.; and Rochana Sawatzky, founder and CEO, Beautiful Mood.

To help all Saskatchewan small-business entrepreneurs, our government has implemented various support programs to provide ongoing assistance and access to capital. These programs include the Re-Skill Saskatchewan training subsidy, the digital literacy for entrepreneurs, and the Scale Up for Entrepreneurs initiative. The last one is in partnership with Women Entrepreneurs Saskatchewan.

I ask all members to please join me in recognizing the outstanding female entrepreneurs in our province, not only this week but all year long. Thank you.

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

Sexual Violence Awareness Week

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sexual Violence Awareness Week, a week to raise public awareness on issues relating to sexual violence in Saskatchewan. Throughout

the week, Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan, or SASS, is sharing an overarching message that most forms of sexual violence, exploitation, and human trafficking occurs between acquaintances and intimate partners. Virtual events run every day between tomorrow and Friday, which will connect themes like emotional intelligence and sexual health, missing persons and Indigenous perspectives, with the issues of sexual violence and exploitation.

Saskatchewan's rate of reported sexual violence is twice the national average. Saskatchewan also has the highest rates of intimate partner violence and second-highest rate of sexual assault amongst all provinces. This alarming prevalence can be attributed to factors like community remoteness, treatment of vulnerable populations, and access to public services and justice.

Along with SASS, the Regina YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] has partnered with 20 local food and beverage businesses on a marketing campaign. Each drink purchase comes with a Never Blame the Victim beverage coaster, highlighting the importance of ending the stigma and victim blaming that survivors of sexual violence face. New this year, the YW also provided staff training for partnering businesses to talk about and recognize sexual violence. Mr. Speaker, this is just one example of the many activities being put on this week by organizations throughout the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me in thanking all the organizations that work to support survivors of sexual violence in our province, who work tirelessly every single day. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

National Police Week

Mr. Lemaigre: — Mr. Speaker, this is National Police Week. The theme, Connected to our Communities, emphasizes how police officers are members of the community in which they live, as well as policing the community in which they work. Strong partnerships between government and police agencies continue to benefit Saskatchewan communities.

In the past year we have taken significant steps in strengthening these relationships, including creating the provincial protective services branch, which unites provincial peace officers into a single organization structure that supports police in emergent situations; developing the First Nations community safety officer pilot project with Whitecap Dakota First Nation and Muskoday First Nation; establishing a warrant enforcement and suppression team to target high-risk offenders with outstanding warrants; forming the Saskatchewan trafficking response team to address the trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people; expanding the crime reduction team program to La Ronge and Meadow Lake, bringing the total number of CRT [crime reduction team] units in the province to nine; and adding additional resources and capacity to the Saskatchewan internet child exploitation unit.

This week we look forward to highlighting the great work of police officers from across the province and thanking them for their service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Elder Advocates for Art and Social Justice

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the accomplishments of one of my constituents, Maria Campbell, Métis author, playwright, filmmaker, teacher, activist, and elder. Ms. Campbell's work has spanned many decades and is centred around advocacy for Métis and Indigenous people, both within and outside of Saskatchewan, in particular around causes of significance for women and youth.

Just last year, Ms. Campbell was awarded both the Lieutenant Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award as well as an honorary doctorate from the University of Saskatchewan in recognition for her work in the arts and in activism, adding to a long list of achievements throughout her lifetime.

Ms. Campbell has been and continues to be a vital voice across so many communities, bridging the spaces between people in her lifelong dedication to building a better future while honouring the past. Her ability to foster these connections is reflected in her art, which spans multiple mediums and genres, and which has been appreciated by audiences throughout Canada and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the contributions that Ms. Campbell has made to art and social justice in Saskatchewan. She is one of the most compelling voices in our province, and her calls for community building and justice remain just as important today as they were in the early days of her advocacy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville-Warman.

Saskatchewan Welcomes Ukrainian Immigrants

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over 6 million people have fled Ukraine since Russian President Vladimir Putin began his heinous and unjustified invasion. Dr. Suhyb Abulibdeh and his wife, Oksana Pietushkovah, are among them.

Shortly after the invasion began, Suhyb was called to help defend his country. Alone and with airplanes overhead and bombs going off all around their Kharkiv home, Oksana began running out of food and it was becoming much too dangerous to stay. Their 1300-kilometre journey to safety was incredibly dangerous and difficult. In Oksana's words:

When we got to Kyiv, the driver turned off the lights on the train and told us to turn off our phones and sit quietly with no sound. A train full of children and women, we stood still for four hours in the dark, in silence and in fear.

From Warsaw it was on to Vienna, Paris, Calgary, and finally Saskatoon, arriving on April 8th. Mr. Speaker, I was privileged to meet them at the airport that evening to welcome them to our province. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to report that Suhyb and Oksana have put down roots in Martensville. And our government will keep doing everything we can to ensure others who want to come to Saskatchewan are afforded every opportunity to make our province their new home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatoon Brewery Plans for Facility Expansion

Mr. Friesen: — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to rise today to recognize an exciting new development in downtown Saskatoon. The Great Western Brewing Company has announced plans for a \$40 million facility expansion, which includes updates to their current technology while maintaining the historical portions of the brewery built in the early 1920s. This will double their current output of beer to 100 million cans of beer per year, while cutting water usage in half and reducing their energy usage by 60 per cent.

The upgraded building will feature angles that resemble a grain elevator in recognition that 100 per cent Saskatchewan-grown barley is used in their beer. Great Western will continue to serve as an anchor for the 2nd Avenue North, and act as both a tourist destination and a showpiece as you enter downtown.

Mr. Speaker, it was 32 years ago when a group of 16 bold and determined employees stood up, pooled their resources, and took a risk to form the Great Western Brewing Company. It has become one of Canada's most respected and successful regional brewers and internationally recognized producer of world-class beer. Today the brewery employs over 100 staff who will continue to carry on the legacy of those original 16 founders who faced incredible challenges.

This is a true made-in-Saskatchewan success story. Cheers, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Increase in Key Economic Indicators for Saskatchewan

Mr. Francis: — Mr. Speaker, it's the last week of session, and over the last several weeks and months there's been no shortage of good economic news here in the province. But according to the statistical experts opposite, none of it has been good. And that's why it's so important to separate the facts from the continued doom and gloom rhetoric we hear from the NDP [New Democratic Party] every day.

