



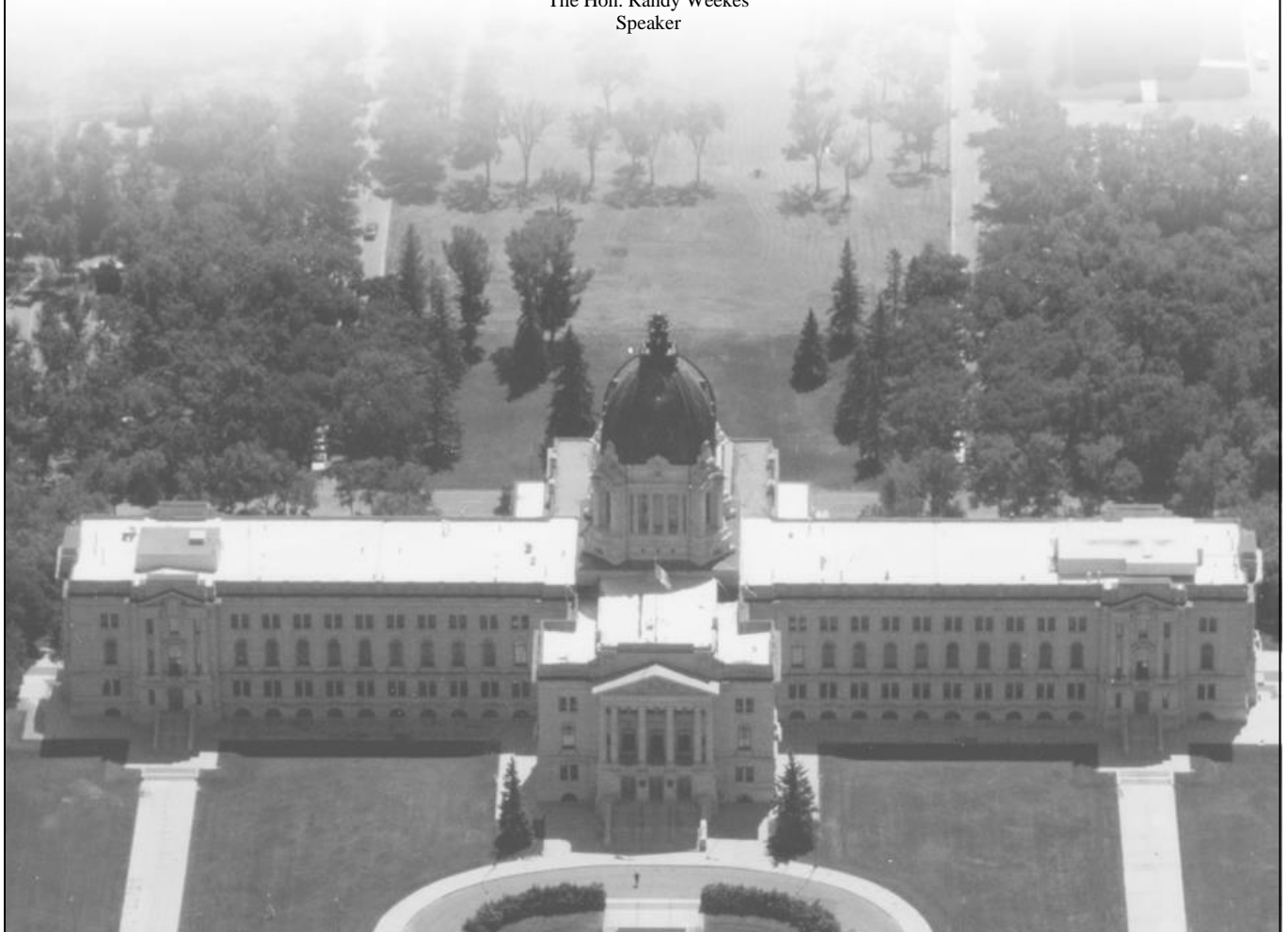
THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

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



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd 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 — Carla Beck

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, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)	McLeod, Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)	Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	Meyers, Derek — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)
Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)	Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)	Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)	Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
Docherty, Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)	Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)	Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)	Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)	Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)	Skoropad, Hon. Dana — Arm River (SP)
Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Stewart, Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Harrison, Daryl — Cannington (SP)	Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
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, 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

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

Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Principal Clerk — Kathy Burianyak

Clerk Assistant — Robert Park

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I'd just like to welcome all our guests here today. And please refrain from taking part in the debate, and that includes clapping or shouting out any words. I'd appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Introduction of guests. It's the member from Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to extend a warm welcome in the west gallery to the Campbell Collegiate Chamber Choir and their director, Jodi Scott, to their legislation today. The choir performed earlier this morning at the Holodomor remembrance ceremony and gave a truly fantastic and graceful performance, and I'd like to thank them deeply for that. So through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to welcome them to their Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, also while I'm on my feet, in your gallery I would like to introduce Gerald Luciuk. He's the president of SURAC [Saskatchewan-Ukraine relations advisory committee]. He was emceed the Holodomor service today, and I'd like to thank him for his service today and all the time through SURAC. Thank you.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to echo the welcome of the member opposite to Gerald. Welcome to your legislature. I was honoured to attend the ceremony as our Human Rights critic earlier today, and we very much appreciate your presence and the ceremony that you took part in and led today. Thank you so much.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce, in the west gallery, 32 students from Brownell School in the great constituency of Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Speaker, they're accompanied by their teachers, Deanna Fast and Meagen Dunn. I'm certainly looking forward to talking to the students after question period today and answering any questions they have, if I can, Mr. Speaker. But I would ask all members, Mr. Speaker, to welcome these individuals to their legislature.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I'd like to just briefly recognize a few very important people, certainly to me, in the legislature here today.

I'd like to start by recognizing, seated in your gallery, Councillor Bresciani, whom I have the pleasure of representing a large number of the same constituents with. I've worked with Lori over the past couple years, but have about a decade of time working with her husband, and slowly getting to know her son as well through some of his business endeavours. So a real pleasure to have you here with us today. And welcome to your Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also be remiss if I didn't join with the member from Canora-Pelly in recognizing the astonishingly talented Jodi Scott and students in attendance from Campbell Collegiate, a school in Regina Public I am proud to represent. Just absolutely remarkable the talent that we have certainly in Campbell, but across all of our K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] institutions in this province. And I know they did all members in this Assembly proud today with the Holodomor remembrance ceremony. It's so especially poignant this year in particular.

And last but not least, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize remarkable Deanna Fast who was graciously introduced by the minister. I've known Deanna in a personal context for probably a decade — not to date us. She's a proud mom to Maddie and Izzy, two wonderful and energetic girls, and a partner to Mike.