Here are the facts, Mr. Speaker. In March the value of building permits increased by 20.2 per cent month to month, and by 45.7 per cent year over year. Merchandise exports increased by 34.4 per cent month to month, 38.5 per cent year over year, and 27.6 per cent year to date. The value of manufacturing sales increased by 11.1 per cent month to month, and by 44.6 per cent year over year. The value of wholesale trade increased by 28.9 per cent year over year.

In February, the value of retail trade increased by 2.4 per cent month to month, and by 13 per cent year over year. Investment in building construction also increased by ten and a half per cent month to month.

These key economic indicators cover a wide swath of sectors. The fact that Saskatchewan is either leading or near the top in all of those says something. It says a lot, Mr. Speaker. It says Saskatchewan's economy is vibrant, diverse, and strong. And if

that's bad news, Mr. Speaker, then I can't imagine what the members opposite think is good. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Support for Health Care Workers

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "I don't care." That's what the Premier had to say about climate change, but his actions prove that that statement applies to so much more. He doesn't care about rising prices. He doesn't care about cuts in our classrooms. He doesn't care about those living in poverty. He doesn't care about our overwhelmed emergency rooms. If he did, he would make different choices.

There is a group of people in this province who do care, who've given this province everything they have over the last two years. But how are health care workers supposed to keep that effort up with messages like that from the top? Over half the nurses in the province are thinking of leaving the profession. A full one in every five physicians is thinking of retiring in the next two years.

Dr. Tomi Mitchell closed her busy practice in Regina. Dr. Kevin Wasko, off to Ontario when he should be leading from Swift Current. And now we lose Saskatoon intensive care specialist Hassan Masri. It's hard to think of a physician who more clearly embodied the spirit of evidence-based advocacy throughout this pandemic. From his Facebook videos to his mustachioed mug on billboards promoting vaccination, he shared sensible advice directly to Saskatchewan people and pushed this government for wiser action on public health. Now he's leaving the province and says what we're all hearing . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . A minute and a half, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . We both get a minute and a half, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[14:15]

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say, and we've said this many times in this Assembly that COVID-19 has most certainly put significant pressures on all facets of our personal and professional lives, Mr. Speaker. Nowhere is this more evident than in our health care system. And this is an opportunity for us to give a thank you to all of our health care workers across the system, all of those that have served on the front lines throughout the pandemic, previous to the pandemic, and continue to serve today, whether that be in our ICU departments, whether that be in our long-term care facilities across the province, our personal care homes, those that served in our vaccination centres, in our testing centres, or just simply providing advice day in day out through our public health care offices. On behalf of the government, we most certainly say thank you.

Mr. Speaker, we have worked very hard as a government over the course of the last decade and a half to increase our recruitment and retention efforts of health care professionals, whether it be opening up training seats for CCAs [continuing care assistant] up to and including being invested in in this budget, 300 of them total; whether it be increasing our nurse training seats from about 300 to 1,000; whether it be increasing our physician training seats

and making every effort to recruit those folks into the Saskatchewan health care system, into a Saskatchewan community, Mr. Speaker.

Given there are challenges, but the attrition rates within the Saskatchewan Health Authority do remain constant, about three and a half per cent previous to the pandemic, and about three and a half per cent today.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the Premier failed to acknowledge during that answer was the departure of Dr. Hassan Masri, one of many physicians who is leaving or thinking about leaving.

In a recent survey, 76 per cent of Saskatchewan doctors named their number one concern — the source of stress that's driving them away — as the lack of physician voice in the pandemic, being ignored. Dr. Masri is one of the 400 doctors who wrote a letter calling on this government to act, a letter the Premier dismissed. Dr. Masri said his choice to leave this province was, in his words, "forced upon me by a failed leader like Scott Moe." That quote continues:

A leader that had time to call the anti-vaccine and anti-mask mandate leader but never had a chance to listen to my private and public messages and pleas despite endless attempts to speak to him directly and privately. His failed leadership and behaviour during this pandemic was so shameful.

Does the Premier recognize his choices are chasing away Saskatchewan doctors? We're losing our best and our brightest. Does the Premier simply not care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Dr. Masri as well as all of our front-line health care folks that have gone above and beyond over the course of the past two years, and by extension all of the health care folks across the nation of Canada as we have leaned on one another.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, is the attrition rates within the Saskatchewan Health Authority remain about three and a half per cent. That doesn't mean that we can, not in any way, let up on the recruitment and retention efforts of all health care professionals that this government has been engaged in. It includes meeting with the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association], which the ministers do regularly and most recently just a number of days ago. It includes continuing to provide the 17 physician incentive support programs that we have to attract physicians to various communities and various disciplines across the province, Mr. Speaker.

And there was additional funding in this budget to look at if we need to expand some of those programs to ensure that we are attracting physicians and all health care professionals into our communities, Mr. Speaker. This most recent budget came out with a four-point plan on how we are going to address . . . and attract nurses into our communities to add to the over 4,000 nurses that have come to work in a Saskatchewan community, about 17,000 nurses of all designation total, Mr. Speaker.

This four-point plan most certainly will continue our efforts, and actually intensifies our efforts to recruit, to retain, and to increase the training seats, Mr. Speaker, and to target incentives on where we need these health care professionals to be.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That four-point plan is nothing but talking points. It's completely empty. And the SMA survey was 100 per cent clear. Doctors are planning to leave. And the Premier went out of his way to praise Dr. Masri when he agreed with him, but he ignored him and he ignored other doctors when they called for real action that would have saved Saskatchewan lives. We would have more people with us still in Saskatchewan today.

Dr. Masri said this about the Premier, and I quote:

This leader will drain this province of all those who wish to see change. I am not the first to leave and there are many who have left and some who will be leaving silently in the weeks to come.

The quote continues:

Scott Moe is the example of the leader that I never want to be. Bad leaders hurt everyone and people should pay more attention who they vote for.

Clearly this Premier is failing health care workers. Clearly this Premier is failing Saskatchewan people. Will he admit his mistakes and chart a different course, or does he still simply not care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, most certainly the four-point plan is not talking points, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition references. When it comes to international recruitment, there's a million and a half dollars. That's not a talking point. Those are actual dollars that are being invested to recruit 150 health care professionals from the Philippines into our province, into our communities, Mr. Speaker.

The health care recruitment agency of Saskatchewan is being revamped, so that it is not just focusing on recruiting physicians, Mr. Speaker, but recruiting all health care professionals into our communities. The increased training seats of 150 this coming year, Mr. Speaker, bringing us up to 1,000 nurse training seats. Three hundred when we formed government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's not just talking points. Those are actual training seats with actual individuals that are in them, Mr. Speaker. Individuals that we will be pursuing to work in a Saskatchewan community and to provide service and to support those that are providing that service today.