And I got to know Deanna through her in-laws, the absolutely astonishing Conni Larson, who will be known to many members in this Assembly, certainly on the government benches who she served, this current government and past Conservative governments, particularly most recently as the constituency assistant for the former member from Eastview. We don't always agree politically but one of my favourite people to gossip with and exchange points of view and barbs on all things Saskatchewan politics.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't recognize Deanna's father-in-law, the late Ron Larson, who may also be known to members in this Assembly. Ron spent decades of his life working in Saskatchewan politics for the Devine government in the 1980s, maintained his involvement with the current government, and despite that, Mr. Speaker, was integral to me getting my foot in the door of locally elected politics. And again, Ron has passed away but was truly just an absolute student of Saskatchewan politics and a true servant and respecter of all who put forward their names in service. So to Deanna and her family, to Councillor Bresciani, and the wonderful, wonderful kids from Campbell who I promised to behave myself for, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce Paul Hills, president of the Saskatoon Paramedic Association and the International Association of Fire Fighters, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. I've met with Paul multiple times to be able to discuss how we could support the paramedics in Saskatoon, but across Canada. I had the opportunity to do a ride along with him during the summer, which was eye-opening, Mr. Speaker, as well as I was able to do that a couple of years ago. And he's a great advocate for paramedics, not just here, not in Saskatoon, not just in Saskatchewan, but across our country. So I'd like to welcome Paul to his Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming Paul to his Legislative Assembly. Paul's a good friend. I've known his family for years after teaching both of his sons in their grade 9 year, and our families have gotten to know each other.

And I appreciate the advocacy that Paul has given to paramedics in Saskatoon and around our province, in particular as it relates to challenges on the job, those challenges that are created in his personal life as a result of his job. He has spoken very candidly about mental health challenges for first responders, even featured in the spring, I believe, in an article in *Maclean's* magazine. He's just a fantastic advocate. We were happy to meet earlier today. And I want to ask all members to welcome Paul Hills to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Seniors.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask 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. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and to all members of the Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce, in your gallery, representatives from the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism and communities they have awarded with Age-Friendly Community status. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism have partnered to present this award, and we're pleased to have representatives from the three successful communities here with us today.

I'd like to recognize from the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, Holly Schick, their executive director; Randy Dove, their president; Doug Still, Chair of the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan committee; Robert Wuschenny, Shirley Dixon, Linda Anderson, and Catherine Barnsley.

Representing the community of Kipling and district, Colby Sproat, councillor from the town of Kipling; Jamie Husband, reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Hazelwood. And from Age-Friendly Kipling & District, Deborah Nordal and Susan Hengen.

From Moose Jaw, Crystal Froese, councillor from the city of Moose Jaw; and from Age-Friendly Moose Jaw, Christine Boyczuk, and Gillian Froehlich.

And representing Regina, Lori Bresciani, city councillor; from Age-Friendly Regina, Andre Nogue, Chelsea Brown, Lindsay Bzdel, Alynn Skalicky, Kathryn Smart, Sylvie O'Callaghan, Richard Marcotte, Ritu Kalra, Linda Pratt, and Tara Smith.

And my apologies if I've missed anyone by name, but I welcome each and everyone of you to here today.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan supports the Age-Friendly Communities initiative which promotes healthy, accessible, inclusive communities where all individuals are valued and supported. These three communities have undertaken activities and created programming to be more inclusive of seniors, leading to communities that are more inclusive to all residents. And there will be an event in the Saskatchewan Gallery here later this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me in thanking the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism for working with these communities and to acknowledge the leaders from Kipling and district, Moose Jaw, and Regina for their efforts to become age friendly and inclusive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite in recognizing several members of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism who are here with us today, as well as the communities that they've partnered with to improve the lives of older adults in Saskatchewan.

I want to take a minute to recognize the work that the Seniors Mechanism is doing to promote and to really get to work with supports for older adults, home supports. They've brought forth a well-researched, evidence-based, common-sense approach to improving the lives of older adults to age in place in their homes, in their communities, connected to loved ones, and they've been able to get the ball rolling on that. I want to commend their advocacy and their actions as being incredibly effective at improving the quality of life for older adults in Saskatchewan. Thank you and welcome here to your Legislative Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'll also take a minute to recognize in your gallery the presence of a large group of

professional firefighters and paramedics. They're here as part of the Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Association. They've had a chance to meet with the opposition and the government today, and I want to thank them for their time.

I want to thank them for the roles that they play in our communities around the province, both on the job and away from the job. I want to recognize that these folks who serve and are fire and paramedics, are pillars in our communities who often go above and beyond, both on the job and away from the job, with their volunteerism and their work at improving the lives of their neighbours.

I want to take a minute to recognize Lloyd Zwack. Lloyd's here and he recently retired from a long career in fire. And I appreciate his career and also appreciate that he'll be sticking around for I think about two more years as president of the SPFFPA [Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Association]. Thank you for your service, Lloyd. And to all of your members, fire and paramedic, who are here today, welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Meyers: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the member opposite in welcoming the Saskatchewan firefighters and paramedics association. We had a great chat this morning, as the Chair of Human Services, about a number of different things going on in our province and then ways that they can help out and that the government can help out. And really appreciate their time in always coming in and keeping us connected and informed. So once again I'd like to ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to introduce some people who are here today as part of the construction coalition lobby day. These individuals are part of organizations from Merit Contractors, Mechanical Contractors, and the General Contractors Associations of Saskatchewan. With us today in your gallery are Carolyn Bagnell, Keith Bird, and Colin Olfert, and joining them is Joel Peterson.

Mr. Speaker, myself and the Minister of Crown Corporations had the opportunity to meet with these individuals this morning, and we had the opportunity to speak on many common topics and had a great conversation. Look forward to working with them in the future. And I ask everybody to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

[13:45]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister opposite to introduce and welcome these leaders in construction, these leaders within Saskatchewan's economy to their Assembly. It was a pleasure to meet with them

here this morning, both Merit and the general contractors and the mechanical contractors. I see Joel Peterson up there as well. I didn't meet with Joel this morning, but it's always good to see his smiling face in the Assembly. But it was really great to meet with Keith Bird, with Carolyn Bagnell, and with Colin Olfert here this morning. And I want to thank them for the important work that they are engaged in building Saskatchewan, building opportunity, creating jobs, and for the common-sense recommendations that they brought to us here today. On behalf of the official opposition, I ask us to all provide them a warm welcome.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you this afternoon, I'd like to introduce some guests seated in your gallery. I'd like to first welcome Rahim Ahmad and his wife, Alia, as well as Michael Walker. Mr. Speaker, Rahim was born in Pakistan and moved to Canada in 1995. He graduated from Warman High School, I believe, in 2009 — yeah, I'm getting a nod — and has since completed a civil engineering degree at the University of Saskatchewan and is a project engineer and project manager for Associated Engineering.

Rahim was recently named Young Professional of the Year by the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies — Saskatchewan last week in Saskatoon. It's an event that I'll be providing some more information on very shortly. But Rahim's contributions, Mr. Speaker, go much further than that. He's a board member with the Saskatoon Open Door Society and also volunteers with Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at in Saskatoon. He's helped organize community events such as Muslims for Remembrance Day, virtual Ramadan, and is a youth leader helping young newcomers to our province succeed in their cultural, social, and economic environments. Mr. Speaker, Rahim is also a volunteer with the Sunflower Network.

I'd also like to thank Alia for joining us as well today. She's completing her pharmacist internship and was able to take some time away to accompany us today. And Michael is the manager for Associated Engineering's infrastructure group here in Regina and was Rahim's mentor.

I'm looking forward to spending some more time with them following question period, Mr. Speaker. And I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in welcoming Rahim, Alia, and Michael to their Saskatchewan legislature.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf

of the official opposition, I'd like to join with the member opposite in congratulating Rahim as well as his remarkable-sounding wife, Alia, and Michael on their presence here today. And Rahim in particular for his most recent award, as well as the good work that he does building up Saskatchewan in what I'm sure is very limited personal time, as it sounds like you have a remarkably busy professional life and family life as well.

You know, all people who contribute to building a better Saskatchewan are truly worthy of recognition, and I really want to thank you on behalf of the official opposition and congratulate you. So I'd ask all members to join in welcoming Rahim to his Assembly.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join both members to welcome Rahim and Alia, both from my community, from Ahmadiyya community, Mr. Speaker. And I would like to say thank you very much for your volunteering, for all the community work and everything. I ask all members to join me and welcome them in their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are many familiar faces in the gallery today. But I did want to take a quick moment to introduce, to you and through you, a constituent that I admire very much, Shirley Dixon, who's seated in the front row of your gallery, for no other reason than the fact that Shirley is just a pillar of our community.

She's absolutely involved in everything that you can think of. I saw her there and I actually didn't know that she was active in Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism. But she is, and she's active in many other things. She's been a proud advocate for workers' rights all her life and deeply involved in her community. You will absolutely see her name pop up all over the place in the Cathedral area. She's active with the Snow Angels. She's just a very good neighbour and a very involved constituent. So I did want to take a moment to introduce Shirley Dixon to this, her Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present the following petition in the House today. The folks who signed this petition would like to bring to your attention Quebec-based Lambert Peat Moss has proposed the creation of a peat moss mine near La Ronge in northern Saskatchewan. Many local residents, hunters, trappers, and traditional land users are opposed to the proposed peat moss mine and are concerned about the potential for damage to habitats, including critical habitat for woodland caribou, traplines, and drinking water sources, as well as climate impacts. More than 20,000 people have signed an online petition calling for the proposed peat moss mine to be stopped.

We in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request

that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to protect the boreal forest and reject the proposed Lambert Peat Moss development.

Those who signed this petition reside in La Ronge. I do so present.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that the Liberal-NDP [New Democratic Party] federal government continues to infringe on the constitutional rights of the province of Saskatchewan and implement policies that are detrimental to our province's economic well-being, that the commitments and actions of the federal government have made the control of Saskatchewan's resource rights unclear, that an unsupportive federal government will continue to impede Saskatchewan's potential to play a global role in providing resources to the world market.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to implement Saskatchewan-first policies and legislation that will support the development of Saskatchewan as a global supplier of food, fuel, and fertilizer without federal infringement on Saskatchewan's constitutional authority.

The below undersigned are residents of Leader and Regina. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to again present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. This petition is again signed by concerned citizens from Wilkie. We've seen a lot of that; we know that their concerns are very real. There's a lot of folks out there unable to access care because of this government's mismanagement of our health care system.

Folks from Wilkie who signed this petition today are concerned that recruitment and retention of health care professionals is a major concern that's led to many health care disruptions, including but not limited to emergency room, acute care, lab, and X-ray disruptions. These folks want us to know that health care workers and their families are valuable assets in Saskatchewan communities and local economies, that these are good-paying jobs that serve our communities well, and that this government has failed to plan for the needs of our health care system.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis.

I do so present.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition calling for the Government of Saskatchewan to cancel its plans to end the subsidies on 50 apartments at Luther Heights in my riding in Saskatoon Meewasin. Mr. Speaker, with these actions, seniors are being forced to make a decision, during a generational affordability crisis, to either pay more or leave their homes. This is not how seniors who've contributed so much should be treated.

Thus the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: the department of Social Services is cancelling government subsidy for 50 apartments in Luther Heights, our seniors' residence in Saskatoon. This building contains 120 units providing vital housing for seniors. The decision to eliminate these subsidies reduces the supply of housing available to seniors on fixed incomes and creates a burden and stress on us all.

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.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories today reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to rise today and present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for the funding of in vitro fertilization here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we know that this impacts far too many individuals and families across Canada and right here in this province. We know, Mr. Speaker, that treatments for this health condition are prohibitively expensive for far too many, costing tens of thousands of dollars, Mr. Speaker. And we know this is a government with windfall revenues and families facing an affordability crisis like none we've seen before in this generation.

So for a government saying they're looking at health care, you know, I'd urge them to consider making it more inclusive, more expansive, and also more affordable for families, Mr. Speaker. It's the right thing to do for compassion. It's the right thing to do economically. A medical condition for some should not be a business opportunity for others.

I will read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition are from Prince Albert and Spruce Home. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition calling on the government to prohibit conversion therapy. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* names sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as prohibited grounds of discrimination. Conversion therapy uses discredited and abusive practices which attempt to actively change sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The practice of conversion therapy is seriously harmful to individuals and is opposed by the Canadian Psychological Association, the World Health Organization, and the American Psychiatric Association.

Mr. Speaker, many provinces and municipalities across Canada have taken action to ban conversion therapy. It's time for Saskatchewan to follow suit and to get to work protecting the people of our province from this oppressive practice.

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 ban the practice of conversion therapy and prohibit transporting youth and adults outside Saskatchewan for such purposes.

Mr. Speaker, the petition today has been signed by residents of Humboldt and Middle Lake. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Commemoration of 89th Anniversary of Holodomor

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I was honoured to attend the commemoration of the 89th anniversary of the Holodomor. I rise now in the Assembly in solemn remembrance of the Holodomor famine genocide. We call it a famine genocide because it was orchestrated and it was deliberate. Ukraine, much like Saskatchewan, has long been an agricultural powerhouse, and in 1932 and '33 their harvests were plentiful enough to feed the nation. But Russian forces, on the order of the dictator Joseph Stalin, seized their grain and sent it across the Soviet Union leaving Ukrainians to starve to death.

At their peak, deaths by starvation reached 28,000 a day. A third of those deaths were children. Those who survived were forever scarred. The memory of the Holodomor hits harder this year than perhaps any of the 88 years previous. Once again Russia is attacking Ukraine and threatening the lives of Ukrainians. This day both reminds us of the horrific crimes committed against the Ukrainian people, and it is a reminder that nothing and no one will extinguish the Ukrainian spirit.

I was moved by the solemn remembrance for our sisters and brothers in Ukraine earlier today, remembering the untold casualties of unconscionable Russian aggression now as nine decades ago. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in remembering the lives lost and families destroyed by the Holodomor of 1932 to '33.

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

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Saturday, November 27th, we will commemorate the 89th anniversary of the Holodomor famine genocide of 1932-33. Mr. Speaker, during the Holodomor, the Soviet regime killed millions of Ukrainians by starving them of their grain and agriculture.

[14:00]

Stalin declared food to be illegal for Ukrainian farmers, and Soviet troops confiscated their grain and livestock. Farmers found to be hiding in the grain were shot or often tortured. The Soviets blocked villages from receiving food to ensure that people suffered. People ate grass, tree bark, and anything to keep themselves from starving.

The word Holodomor, literally translated from Ukrainian, means death by hunger. Mr. Speaker, Canada has very strong ties to Ukraine, having the third-highest Ukrainian population in the world. Holodomor has only been recognized as an act of genocide by 16 countries, Canada being one. We will continue to remember the Holodomor and the millions of Ukrainians' lives that were lost.