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

Funding for Mental Health, Addictions, and Suicide Prevention

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More empty words from

a premier who doesn't listen to the reality of health care workers on the front line. Dr. Masri wasn't only referring to this Premier's many failures when it comes to COVID. He said, and I quote:

The straw for me after all this terrible leadership during the pandemic was when he and his health minister decided to not fund a harm reduction place. Instead of being in a system that reduces harm and looks out for people I now can watch people overdose and die from the window of my hospital's ICU.

Instead of following the science and saving lives, this government constantly puts politics ahead of people. This includes the choice to cut the proportion of the health budget going to mental health and addictions. And it certainly includes the charade of passing the member for Cumberland's suicide prevention bill and not only taking no action but also cutting funding to the already inadequate Pillars for Life by 20 per cent.

What does the Premier have to say for himself? He says that he cares, but his actions just don't agree.

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We continue to make significant investments into the area of mental health and addictions, \$470 million in this year's budget, which is more than was spent than the year before and more than the year prior to that. We are investing over \$92 million in targeted mental health and addictions initiatives since 2018, Mr. Speaker, since this Premier took his Chair.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to point out with respect to the one point that the member from Meewasin made with respect to Pillars for Life, to be clear, Mr. Speaker, there have been no budget cuts to Pillars for Life. The issue that is being discussed is actually an issue of budgeted dollars versus actual expenditures. This year's budget provides two and a quarter million dollars for a number of targeted suicide prevention initiatives including the \$1 million for Pillars for Life, which is the exact same amount that was funded for Pillars for Life in last year's budget. We're going to continue to make these important investments into areas of mental health and addiction and suicide prevention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More worn-out talking points. You've got to follow the money, Mr. Speaker, to understand. And what do we see? A 20 per cent cut to Pillars for Life, an ideological choice to refuse to fund Prairie Harm Reduction. And cutting that insignificant, insignificant funds that are going towards suicide prevention at a time when so many families are struggling, and to say, as the minister did, that these are just start-up costs. No one's seen any sign of anything starting up. The government's suicide prevention program is nowhere to be seen. If anything, we need more money to prevent suicide, not less.

The Premier seems to have lost his talking points now. He seems to have lost the ability to take his feet. How does he, how does he who led the way on this, how does he square the show that he

put in to pass the member for Cumberland's bill with the betrayal of the families who are struggling today?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my previous answer, the funding that was committed to Pillars for Life in this year's budget is the exact same amount that was committed in last year's budget. Mr. Speaker, there was some additional spending on initiatives related to Pillars for Life that occurred, and that's what reflected in the actual spending figures that were reported in the media.

Mr. Speaker, the Pillars for Life suicide prevention plan has been around since May of 2020 and serves as the framework for a number of different initiatives in this province. Outside of that as well, there was other funding that we are committing to a variety of other programs across Saskatchewan, such as enhanced funding for the mental health capacity building in schools initiative. In this year's budget, an additional \$800,000 in that budget to provide more of these programs to more school-aged kids across this province.

That is some of the good work that is happening in Saskatchewan right now, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to do this work through consultation with community leaders and with CBOs [community-based organization] and organizations across this province. We're going to do that in the weeks and months ahead and continue to enhance these programs, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's predecessor, the architect of the Saskatchewan assured income for disability or the SAID program, said that he'd make Saskatchewan the best place to live for people with disabilities. That idea has never been further from the truth than it is today. Far from improving the quality of life for people living with significant and enduring disabilities in Saskatchewan, this government has presided over cut after cut after cut to the SAID program.

SAID is an income replacement program for people with significant and enduring disability, people who often cannot work through no fault of their own. The program has not seen a significant increase in seven years, and that represents a cut of 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker. When will the minister provide enough for people with disability in Saskatchewan to meet their basic needs?

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. And I welcome the groups that are with us here today. I recognize some faces from some organizations that I've had the opportunity to meet with over my term as Minister of Social Services in the past few months.

Mr. Speaker, Social Services does have programs that assist individuals to help them overcome their challenges, earn more

income, become more self-sufficient, possibly even start a career depending on their circumstances, and to be able to participate in their communities to the best of their abilities, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is harping on the SAID program which this government brought into place in 2009. Since we brought it into place in 2009, we have had four increases over that period of time. Mr. Speaker, the community that this program serves had been asking for that program for years and years and years, only to be ignored by the members opposite, and never put a program in place.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, that member knows well that there's not been an increase in seven years. And that's in addition to cuts to the special diet allowance, cuts to the rental housing supplement, cuts to the transportation supplement, cuts to the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], Mr. Speaker.

Today we are joined by James MacLachlan and his sister, Barbara. James is a SAID recipient. He's living with myotonic dystrophy, and he's also blind in one eye. After applying for SAID in December, hoping it would help cover his basic needs and keep him in the care home where he's been living the past couple of years, he learned that Social Services would be clawing back his CPP [Canada Pension Plan] disability pension and his Sarcen pension, leaving him eligible for \$83 a month.

These clawbacks mean that James will not be able to afford to live in his home. Will the minister stop the clawbacks to pensions that people with disabilities rely on to meet their basic needs?

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And once again I do thank the member opposite for the question, and I welcome James and Barbara to their Legislative Assembly here today. Welcome.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, the SAID program as well as our SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program, these are programs of last resort for individuals, meaning that any income that they do earn is taken into consideration, and that does include benefits that they receive from the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read into the record a quote from *Hansard*, from the Hon. Mr. Calvert. He believed the same thing that we believe on this side of the House, and these are his words. I quote, Mr. Speaker:

... also recognize that social assistance and welfare must be funding of the last resort, of the last resort. And so we have always considered other sources of income to be income, and that welfare payments, social assistance, must be funding of the last resort.

Mr. Speaker, thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Elphinstone-

Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this is not welfare. This is an income replacement program for people like James MacLachlan, who through no fault of his own cannot enter the workforce at this time, Mr. Speaker. What a out-of-touch and cruel response from that minister.

These clawbacks make no sense, Mr. Speaker, and they impact so many. The minister surely knows that clawing these back . . . funds now will only cost folks with disability more in the future.

James appealed that decision, the ministry's decision to claw back his pensions, arguing that the ministry can make exceptions, which they can. He won that appeal. They said he could keep \$500 a month, which is the same amount that someone who's lucky enough to work can keep. That minister decided to appeal that decision, Mr. Speaker. This decision that was so welcome by Jim — James, who goes by Jim; and his family; his advocates — was appealed by this ministry.

It's leaving James again in a precarious position because the appeal board said this is consistent with SAID policies and the only one who can decide to exempt that income is the minister. And so far she has refused to do so. So the question is simple: will the minister agree to exempt Jim's Sarcan and disability pension, so he can remain in his home?

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to start off by saying when the word "welfare" was used, I have never used that word myself. Those were the words of the former leader of the NDP, the Hon. Mr. Calvert, Mr. Speaker. So I just want to clarify that.

Mr. Speaker, within the SAID program we keep all of the policies consistent for all of the individuals, and it is a program of last resort. Within that program they actually do have higher overall rates over the regular income replacement program. We have additional benefits for special needs, whether that be health care or special needs for a house that they may be in, Mr. Speaker. And we do have that higher income-earned exemption for individuals that do happen to earn money within their needs that they have, Mr. Speaker. So thank you.

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

Ms. Conway: — SAID may be a program of last resort. James is here as a last resort, Mr. Speaker. The minister could decide with a stroke of her pen today to exempt this income. Will she or won't she? And will she at least agree to meet with him?

This is in addition to the ministry's practice of forcing SAID recipients to apply for early CPP, clawing that back dollar for dollar, leaving them with less when they turn 65 and they're kicked off the program anyway. That practice was weighed in on by the Manitoba Court of Appeal, by the Supreme Court of Canada. They said it was discriminatory, and yet this ministry continues to do it, Mr. Speaker.

I've written to the minister about it. I've asked her to stop this

discriminatory practice. So to the minister: will she ensure basic dignity for folks on the SAID program? Will she agree to raise the rates, stop violating their Charter rights, and agree to exempt Jim's income?

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, of course I'll meet with the individuals after question period. Thank you.

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

Affordability and Cost of Living

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, a record-breaking a buck eighty-seven at the pumps today is the price for fuel. People are breaking the bank just to fill the tank. The average fill is over \$100. Many are paying much more than that, not just a few cents as this Premier has dismissed it as. That Sask Party government is proving itself completely out of touch with working people in this province and the reality they face with the crushing cost of living.

Gas prices have skyrocketed since March, but we see a Sask Party government that sat on its hands for two months, offering no relief to the hard-working people of this province, rejecting the calls from this opposition for relief at the pumps or a cost-of-living rebate. When will that Sask Party government finally get off their hands? When will they provide some relief at the pumps and with respect to the cost of living for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I believe this is the third or fourth time where I've done the math for the members opposite, demonstrating that relief at the pumps in Alberta and Ontario is actually less in people's pockets than the SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] rebate of \$100 per driver that we are offering and the 110 that NDP BC [British Columbia] is offering. So I don't think I should do that math again.

As well I've told the members opposite numerous times that there is over \$2 billion worth of relief for affordability within our budget. For example, under the NDP when they were in power, a family of four started paying provincial income tax at \$26,150. Now they can make 53,435 before they pay income tax, Mr. Speaker. And the credits that we have within this budget goes on and on. It also includes a further decrease in daycare and an increase for seniors' income plan, Mr. Speaker. We are mindful that inflationary pressures are real, and we will be watching and monitoring as we go forward.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Suicide Prevention Strategy

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, this is the 20th day this spring I rise on behalf of Saskatchewan families, today the McKenzie family, who lost a loved one to suicide. When will we see a real plan to save Saskatchewan lives?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I extend my deepest condolences to the McKenzie family on the loss that they have suffered as a result of suicide.

Mr. Speaker, in this year's budget, as I said earlier, we're committing \$2.25 million overall to a number of different suicide prevention initiatives in this province through this ministry, and that includes the \$1 million towards the Pillars for Life suicide prevention plan for Saskatchewan.

And we reported, recently here in the last couple of weeks provided some updates in terms of some of the accomplishments in year number two of those actions, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to continue to make these investments and have consultations with families and communities across this province as we look to enhance the programs that we have currently funded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Time and time again families, organizations, those who've asked this government, leaders, have made it very clear we have a crisis going on in our province with mental health and addictions, suicide. The government has an opportunity. It says it wants to work with the people, with the leaders.

What is your plan? Because people are losing their lives and they want a plan. Families don't want to suffer anymore. I don't want to read any more names in this Assembly. What is the government's plan to deal with the crisis going on in our province?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to pursue initiatives through the Pillars for Life suicide prevention plan, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of other ministries that provide and offer support financially and otherwise to organizations and groups through their own programs to address this very important area across this province, Mr. Speaker.

And the work continues in terms of meeting with individuals. And I know that I personally have met with a number of groups and communities and families directly across this province, as have many members in this Chamber. I'm going to be continuing to do that in the weeks and months ahead, Mr. Speaker, and that is some of the work that we're going to continue to do in this province.

And I know that work continues, conversations are happening with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] as part of the letter of commitment that we have with them, very recently in terms of some potential for future initiatives. And hoping to have more details on that later on in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Development Work on Potential Hydrogen Hub

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm excited to rise today and share that Saskatchewan is going blue. Our government is ramping up investment development work for a hydrogen hub in the Regina-Moose Jaw industrial corridor.

This morning I announced that the Ministry of Energy and Resources, along with Whitecap energy and Federated Co-operatives Ltd., will support a foundation report study developed by the Transition Accelerator and our own Saskatchewan Research Council, which will provide investors with a thorough analysis of commercial-scale hydrogen opportunities with carbon capture, utilization, and storage infrastructure in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, blue hydrogen projects rely on CCUS [carbon capture, utilization, and storage] technology, and we know Saskatchewan is already a world leader in CCUS and enhanced oil recovery. Last September our government announced several new policy commitments to advance CCUS projects in the province, while at the same time standing by enhanced oil recovery. This is another step in fulfilling those commitments.

Mr. Speaker, a hydrogen CCUS hub in the Regina-Moose Jaw region would allow for the eventual development of a commercial-scale hydrogen supply and demand chain in Saskatchewan. Here in the province we continue to build on our energy strengths, diversify into emerging energy and mineral markets, while at the same time steadfastly standing by our traditional oil and gas sector. A blue hydrogen hub represents a great opportunity to do all of the above. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you to the minister for this statement. Blue hydrogen will be a crucial component in the transition to net zero by 2050, while building on our strengths in the energy and natural resources sector.