It's alarming to once again see that Ukraine threatened by Moscow and their food security is jeopardized. We must remember our sisters and brothers in Ukraine fighting for their freedom. Our support for them will never waver. Mr. Speaker, we condemn these crimes, and we pray that the Ukrainians can live in peace. Vichnaya Pamyat.

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

Saskatchewan Addictions Awareness Week

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in my place to recognize the importance of Saskatchewan Addictions Awareness Week, which runs from November 20th to 26th this year.

Mr. Speaker, addiction is a complex health issue that affects countless Saskatchewan families and communities. Approximately 50,000 deaths in Canada every year are linked to substance abuse. As you know, we cannot completely curb addictions without addressing mental health issues, and young people are most vulnerable to the impacts of drugs and alcohol. Too often depression and anxiety are self-medicated with substances, and stigma keeps people from getting the care they need.

And we cannot overlook the relationship between addictions, substance abuse, and poverty. Saskatchewan's northern and rural communities face additional socio-economic conditions often linked to abuse of alcohol and drugs. Yesterday the government boasted about investment in mental health and addiction services, yet drug toxicity, overdose, and death increases while advocates fail to be heard by this government.

That being said, I want to thank all those on the frontlines of this crisis — first responders, health care workers, addictions professionals, and social workers — for the amazing work they

do, often with limited resources and staff. Mr. Speaker, we need to do more than just recognize Saskatchewan Addictions Awareness Week; we must follow up with action.

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

Consulting Engineering Companies of Saskatchewan Awards of Distinction

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Engineers play a vital role across our province, and on November 15th I had the pleasure of attending the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies of Saskatchewan 2022 Awards of Distinction in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, among the highlights of the night was the prestigious Lieutenant Governor's Meritorious Achievement Award presented to Dave Kent, who was recognized for his 45 years of service in the engineering field. Leon Botham was the recipient of the Mentor Award, while Rahim Ahmad was named young professional of the year. And, Mr. Speaker, the firm of Allnorth Consultants Limited was awarded the 2022 Consulting Engineer of the Year as presented by the Ministry of Highways.

Mr. Speaker, the 2022 Brian Eckel Awards recognized several engineering firms for their excellence in categories such as municipal infrastructure and water resources, transportation, environmental and project management, and buildings. The winners included Associated Engineering, AECOM Canada Ltd., WSP Canada, CIMA [Chartered Institute of Management Accountants] Canada, BCL Engineering, Stantec Consulting, P. Machibroda Engineering, Pinter & Associates, and SAL Engineering.

Mr. Speaker, the work engineers do have a big impact on everything we do, from the glass of water out of your tap, to the roads we drive on, to the buildings we work in, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, it's with great pride that our government congratulates all of this year's ACEC [Association of Consulting Engineering Companies] of Saskatchewan award winners, and thank them for all the outstanding services they provide to the people of our province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Saskatchewan Artist Inducted into Sports Hall of Fame

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill Brownridge, who was raised in the hamlet of Vawn, was inducted into the 2022 Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame for his contributions to hockey, on September 24th at the Conexus Arts Centre in Regina.

Bill grew up in the 1930s with spina bifida and club feet, Mr. Speaker. Due to his health condition and eventual amputation of his right leg, he was unable to participate in sports himself so he channelled his love of sport, particularly hockey, into the areas that he could excel at, which included being an author and a painter.

Bill's work included the logo of the Calgary Centennials junior hockey team, one iteration of the Calgary Flames' uniforms, and he was also the official artist of the 1988 Calgary Olympic bid, Mr. Speaker. Bill's paintings were a stimulant to the creation of Hockey Day in Canada.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, Bill's viewpoint is this:

In a world preoccupied with the bizarre, the sensational, and horrific, I find great enjoyment in watching children at play. Their joyous laughter, enthusiasm, and naivety are a source of endless fascination, especially when the setting is a hauntingly beautiful prairie or foothills landscape.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating Bill Brownridge to the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame. Thank you for your great contributions to hockey heritage in the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Celebrates 35 Years

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is only one Indigenous agricultural lending institution in our province, and that lender is the Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation, or SIEF. SIEF was established in 1986. It is owned by First Nations and serves First Nation entrepreneurs.

Earlier this month, I had the honour of attending and speaking at the 35th anniversary celebration of SIEF, along with the member for Riversdale. The event took place at the Dakota Dunes Resort, located on the territory of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, just south of Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, it was an enjoyable evening of speakers, dancers, and music, all to celebrate the business success of SIEF. This organization has become one of the foremost Indigenous lenders in the country and has served thousands of First Nations business clients.

Another fact, Mr. Speaker, is that SIEF played a pivotal role in the founding of the First Nations Bank of Canada in 1996, a Canadian chartered bank that focuses primarily on providing financial services to the Indigenous marketplace.

Our government is proud to partner with SIEF through past sponsorships and looks forward to collaboration in the future. SIEF has played a major part in reinvigorating Indigenous participation in our provincial economy. When our Indigenous partners are doing well, it benefits all of us in Saskatchewan. That's growth that works for everyone. So, Mr. Speaker, here's to 35 more years of SIEF helping our First Nations partners grow and prosper. Thank you.

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

Contributions of Saskatchewan Construction Associations Recognized

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I

stand today to recognize three Saskatchewan construction associations, the Merit Contractors Association, the Mechanical Contractors Association, and the General Contractors Association, who are here today as part of their day at the legislature.

As Saskatchewan makes good on its commitment delivering food, fuel, and fertilizer to the world, it is important that we take time to listen and to acknowledge the companies, trades, and most importantly the people who design and build the infrastructure the province relies on to make it happen. Today is one of those opportunities. Over the course of the day, this construction coalition is meeting with officials to talk about the current state of the construction industry, some of the challenges they are facing, and to present some solutions as to how we can work together to continue to grow this vital industry.

Within Saskatchewan, construction is the second-largest private sector employer. More than 51,000 people work in the construction industry, representing about 9 per cent of the total workforce in our province. Construction represents a direct contribution to the provincial GDP [gross domestic product] of about 8 per cent, making it the third-largest contributor to the economy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in recognizing the representatives from Merit, MCAS [Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan], and GCAS [General Contractors Association of Saskatchewan] for their contribution to our province and wish them well with their day in the legislature. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Affordability Measures

Ms. Beck: — It's clear, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government has given up helping people in the middle of an affordability crisis. Instead they're actually making things more expensive, raising taxes, power bills by 8 per cent, and raising energy bills by 23 per cent.

The Premier claims that he wants to stop higher taxes on Saskatchewan people. He claims that he understands the crunch that people are facing and wants to help. Well so do I. Mr. Speaker, will he put his money where his mouth is, right now? And will he commit to scrapping his latest round of tax hikes today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Most certainly, Mr. Speaker, I would commit to not increasing the PST [provincial sales tax] to 9 per cent like it was under the members opposite when they had the opportunity. Nine per cent PST this province had, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly, as I have said day after day in this Legislative Assembly, out in the rotunda, Mr. Speaker, that this government, each and every year, provides \$2 billion, \$2 billion in our annual budget to affordability measures that have resulted in removing

112,000 people off the tax rolls, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to that, this year we provided additional relief, Mr. Speaker, in the \$500 Saskatchewan affordability tax credits that were sent out this past week. 360,000 of those cheques were sent out. That's about \$180 million that has arrived in families' mailboxes this week. There's another 465,000 that will go out over the course of about the next 10 days, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly, this is a government that is committed to listening to Saskatchewan people and committed to supporting Saskatchewan people through the affordability challenges that we're seeing across this nation.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, despite all of the rhetoric, the truth is that Premier hasn't met a tax that he didn't like. Since 2017 they've hiked the PST from 5 per cent to 6 per cent. They've extended PST to kids' clothing, restaurant meals, insurance premiums, and construction labour. His government even added a tax to energy efficient appliances and used vehicles, Mr. Speaker — something that Brad Wall campaigned against, calling it dumb.