As we witness the rest of the world moving rapidly to transition its energy sector, we can't be left behind as a province. I know the minister's statement briefly mentioned the Transition Accelerator and their involvement in this project. I hope the government will continue to work with organizations like Transition Accelerator, Federated Co-op, and other industrial players as we quickly move to reduce our emissions in greenhouse gases.

Not only is Transition Accelerator prioritizing the development of Canada's hydrogen economy, they are also prioritizing building decarbonization and electrification, grid integration, and electric vehicle market penetration. I hope this partnership to develop the hydrogen economy means that the government is turning a page and is truly committed on all fronts to reasonable, credible pathways to the future we must work towards.

On behalf of the official opposition, we join with the minister in

shared optimism that hydrogen development should create an economic and environmental edge for Saskatchewan. We support initiatives that will ensure good-paying sustainable jobs for workers as we prepare for the future, and we will simply never ever leave our traditional workers behind.

Congratulations to the hard-working people at Whitecap Resources and Federated Co-operatives for their unwavering focus and determination to pursue these opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 86 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation (Outdoor Public Places) Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard (lieux publics extérieurs)*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority].

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 86, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2022* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of SLGA that Bill No. 86 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Committee of Finance.

[14:45]

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for Committee of Finance.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Motions for Supply

The Chair: — The items before the committee are the appropriation resolutions. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I move the following resolution no. 1:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022, the sum of \$154,216,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

The Chair: — The Minister of Finance has moved resolution no. 1:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2022, the sum of \$154,216,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Chair: — Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I move the following resolution no. 2:

Resolved that toward making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2023, the sum of \$15,434,095,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

The Chair: — The Minister of Finance has moved resolution no. 2:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2023, the sum of \$15,434,095,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Chair: — Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

There being no further business before the committee, I would invite a member to move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, 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 Government House

Leader 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, the Committee of Finance has agreed to certain resolutions, has instructed me to report the same, and to ask for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall the resolutions be read the first time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF RESOLUTIONS

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the resolutions be now read the first and second time.

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: — First and second reading of the resolutions.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. Pursuant to rule 32(1), the Minister of Finance shall move first reading of the appropriation bill. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Bill No. 87 — *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)*

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I move that Bill No. 87, *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)* be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved that Bill No. 87, *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)* 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: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I

recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I request leave to move second and third reading of Bill No. 87, *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)* immediately.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance requested leave to move second and third reading of Bill No. 87, *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)* immediately. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. The minister may proceed.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Pursuant to rule 32(1)(e), I move that Bill No. 87, *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)* be now read a second and third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved second and third reading of Bill No. 87, *The Appropriation Act, 2022 (No. 1)*. 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.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — No? On division. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 14:52 until 14:56.]

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

[Yeas — 44]

Moe	Stewart	Reiter
Merriman	Harpauer	Morgan
Duncan	Tell	Wyant
Makowsky	Cheveldayoff	Bradshaw
Kaeding	L. Ross	Carr
Eyre	J. Harrison	Dennis
Hindley	Marit	Buckingham
Hargrave	Fiaz	Lambert
Kirsch	Steele	Ottenbreit
Francis	C. Young	A. Ross
Lawrence	Skoropad	Nerlien
Meyers	Friesen	Grewal
McLeod	Cockrill	Goudy
Keisig	Lemaigre	Jenson
D. Harrison	Domotor	

The Speaker: — All those opposed please stand.

[Nays — 11]

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

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 44; those opposed, 11.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Federal Government's Approach to Gun Crime

The Speaker: — It is my duty pursuant to Rule 27 to advise the Assembly . . . I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to the motion by my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford made on November 25th, 2021. Mr. Speaker, Bill C-22 is *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. It was introduced to go hand in hand with Bill C-21, an Act to amend certain Acts and to make consequential amendments with regard to firearms. More recently, the federal government is again playing with the policies around Bill C-21. Like the Nightmare on Elm Street, Mr. Speaker, the sequels continue and get worse each time.

[15:00]

It is my intention to speak to these two bills in the context of ongoing gross overreach by the federal Liberal government, supported at every step by the NDP. Furthermore, I will outline how the federal Liberal government, fully supported by the NDP, are in lockstep in dividing Canadians at every opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the Trudeau Liberals pulled an end run on the NDP in 2015 by becoming the far left in the country. And since that time the NDP have been clamouring to find their place, and as a result have positioned themselves as Trudeau kingmaker.

Since 2015 this alliance has formulated numerous divisionary, toxic policies to bring Canada to its knees. Our nation has seen its citizens divided and vilified, its industry neutered, its place in the world as a capital destination destroyed, east-versus-west division, rich versus poor, divided by sectors and subsets of society, and most recently the laughingstock of international media.

It's no surprise that the NDP are supportive of the economic destruction. The Saskatchewan NDP constitution includes the following, and I quote:

[Section] 1.3. The purpose of the Party shall be to promote through political action and other appropriate means the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth in which the principle regulating [the] production and exchange will be the supplying of human needs and not the . . . [production] of profits.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, success in business is a failure to the NDP.

Let me be very clear. Bill C-21 and C-22, as well as previous Acts of parliament like Bill C-69 and C-48, are deliberate attacks on law and order and the economy of Western Canadian interests. Our government, in the last Throne Speech and in subsequent budget deliberations, focused on the safety and security of people of Saskatchewan. Several initiatives advanced our commitment to crime reduction, examples being the drug enforcement teams and the serious incident response teams.

Mr. Speaker, federal Bill C-22 and Bill C-21 are both a step back in terms of effective crime-reduction strategies. Both miss the point of addressing crime from a victim's perspective.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is largely about social engineering under the current federal government. It is vilifying a segment of law-abiding citizens in society. Equally important, we have seen in recent times a federal coalition that is specifically targeting regions, industries, and governments in inequitable manners that will ultimately be detrimental to society in general. And this federal government coalition must be held accountable accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, context is important. Such is the case respecting the aforementioned Acts. To that point, let's quickly review how we got to this point.

The first mandatory minimums were enacted along with the bill respecting the criminal law, which came into force on July 1st, 1893, as Canada's first version of the Criminal Code. In the 1970s, parliament repealed mandatory minimums for driving while impaired and stealing mail, but it added mandatory minimums for second- and third-time offenders who failed to provide a breath sample and who had a blood alcohol level over the legal limit. In addition, it established mandatory minimums for betting, pool selling, and bookmaking and placing bets on behalf of others.