It goes on. This year alone, the Premier has added PST to sporting events, concerts, movie theatres, museums, zoos, historical sites, fairs, rodeos, trade shows, golf, curling, and much more. Mr. Speaker, I might run out of time, but here is the bottom line. This tax-and-squander Sask Party government has no credibility on taxes or affordability. Again to the Premier: will he put his money where his mouth is and scrap his tax hikes today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, again I would recommit that under no circumstances will we take advice from . . . When they had the opportunity, the members opposite, the NDP opposition had a 9 per cent PST in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, 9 per cent PST in the province of Saskatchewan.

Save for Alberta, Mr. Speaker, the lowest PST in the nation is in the province of Saskatchewan. We're taking additional measures, additional measures providing \$450 million. 180 million of that went out last week. The rest of those dollars will go out this coming week or maybe 10 days to help support Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan families through some affordability challenges that we're having, Mr. Speaker.

And when it comes to credibility, I would say that the members opposite have absolutely no credibility. In particular today, Mr. Speaker, when the Government of Saskatchewan is working with the federal government to limit the impacts of a federally imposed carbon tax, bringing it in house, bringing it to the province, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite have no credibility when it comes to their support for Justin and Jagmeet's carbon tax. Our record on this side of the House is growth that works for everyone, Mr. Speaker. Under the NDP, there was no growth and it never worked for anyone.

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

Provision of Care for Mental Health and Addictions

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, it is clearer and clearer every day how out of touch that Premier and that Sask Party government are with the struggles, with the struggles that Saskatchewan families are facing.

Mr. Speaker, we're joined today by Terri McKeever and Ashley Turner. They are the mother and the sister of Shayne Turner. Just over a year ago in November, Shayne died of an overdose at the age of 31.

Terri and Ashley's story is shared by far too many families in this province, left heartbroken and searching for answers. Answers to questions like, why, despite having been admitted to hospital after an overdose, was he discharged without support, support he was pleading for? They want to know why our health system, underfunded and at its breaking point, failed to save Shayne Turner's life.

Does the Premier recognize that people like Shayne and too many others are being failed by our health care system?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, let me say to Terri and Ashley Turner that our condolences are with the family. And our thoughts most certainly are with their family and too many families across Saskatchewan that have struggled within their family with mental health and mental health challenges and all too often subsequent addictions challenges, Mr. Speaker, some maybe not even that but resulting in overdoses.

We lose too many people each and every year, and unfortunately in this province and across the nation, those numbers seem to be increasing, Mr. Speaker. And we need to take action as a provincial government. We need to take action collectively as provincial governments across this nation and ultimately the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

In this province, we are adding addictions rehabilitation beds, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Mental Health and Addictions is working to bring those beds online in various communities across the province, working hard with our community-based organizations, Mr. Speaker. We are working hard to ensure that we are growing the number of staff that we have in all of our facilities across the province with our four-point health human resource plan, a very ambitious plan to ensure that we have the staff in all of our facilities across this province.

And we're building urgent care centres in Saskatoon and Regina, part of which will provide an intake for individuals — our family members, our friends, our community members — that may be going through a mental health crisis or had an addictions issue and are ready to take a different path, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we can get them in front of the professional counsellors, the professional medical health professionals that are available here, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I find it incredibly frustrating to hear that Premier talk about co-operation on this issue, when my colleague from Cumberland brought forth a bill to seek out those answers through co-operation, something that was passed and then denied.

Shayne was admitted the evening of November 7th, 2021 following a near-death experience, an overdose. When in hospital Shayne advocated for himself, pleading for more care. He wanted to stay there or go to detox, but he didn't get those options. He was sent away, and hours later he died of another overdose. This is far too familiar, Mr. Speaker. Like Samwel Uko, he was seeking help, and he too was denied the care that he so desperately needed, care that would have saved his life.

Mr. Speaker, these families do not want our thoughts and prayers. They want a commitment from that Premier that he'll do everything that he can to stop this from happening again. Will he please make that commitment today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that's a commitment that all of us should make, whether we're elected or whatever role we play in our family, in our friend groups, in our community. And most certainly we are making every effort as a government to invest in the space of detox and addictions rehabilitation, addictions treatment, Mr. Speaker.

Because this is a challenge that is impacting many families, Mr. Speaker, many families in this room today, many families that are sitting on this floor, and many families in the communities where we live. This is why we have shifted over the last couple of years from just over 400 28-day rehabilitation spaces we had, to increasing our detox spaces and putting in place intensive rehabilitation spaces, Mr. Speaker. We've committed to 150 spaces. Will that be enough? It doesn't look like it, as we look ahead out over the next number of years.

This is why we are investing in our urgent care centres. Yes, to remove some of the traffic that we have, the folks that we have with minor urgent issues, Mr. Speaker, in our emergency rooms, but also to create a pathway for those with mental health . . . maybe going through a mental health crisis or those that have an addictions issue and are looking to get in front of a counsellor or a health professional in that way, Mr. Speaker. There's one being built on north Albert, another one in partnership with Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

But there's more to do. There's more to do on Shayne's behalf, on behalf of the family of Terri and Ashley Turner, Mr. Speaker. And there's more for this government to do on behalf of so many families across the province.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — How is this growth that works for everyone, Mr. Speaker? This isn't a story just of a failed mental health and addictions strategy. Shayne was failed by a government that has left hard-working, professional front-line health care workers scrambling and stretched to a breaking point.

He needed care. Instead he was discharged the next morning with pamphlets about addictions and a cab voucher and sent to social services. He didn't need social assistance; he needed health care. Does the minister think cab vouchers, pamphlets, and a hasty discharge from hospital is good enough for Saskatchewan people in need?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I join the Premier in extending my condolences to Terri and Ashley on Shayne's tragic passing. I'd be pleased to meet with them after proceedings today if they so choose.

Mr. Speaker, we're always trying to improve upon the services and supports that are offered through the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] and through our health care system. And I'm not aware of the specifics around this particular case but definitely would like to take a closer look at what happened in terms of Shayne's treatment when he was admitted to hospital and the circumstances surrounding that, Mr. Speaker.

We do want to ensure that people of this province, regardless of when they need help and where they need help, that they get the help that they need as quickly as possible, and that that help is the help that they deserve, frankly, Mr. Speaker. And we're committed to making sure that we are always improving these systems and making improvements where we need to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Shayne's family is joined today by Jenny Churchill, a fierce advocate and founder of Moms Stop the Harm. And we thank her for her good work. For years Jenny has been pushing the government for a proper continuum of care for people facing addictions. She knows Shayne should have been discharged with a naloxone kit, but wasn't. Several years ago the last Health minister expanded naloxone access and said one should be given to anyone discharged after an overdose. Why wasn't that the case for Shayne?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why that would've been the case, and again I can commit today to follow up and find out what happened in this particular instance.

Mr. Speaker, as the member referenced, there has been an expansion of take-home naloxone throughout the province. And we've expanded the accessibility to those particular kits. Over 38,000 take-home naloxone kits have been distributed throughout Saskatchewan. Over 29,000 people have completed training on that. Over 8,000 kits have been used to reverse an overdose, Mr. Speaker. We've enhanced that program, providing more funding in this year's budget to be able to expand access to take-home naloxone in our pharmacies.

We've now expanded into areas such as co-locating nasal

naloxone where we have automated external defibrillators. There's another example of where we're trying to expand access to this particular life-saving support, Mr. Speaker. And this is one of a number of initiatives that we are undertaking as part of our addictions plan for prevention but also treatment, harm reduction, and recovery and the supports that goes around with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, those talking points don't help anybody if those naloxone kits aren't actually being given to the people who need them the most. Like Kristen, who was here yesterday, Shayne was failed by a health system not properly resourced to support him.

Earlier this month the Chief Coroner decided to reopen the investigation into Shayne's death. Terri very much welcomes this decision and is hopeful an inquest into Shayne's death will follow. The Minister of Health should want to know what health system's failings led to Shayne's death so that this won't ever happen again. Will the Minister of Health commit to investigating what went so wrong the night that Shayne died?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, as I said previously, yes, we will take a close look, a much closer look at what happened with respect to the circumstances around Shayne Turner's tragic passing. We would like to know the answers to that. We will engage with the appropriate officials and channels to ensure that that does happen and to make sure that we learn from what happened in this instance, to make sure that we can make improvements to the system as required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for First Responders

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The addictions and overdose crisis in our province is taking a tremendous toll on people and on our health care workers, including paramedics. Paramedics play an important role in our health care system, and many of them are burning out. There are very few protections for paramedics when it comes to breaks, hours of work, and hours of rest. And it's not unheard of for paramedics to be working 16, 20 hours or more or to be on call 24-7 for up to five days. It's not safe, it's bad for patient care, and it's burning out Saskatchewan paramedics.

What does the minister think is the path forward for addressing these challenges?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We continue to make investments into the area of EMS [emergency medical services] and ambulance services. In this budget year, I can say

and report to the House — and this would've been reported at budget time — that we're making investments into, as an example, stabilizing EMS services in rural areas of the province with the rural EMS stabilization strategy to add 70 more full-time equivalent positions across the province. A number of those have been implemented already, Mr. Speaker, and others are in various stages of implementation pending the recruitment of staff for these positions.

Mr. Speaker, we're very grateful for the outstanding work that our front-line providers — paramedics, those in emergency medical services, ground ambulance, air ambulance, STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service], all first responders, volunteer first responders as well — for the work they do in each and every one of our communities. And we're going to continue to make these investments, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the question was about working conditions for paramedics. And I appreciate the comments about being grateful, but that minister is in a position to change legislation.

Paramedics don't have the same rights and protections of similar professions, and they're burning out because of this lack of protection. Paramedics like Samuel Colin in Regina, who is one of many paramedics who had to go on leave to take care of his own health because of years of high pressure, traumatic experiences, and no guaranteed breaks. If we don't fix this, we will lose even more paramedics, and our health care system will suffer more.

Paramedics have been calling for these changes for more than a decade. Why won't the minister work with the opposition and the first responders here today to ensure adequate rest and working conditions for the people who keep us all safe?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to work closely with the paramedics and the various organizations who we meet with regularly and have discussions with on a very frequent basis in terms of what their needs are so that they can provide the necessary care that they need to be able to provide to citizens right across this province, Mr. Speaker.

We know that involves enhancing some of the services that they have through additional staff. We're looking at some options there, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this summer we provided some one-time funding to assist the operators, the owner-operators with some of the costs, the additional costs that they are faced with. As I mentioned earlier, the rural EMS stabilization funding project in this year's budget to help add more staff, Mr. Speaker.

And in addition to that, we do recognize that all front-line and all health care workers across this province have been doing outstanding work, particularly over the past couple of years, and we're grateful for that work that they are doing. We also know that that comes with additional stress and pressures on the job. And, Mr. Speaker, we know that we have resources for

paramedics and EMS such as EFAP [employee family assistance program], such as PSPNet or other mental health clinicians that provide some of that support. But we're willing to have, to continue to have conversations as we often do with paramedics about how we can add to that support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Centralization of Distance Education

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, there is a consistent pattern of behaviour seen on the benches of the government towards the people of Saskatchewan. We've seen it with the new police force. We've seen it in health care. Now we're seeing it in education. Leadership in education is all about relationships and trust, but that government is going down a path with a complete lack of consultation.

The Sask Party government thinks that they know better than everyone. They know better than teachers. They know better than social workers, health care workers, and now police. But if we've learned one thing this session, it's that when it comes to the education of our kids, the Sask Party government has no credibility.

Who did that minister consult with on the creation of his new Crown corporation for distance learning?

[14:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last year in the Throne Speech, so that would be 2021, we did announce as a part of that Throne Speech that we'd be working on a distance-learning policy, an online-learning policy for the province, Mr. Speaker.

In that time, Mr. Speaker, we've been working with school divisions, collecting information in terms of how they operate their online schools, how much they spend in terms of their annual budget allotment on online learning. And as a part of that, Mr. Speaker, what we have decided to do is move forward with the centralized online learning so that students can have the greatest range of options when it comes to online learning regardless of where they live in the province.

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

Mr. Love: — You heard it there, Mr. Speaker: we decided to move forward, without consultation. I'll say it again. Leadership in education is about relationships and trust. Now you'd think by now this Sask Party government would have figured out proper governance. You don't consult with folks after introducing a new bill or policy. You do it before, so you get it right.

Today the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation is raising concerns that the scope of the changes for distance learning can't be accomplished under this government's rushed timeline. They say that plowing ahead will compromise the education of students. Will this minister pump the brakes and wait till after he

consults with all partners in education?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly the ministry has been consulting with school divisions that do provide online learning, knowing that not all do. But we wanted to ensure that students, regardless of where they live, first and foremost they will remain students of their home school division. We know that students do best on online learning when they are attached to a local school and by virtue a local school division, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are working through the details in terms of how this is going to be rolled out in terms of ensuring that teachers in school divisions that are teaching online and doing it well, can be a part of the centralized system as a part of a public system, Mr. Speaker.

And there'll be more to say on this in the coming weeks. Thank you.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the fact is that distance learning is just one of the great things that our public school divisions are already doing that this minister's moving forward without consulting with a single division that I've heard from.

Students need good distance learning, they need access to high quality education, and they need to receive quality instruction provided from certified Saskatchewan teachers. At this point, the Sask Party doesn't even have a distance-learning policy in place. The same policy that this minister referenced from last year's Throne Speech, it isn't even there, Mr. Speaker.

Why is this minister willing to compromise the quality of education of students and ignore the concerns of teachers to move forward with this rushed and out-of-touch timeline?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We know that there has been very good online learning that has been taught across this province, Mr. Speaker. What we want to do is to ensure that teachers that want to continue to provide online learning can be a part of a centralized system. There's been great strides that have been made by a number of school divisions to enhance the number of classes that are available for students, Mr. Speaker.