In 1976, parliament passed Bill C-84, which abolished the death penalty and established mandatory minimum sentences at life in prison for murder and high treason. That same year, parliament also made its first foray into gun control, and it passed mandatory minimums for offences committed while using a firearm.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-22 is framed by the Liberal-NDP coalition as being against tough treatment of criminals charged with minor crimes. Let's be clear. The minor offences that the Liberal-NDP coalition are talking about are things like robbery with a firearm, extortion with a firearm, weapons trafficking, using a firearm in the commission of an offence, and many others. Mr. Speaker, that is why I find it particularly disconcerting that the current Liberal-NDP coalition are working so hard to undermine the work of previous governments, particularly from 2007 and '08 through to 2014, when the federal government introduced bills like, in 2008, the *Tackling Violent Crime Act*; in 2012, the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*; and in 2014, the *Tougher Penalties for Child Predators Act*.

We support anything that would make our communities safer, but both C-21 and C-22 are not about safe communities. The current bills include elimination of mandatory prison time for heroine, crystal meth, and fentanyl traffickers, at the same time as we in Saskatchewan are dealing with incredible challenges in curbing gang violence, drug abuse, and associated crime.

So going back to my opening position, that this NDP-supported government's aim with bills like C-21 and C-22 is to continue with the division of Canadians, we have seen this in virtually every bill introduced, including those I have spoken to before in this Chamber, Bills C-69 and C-48.

As further evidence of a failure to lead, this Trudeau-NDP alliance has put the economic, energy, and food security of Canada at risk through endless policy choices that add cost, regulation, and complexity to global supply chains, and more importantly global confidence in the Canada of opportunity and equity. Mr. Speaker, virtually every shared federal-provincial program is riddled with overreach by the federal government, including into provincial areas of responsibility, like health and education and areas of infrastructure funding.

Mr. Speaker, lawful ownership and use of legal guns is a part of our collective heritage in Saskatchewan and in rural Canada in general. While I won't belabour the point, most of us with rural roots in the province have a background that involves either sport shooting, hunting, trapping, or in many cases ownership of guns as a means of predator management and sometimes even protection.

In fact earlier this month, the Big Game Draw process opened. That is an annual event that resonates with rural and urban hunters alike. There is a renewed excitement in the air, and planning the hunt is a tradition. The financial impact on rural communities is significant, as motels and other lodgings are booked up, gas and services businesses benefit, and restaurants and bars see an uptick as the day's stories unfold. In some areas it is akin to a Christmas event, as families rejoin from afar for a few days isolated in a remote cabin.

I'm quite sure that many members on both sides still have a family memory of learning from parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends and probably teaching their own sons and daughters the respect for guns that is a fundamental aspect of ownership and use. Recently I was going through some old files when I came across my own hunter safety certificate that I earned at the age of 13. So why would I have kept something like that for all these many decades? The answer is simple. It was an achievement of pride and responsibility that meant a great deal as part of growing up in rural Saskatchewan. I can imagine today the member from Regina Pasqua and the member from Regina Rosemont and many others would share that same familial tie to that particular rite of passage for their children.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-21 is not about responsible gun ownership. It is a step towards criminalizing rural and urban Canadians in the name of some socialist objective known only in the backrooms of the NDP and Liberals in Ottawa. It's not even about illegal gun ownership because it does nothing to address the vast majority of gun crimes using illegal guns. We already have stringent gun laws for those who abide by the law. Criminal record checks, licensing processes, safe handling, and transportation rules have been in place for decades.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan New Democrats will often try to suggest that they are somehow disassociated from their federal counterparts. This is absolutely false in every way. In fact, not only are they supportive by campaigning for each other, they are constitutionally joined at the hip. Section 1.2 of the

Saskatchewan NDP constitution reads, and I quote: "The Party shall constitute a section of the New Democrat Party of Canada." Furthermore, article 6.1(c), titled provincial council, includes: "... those members of the Federal Council ... not otherwise members of the Provincial Council."

So while they might try to hide from federal positions, let's be very clear that the federal NDP policies have deep roots in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, a recent article by Don Braid, and I quote. He says:

The Liberals, with the NDP in line, are piloting a massive change in the shape of Canada's economy. They promise programs and aid of equal scale. But when there's real work to be done, they fade away.

Thus we are governed, with hapless hypocrisy.

Mr. Speaker, my government is focused on growing our economy, sound fiscal management, and positioning Saskatchewan as the best place to own a business, find a good job, raise a family, and benefit from that economy with value in their social safety nets. We're also focused on standing up for Saskatchewan. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford's motion condemning the federal government. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise into the debate and enter a few points on the record as to why we will not be supporting this motion. Now I also have to correct a few things on the record that members opposite have put forward — some fairly wild statements, frankly, Mr. Speaker, to be honest with you.

Now in looking at the motion before us which, by the way, doesn't actually mention Bill C-21 at all, there are definitely some discussions and I think important debate that we should be having around the federal regulatory changes around legal firearm ownership and use, Mr. Speaker. But the way it's been politicized in some of the rhetoric we've seen already today and hammed onto a discussion around Bill C-22, which we absolutely do not support this government's position on — and I'll put some more thoughts of that why on this record — but at a time when the news stories over the weekend showed the rise in mass shootings and the mass shootings we saw in America, Mr. Speaker, it begs the question as to why this is the statement that government wants to put forward at this particular time.

But I want to go back to Bill C-22 because it seems that members opposite may not have a full understanding of what Bill C-22 is intended to do, Mr. Speaker. And it's interesting hearing the member opposite talk about jurisdiction and having the federal government stay in their own lane when we have a provincial government wanting to condemn the feds over federal legislation in criminal law.

Anyways, Mr. Speaker, Bill C-22 will repeal mandatory minimum penalties for all drug offences that were enacted by the Harper Conservatives back in 2012. It will also repeal mandatory

minimum penalties for certain offences involving the use and possession of firearms and a tobacco-related offence. To be clear, mandatory minimum penalties will remain for most serious offences, including murder, child sexual offences, and firearm offences linked to organized crime, Mr. Speaker.

Now several of these provisions, since the Harper Conservatives put these mandatory minimum penalties in 2012, have already been deemed unconstitutional, Mr. Speaker, and have also shown to have been directly linked actually, Mr. Speaker, to the rising rates of overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples and black peoples in our jails, Mr. Speaker. In fact they have been directly linked to not only that but problems around over-incarceration throughout the country, Mr. Speaker. So it begs the question why government members would be voting against supporting this particular legislation, why they don't see the issue around over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples in our jails as an issue.

It's a conversation I have often with the Ministers of Justice and Corrections, and them and their officials always tell me that it's an issue that they're wanting to address and it's a concern that they have.