But that hasn't always been the case, Mr. Speaker, without interrupting kids' access to extracurriculars, things like graduation, driver training, and other things. So we want to make sure that kids are connected with their local school — we know that they do best even if they are learning online — as well as be able to provide as many options as possible regardless of where the student lives, regardless of the options that their own school division provides, and not having to essentially force families and kids to decide between one school division or the other, Mr. Speaker. We can do all things, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 108 — *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 108, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 108 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.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order question no. 65.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 106 — *The Police Amendment Act, 2022*

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Police Amendment Act* of 2022. The 2022 Speech from the Throne contained various measures to enhance public safety and reduce crime. As part of that initiative, this bill contains two sets of changes to *The Police Act* of 1990.

First, the changes create greater flexibility to designate police services under section 24.1 of the Act. These updates include allowing the types of members to be expanded by regulation, allowing alternate governing structures beyond traditional police boards, and granting broader, regulation-making powers.

Mr. Speaker, the government has announced the creation of the Saskatchewan marshals service, or the SMS. The structure and implementation of the SMS is still in development. However the

proposed changes ensure the SMS could be designated as a police service under section 24.1 if appropriate.

Second, the changes grant the minister greater flexibility to intervene in special circumstances where there are administrative or operational deficiencies within a municipal policing agency. Mr. Speaker, currently if there are concerns with the level of policing services provided by a municipal police agency, the minister's only intervention option is to order a special inquiry. Special inquiries are an expensive and time-consuming process and are not always appropriate for addressing deficiencies.

The proposed amendments grant the minister more options to intervene if a police agency is not providing adequate policing or is not in compliance with the legislation. This approach is based on legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions, including British Columbia and Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the government recognizes the hard work and dedication of municipal police throughout our province. These proposed changes do not indicate a lack of faith or confidence in our municipal policing service. Instead they are intended as a preventative measure to ensure Saskatchewan residents continue to receive safe and effective law enforcement.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Police Amendment Act, 2022*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 106 be now read the second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Bill No. 107, *The Police Amendment Act, 2022* and Bill 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act* are both bills being introduced to reform Saskatchewan's policing framework, I will reserve comments, initial comments on behalf of the official opposition on Bill 106 till I address Bill 107 in a few minutes here.

With that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 106.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 107 — *The Provincial Protective Services Act*

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Provincial Protective Services Act*. This past April the provincial protective services, or PPS, began operating as a branch within the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. The PPS consolidated several groups of officers into a single unit, including conservation officers, highway patrol officers, safer-communities-and-neighbourhoods officers, court security and prisoner transport, deputy sheriffs . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You going to stay awake through this? And Wascana Park community officers. The consolidation

of these groups ensures a uniform command structure and supports coordinated protective and security services.

Mr. Speaker, the PPS was established on a co-operative basis through MOUs [memorandum of understanding], policy change, and transfer of resources to the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. This proposed bill will implement a legislative structure for the ongoing operation and administration of the PPS. In particular this bill will confirm a number of matters respecting PPS including the minister's responsibilities and powers; the composition of members including the appointment of a commissioner, deputy commissioner, and assistant commissioner; the powers, functions, and duties of the members; and other administrative and structural matters.

The establishment of PPS demonstrates our commitment to enhancing protective and security services to protect Saskatchewan people, natural resources, and infrastructure. With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Provincial Protective Services Act*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 107 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to offer initial comments on behalf of the official opposition on Bill No. 107, and my comments on this bill will also cover comments on the previously introduced Bill No. 106. The official opposition is concerned at these announcements, Mr. Speaker, and the changes that are being introduced to the policing framework here in Saskatchewan.

I would note that the minister kept her comments on this legislation quite brief. I'm not surprised because of course there's been a lot of pushback from the announcement of these changes, Mr. Speaker. And there are aspects of these bills that are clearly an attempt on behalf of the Sask Party government to signal their deep and abiding love for Danielle Smith.

And I think it's no coincidence we're seeing this happening just at the time when Danielle Smith, the Premier of Alberta and head of the UCP [United Conservative Party], has introduced similar plans to create a provincial police force. Certainly this is part of a signal of an embrace of American-style, tough-on-crime agenda, Mr. Speaker. And it is a concerning trend from this Sask Party government to take direct control over policing in this province, Mr. Speaker. And I think it should have us all concerned.

This government has essentially introduced legislation to create a marshal service without actually consulting with existing police services, Mr. Speaker. This plan has been roasted from beginning to end by existing policing organizations, and it's really another example in a long line of missteps from that Minister of Corrections and Policing.

She is very much the spokesperson of this tough-on-crime agenda, Mr. Speaker, but she has no issue proclaiming her support for Colin Thatcher, that he deserved to be a guest of honour of this government at this year's Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. And how that minister responded to the fact that people were taken aback initially by his presence on this floor, I suggest,

tells you all you need to know about that minister's commitment to taking on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

She was shamed into an apology, but it's very disconcerting to see this government double down and continue to pursue this tough-on-crime agenda. Well, some crime, Mr. Speaker. Crime driven by poverty; crime driven by, you know, intergenerational violence and trauma, colonialism, mental health and addiction; crime driven by lack of hope, lack of opportunity, lack of employment, lack of belonging — they're certainly tough on that, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

I would add also permitless protest. They're very tough on permitless protests, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I believe it was the permitless protest of anti-mask activists that really had this government's knees shaking and caused them to introduce the Bill 70, which is all part of this larger agenda in the first place, Mr. Speaker.

Frankly, this trend undermines the independence of existing police forces and it represents, in my opinion, a threat to our democracy, Mr. Speaker. But you know, I digress because obviously there are some types of crime that this government is soft on. Corruption. You know, I think back to the caucus fraud scandal that landed many of their counterparts in jail, back when the member for Lumsden-Morse was palling around with the likes of Colin Thatcher. Oh wait, he's still doing that, Mr. Speaker.

Let's get serious, Mr. Speaker, about this bill and the particulars about this bill. It appears that with these policing initiatives, we're seeing a government that is content to politicize policing, which is very concerning, and introduce a marshal service that has been roundly criticized by not just police stakeholders, existing policing organizations, Mr. Speaker, but many other affected stakeholders as well.

It will be extremely expensive and cumbersome to create a whole new administrative body to oversee this marshal police service, this SMS. New equipment, new management, new administration. Why are they wasting public money on this, Mr. Speaker? What is the point? If they wanted to do what they say they want to do, which is to address a crime crisis that doesn't exist — but I'll return to that in a moment, Mr. Speaker — it would be far more effective and fiscally responsible to bolster existing police forces like the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police].

And indeed that is what the RCMP has called for. That is what other policing organizations have called for. They're saying this will cost 20 million a year, Mr. Speaker, but that's . . . I mean that's quite a bit of money. That's quite a lot of money, and it could be well spent elsewhere. But of course it will cost more than that with this government's record on getting value for money and keeping on track of predicted . . . the cost of new initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm concerned that this government continues to try to get political mileage out of tragedies that rocked this province, Mr. Speaker. And it's shameful, and I believe they're playing on the fears of remote communities without actually pursuing the best

solutions for those communities. They're saying that crime is going up. It is not. Crime is not going up. We've seen a 25 per cent reduction in crime since 2003. We've also seen a reduction in the severity of crime.