The rising rates of remand, Mr. Speaker, that's also linked to challenges around mandatory minimums. Because when we have mandatory minimums, Mr. Speaker, there's a . . . less likely that individuals will plead out of offences if they so want to, because there really is no incentive to. There is no ability frankly to be able to plead out, leading to delays in our court system, delays in our trials, and then again, like I said, overrepresentation of Indigenous individuals in our justice system.

[15:15]

Bill C-22 will also realign the community safety order regime, Mr. Speaker, and create more incentives for diversions for drug-related crimes. Mr. Speaker, this is actually spoken in favour by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, who are in favour of Bill C-22 and the provisions around drug offences.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police recognize that the opioid crisis, which all jurisdictions including especially Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are faced with, are not being well served by mandatory minimum penalties, Mr. Speaker. And in fact treating the issue as a holistic one and working towards diversionary sentence practices, Mr. Speaker, has been proven to be more useful for addressing addictions issues, Mr. Speaker.

So it begs the question as to why this government isn't supportive of diversionary practices to address something that we've talked about often in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, the growing rates of . . . or the absolute crisis we're faced with in our province around addictions.

Perhaps it's because this government hasn't done a good enough job of ensuring that there are enough treatment beds in Saskatchewan. Perhaps it's because this government is too busy crafting motions condemning the federal government on bills and then debating it, spending time debating it in this House, rather than ensuring that we have real treatment options for everyone in Saskatchewan. They don't have to wait months to receive treatments for their addictions, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest to members opposite that that might be a better use of their time,

Mr. Speaker.

I also want to say that this bill is also to repeal some of the Harper Conservative changes that were made to the Criminal Code to ensure that it's aligned again with the Gladue principles. Now this might be a government that has forgotten the importance of Gladue since we're one of the only provinces that produce very little, if any, Gladue reports every single year, Mr. Speaker, also contributing to the rates of disproportionately Indigenous individuals in our jails, Mr. Speaker.

Perhaps this government could focus on creating a robust province-wide Gladue program, Mr. Speaker, another suggestion for a better use of this government's time than this particular motion and would actually help address some of the things that this government says that they want to address by voting for this government's motion.

So I just wanted to make sure that there were some very important remarks on the record as to why we will ultimately not be voting in favour of this motion, Mr. Speaker, because we believe in reducing the rates of overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in Saskatchewan. And we also believe in ensuring that our opioid and our addictions crisis in Saskatchewan is treated as the health crisis that it truly is, Mr. Speaker.

To be clear, this is again, as many of these provisions have been deemed unconstitutional already by various courts including the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker, this will still allow judges to have the discretion that they should have in imposing serious sentences for serious crimes, but it does allow the flexibility that frankly our Constitution requires, Mr. Speaker.

So I hope that some of the members opposite's comments will be more reflective of the actual motion in front of us around Bill C-22. And I do urge them to read the legislation and read the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police position on Bill C-22, Mr. Speaker. And in light of all that, we will not be voting in favour of this motion.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Quite frankly I'm not surprised the member opposite is not supporting this. They do not stand up for the rights of law-abiding gun owners. Fortunately we are here to support them. I fully support the motion from my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

The Trudeau Liberal government, fully supported and signed onto by the NDP, have continued to harass and punish the law-abiding gun owners of this country. Legal gun owners are not the issue.

Federal Minister of Emergency Preparedness, Bill Blair, commenting on legal firearm owners, and I quote:

I'd like to take a moment [if I may] to speak to law-abiding Canadian gun owners. I know from very many years of experience as a police officer that the overwhelming majority of gun owners in this country are law-abiding. They are responsible. They are conscientious. They acquire their weapons legally. They store them securely and they use them safely.

After a comment like this, why would it be necessary to further punish law-abiding firearms owners? The minister clearly knows they are not the problem. Obviously the Liberal and NDP federal government is unable to control the illegal smuggling of firearms into this country. They prefer to kick the rears of ordinary gun owners in this country, like blaming and punishing the family dog for plundering the henhouse while it was actually the fox. They need to address the problem directly and not play politics with such a critical issue such as gang violence and smuggling.

Recently, Toronto Deputy Chief of Police, Myron Demkiw was quoted as saying:

Our problem in Toronto are handguns from the United States.

The issues around investing in what you described is certainly not going to deal with the crime problem we're facing in Toronto, as it relates to the use of criminal handguns.

Mr. Speaker, while the minority federal Liberal government wants to be seen as doing something to control gun violence, they are actually making it easier for the criminals. Last year the federal government introduced Bill C-5. C-5 seeks to repeal mandatory minimum penalties on 14 offences. Most of these 14 offences are related to the illegal use of firearms. Canada already has some of the most stringent gun laws in the world. Law enforcement and our justice system need only enforce and prosecute to the full extent of the law.

It would be interesting to know how much incarceration time a gang member receives after committing a firearm offence. Most likely, a catch-and-release with a promise to behave better in the future. Pathetic response from a federal minority Liberal government propped up by the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, law enforcement know where the issue with gun violence lies. It's unacceptable that the federal government chooses to ignore the problem while punishing law-abiding gun owners.

Mr. Speaker, the Trudeau Liberal government chose to ban 1,500 assault-style firearms. Their definition of "assault-style" is based more on the appearance rather than the mechanics and calibre. If the firearm has the appearance and perception of an assault-style firearm, then it must be an assault-style weapon. More and more firearms are built using synthetic black stocks, and the Liberal government is pointing to these guns as being assault-style weapons, scaring the general public when they show pictures of these legal firearms. They are not assault weapons, and the government has the duty to be honest and open with the general public.

Mr. Speaker, while on the topic of the Trudeau government being honest and open with the public, I need to point out the backdoor firearm registry, a registry they campaigned against and vowed they would never implement. This new plan is to have all sales and transactions of firearms recorded in the database of the RCMP, a complete disregard for the rights of firearm owners. As we have seen in the past, firearm registries, they were ineffective and very, very costly.

As Canadians, we have seen the reckless spending of the Trudeau government, a government propped up by this opposition's boss, Jagmeet Singh. Apparently the NDP leader, like his buddy, Trudeau, believe there's a money tree and the budget will balance itself. Mr. Speaker, the only money tree is the hard-working, taxpaying people of this country, and they are tired of having bare branches.

Mr. Speaker, as a young lad growing up in the province, I relished my time hunting gophers, hunting upland-game birds, migratory game, big game. It is truly a rite of passage for Saskatchewan people. I would encourage and ask people whether they plan to hunt or purchase firearms, take the course, learn the responsibility of being a firearm owner, and shooting a firearm.

There is so much to be learned by understanding that the firearm is not a weapon that is used in criminal activity but is a tool for target shooting, hunting, and in securing your livestock from predators, euthanizing animals when they become ill or injured. It's a very, very important tool to have on the ranch.

And I would ask you again to please take a firearm course. Understand all the rules, the safe storage, the safe use, and fire a gun to make sure you understand the full impact of what that firearm can do. A little understanding goes a long way.

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion:

That this Assembly condemns the federal government's targeting of law-abiding firearm owners in recent regulatory changes and calls on the federal government to halt any proposed reduction of sentences for serious offences through the Criminal Code of Canada, as prescribed in Bill C-22 introduced to the House of Commons in 2021.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

The Speaker: — It is my duty to rule under 54(3) to warn the Assembly that the member is about to exercise his right to close the debate, and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. Therefore if any member wishes to speak, let them do so now.

I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to close debate on the motion that I originally moved last fall dealing with Bill C-22, which is the federal government's plan to pass legislation to take guns away from licensed gun owners, as well as reducing sentences for those that use them in crime.

In 2021 the Liberal government introduced Bill C-5, previously labelled as Bill C-22. Bill C-5 seeks to repeal mandatory minimum penalties on 14 offences, most of them related to the illegal use of firearms. That includes robbery with a firearm. Discharging a firearm with intent, that's the legalese for trying to shoot someone, Mr. Speaker. Possession of prohibited or restricted firearms with ammunition, that would be handguns the Trudeau Liberals and NDP are trying to take away from legal, responsible owners. Possession for the purpose of weapons trafficking, that means lighter sentences for people smuggling guns, the real root of the issue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we all realize that irresponsible gun use is problematic, as well as a concern for law-abiding citizens. However the federal government's plan to remove several firearms from licensed, responsible gun owners while lowering sentences for repeat offenders using guns is a crime, is ludicrous.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider that most gun-related crimes in Saskatchewan, and Canada for that matter, are committed with stolen and smuggled firearms, the theory that by taking them away from law-abiding, legally licensed firearm owners is going to somehow reduce crimes committed with firearms is unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan we have many farmers and ranchers who use their firearms responsibly to protect both their crops and livestock, which in essence is protecting their livelihood and their bottom line. We also have responsible citizens who use firearms for either recreational uses, such as being part of a gun club, or for those that use them for hunting either for sport or for food because they enjoy the taste of wild meat.

Mr. Speaker, an example pertaining to producers would be where guns can be used in assisting with helping control the gopher population, who have been known to destroy acres of crop or hay land when they move in and get out of control. I can personally speak to this occurring first-hand.

I have a friend who farms in my hometown of Turtleford area who I have helped in spring seeding and fall harvesting for about 25 years now. I remember one fall swathing a canola crop when I came across an area that was totally decimated. When speaking with my friend, he had indicated that the gophers had moved in, and by the time he realized it, they had already done their damage.

Now in this particular case, I want to recall that the area was maybe only a few acres in size, but when you consider the inputs in today's world that farmers are subjected to along with the strong commodity prices we see today for the sale of their product, this is a definite cost to the producer which could easily cost him thousands of dollars out of his bottom line.

[15:30]

Mr. Speaker, the same can be said for controlling and protecting livestock for livestock producers, whether it be cattle, pigs, or chickens. I know that back in the day, my father-in-law had issues when he was still farming and had various varieties of animals on the farm. Mr. Speaker, coyotes come to mind when recalling some of the issues he had, and I specifically remember the use of a firearm, which was used more than once to try to curb the problem, which he finally did. Again for the loss of each animal due to predators, it is directly a cost to the producer. How our federal government doesn't understand that is beyond me.

Mr. Speaker, we presently have the most stringent gun laws and regulations in the world. Further removal of certain firearms from legal use is actually punishing the average responsible gun owner, as they will be the ones actually affected, not the criminals who are using stolen or illegal smuggled firearms in the first place. If we truly want to reduce crime, then I believe the answer would be based more around having better enforcement

and stronger penalties for offenders that use firearms in crime, not reduced penalties for the actual criminals using them, and certainly not punishing responsible firearm owners by passing legislation taking guns away from licensed gun owners.

So, Mr. Speaker, just to review, if you rob someone with a gun, shoot a gun at someone, have a restricted gun that you never should have had in the first place, or try to smuggle a gun, the Trudeau Liberals and NDP believe our justice system is putting people behind bars for too long.

On the other side of that, we have fearmongering and the demonization of legal firearm owners; made-up terms like "assault-style weapons" meant to scare people in Toronto that don't know the first thing about firearms; the arbitrary banning on certain firearm models with no reason, no input from police, and for no effect on our streets, just to make it look like they're actually doing something; and now, just last week, the Liberals have introduced a new gun registry, something they promised Canadians they would not do.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I've gotten my point across and would like to close debate on my original motion as previously indicated, as follows:

That this Assembly condemns the federal government's targeting of law-abiding firearms in recent regulatory changes and calls on the federal government to halt any proposed reduction of sentences for serious offences through the Criminal Code of Canada, as prescribed in Bill C-22 introduced into the House of Commons in 2021.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford:

That this Assembly condemns the federal government's targeting of law-abiding firearm owners in recent regulatory changes and calls on the federal government to halt any proposed reduction of sentences for serious offences through the Criminal Code of Canada, as prescribed in Bill C-22 introduced to the House of Commons in 2021.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — On division. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 15:33 until 15:36.]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford. All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 44]

Moe
Merriman
Duncan

Stewart
Harpauer
Tell

Reiter
Morgan
Wyant

Makowsky	Docherty	Bradshaw
Kaeding	L. Ross	Carr
Eyre	J. Harrison	Dennis
Hindley	Marit	Buckingham
Hargrave	Fiaz	Lambert
Kirsch	Steele	Ottenbreit
Francis	C. Young	A. Ross
Lawrence	Skoropad	Nerlien
Meyers	Friesen	Grewal
McLeod	Cockrill	Goudy
Keisig	Lemaigre	Jenson
D. Harrison	Domotor	

The Speaker: — All those opposed please stand.

[Nays — 11]

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

Procedural Clerk (Mr. Park): — Mr. Speaker, the number of members for the motion, 44; the number of members against, 11.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:41.]

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Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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

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Hon. Dustin Duncan
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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
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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