There are legitimate concerns out there, yes, particularly in rural and remote communities who feel the response times are not what they should be. But this Saskatchewan marshal service will not address that in the best way, Mr. Speaker. Again, if they want to do what they say they want to do, they are not pursuing existing solutions. They are not pursuing the best way to address those issues.

But this is a government that, you know, the truth seems variable and malleable depending on what it is they're pushing. This SMS or marshals service is being criticized by the National Police Federation, Mr. Speaker, as being completely unnecessary. And it has actually been pointed out that it could actually make these communities less safe. So this could actually do the exact opposite of what this government claims they're trying to do, which is to make these communities less safe because it will add to confusion around jurisdiction, around dispatching. And we on this side, Mr. Speaker, we remain very concerned about that. The RCMP is not a fan either, Mr. Speaker.

So we do not support the creation of an additional police service, Mr. Speaker. First Nations were not consulted as part of this legislation, Mr. Speaker. This is part of a concerning trend from this government of failing to consult with First Nations and Métis communities.

And you know, let's take an example, Mr. Speaker, of what First Nations communities have been asking for around policing. You know what James Smith Cree Nation asked for? They asked for local Indigenous-led policing. So where's the legislation on that? That is a tragedy that absolutely rocked this province. The Premier showed up and said whatever they needed he was good for. And we have not seen that materialize, Mr. Speaker. But I guess they know better, Mr. Speaker. They know what everyone else needs, Mr. Speaker.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to just push for a very novel and transformational idea that we invest some of this money in the social determinants of crime. If this government is really concerned about crime in this province, let's invest some money and actually improve the conditions in which people are born, they grow up, they live, they work. Let's look at some of the most significant determinants of crime — poverty, housing, mental health, Mr. Speaker. Where are the investments in those issues, Mr. Speaker?

Lastly I want to flag the lack of oversight for this new SMS, Mr. Speaker. That is a considerable question mark for the opposition in a historical moment when some members of the public are calling for more oversight and there is a struggle in some places in the world over confidence in police services. And we need only look to the Black Lives Matter movement, Mr. Speaker, but we're certainly not immune to it here. I think of the starlight tours here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The need for fair and responsible policing, police members with a good understanding of the lawful limits of their authority, Mr. Speaker, that need has never been greater. So we are concerned over the lack of a plan for an oversight body for these newly announced policing

services.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing from my colleague, the member for Douglas Park and the lead critic on this bill, as I'm sure she'll have a lot to say about these changes, as will all of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker. And with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 88

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 88** — *The Saskatchewan First Act* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on adjourned debates on Bill No. 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act*. You know, my colleague previous to me speaking on adjourned debates made it very clear. Again, here we go; we have a government who wants to direct everything, control everything. But it forgets about First Nations and Métis, forgets to consult the people that will be impacted by legislation. And so many times our role here as opposition is to remind the government that when you have legislation you want to bring in, make sure you consult those that will be impacted.

And again, here's a bill where FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] has rejected it very clear, has made their stance and have made their voice very loud and clear. Now we have Métis Nation of Saskatchewan doing the same thing, at their MNLA [Métis Nation legislative assembly] passed unanimously rejecting this.

What does that say to the government? What does it say to the Sask Party government when First Nations and Métis tell you — both leaders, organizations, nations — tell you they do not accept this? They do not accept what you're doing. They're asking you to stop. What does that mean to the Sask Party government? You could sit here and say, oh, we're consulting. Oh, let's have a photo op with First Nations and Métis. Let's do that. Let's do this, let's do that. It doesn't work anymore. People are tired of the photo ops.

So just so you know, our leaders, First Nations and Métis, are telling you loud and clear they do not support this Bill 88. They do not. Loud and clear. So hopefully the backbenchers with the Sask Party government, you can actually wake up some of those ministers and say, hey, we didn't do this right. Let's go back and fix it. Let's consult and talk.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this government has done a miserable job on this. Again it goes back to saying it's time First Nations and Métis are consulted meaningfully. No more. And there is legislation that you guys could support that would give some teeth instead of policy that doesn't work, has been rejected. You know, the member from Saskatoon Centre has a bill forward. You could support that. So maybe some of the backbenchers, maybe some of our Indigenous members on both sides will get together and we'll work together to say to both sides of government, let's work unanimously and pass some legislation with the duty-to-consult that has some teeth in it, with legislation rather than policy. But probably we won't have that. But you know what? I'm always willing to work with members opposite. Especially the Indigenous members, I would work with.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much more to say. I think First Nations and Métis have made it very clear, loud and clear, they reject this legislation. So to the government, maybe it's go back to the drawing plan and maybe start consulting with people before you come out. And again I go back to say, it's the duty-to-consult, not insult. Remember that.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to move a movement to adjourn debate on Bill 88.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 94

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 94 — *The Public Pension and Benefits Administration Corporation Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join in this adjourned debate on Bill No. 94 and put some comments on the record. Mr. Speaker, this is legislation that aims to create a non-profit, non-Crown corporation to administer public and municipal employee pension funds.

So those pension funds affected are the public employees pension plan, or PEPP; and municipal employees' pension plan, or MEPP. And they are to be replaced by the above corporation mentioned. This legislation also enables the transfer of the staff and services of the Public Employees Benefits Agency, or PEBA, to this new corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important just to quickly note some of the information around these pension plans. So the public employees pension plan, or PEPP, has been in place for about 45 years. It was created in 1977. It is the largest defined contribution plan in Canada, and it provides retirement benefits for both Government of Sask employees as well as other public sector employees.

As well, affected in this legislation, we have the municipal

employees' pension plan, or MEPP. This is a defined benefit pension plan that provides retirement benefits to employees of the school divisions, urban and rural municipalities, regional public libraries, and other local authorities in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm cautiously optimistic about the proposed changes in this legislation. As always, we will continue to work with stakeholders and make sure this legislation gets this change right.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to know that all members in this Legislative Assembly are members of PEPP, which has served MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] very well over the last number of years. We should be very, very proud with how well it performs and serves public employees. Mr. Speaker, we are very committed to PEBA and PEPP's longevity and stability.

I won't speak for too long, Mr. Speaker, but I thought it would be good to just note some information about how many folks in Saskatchewan are not covered by a pension plan. And, Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada shows that about 230,000 people in Sask are enrolled in a registered pension plan, leaving so, so many folks out in the cold when it comes to planning for their own retirement. And we continue to see, you know, increasing costs during this generational affordability crisis that are having people dip into their savings or go into high-interest debt just to make ends meet, Mr. Speaker. So these folks are not getting those benefits that are so important.

You know, I just want to echo the comments from my colleague from Saskatoon University as I wrap up, that as MLAs we should all be very concerned with ensuring everyone in Saskatchewan has similar benefits as we do. So while the government continues to make changes to pensions, they should be ensuring that everyone in Saskatchewan has access to a retirement pension and benefits plan.

Mr. Speaker, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak to this bill. It is my pleasure to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 94.

[15:00]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 95

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 95 — *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 95, *The Surface Rights Acquisition and*

Compensation Amendment Act, 2022. Mr. Speaker, this bill introduces amendments to the Act that governs the relationship between landowners and oil companies. The amended bill will allow for a board of arbitration to hear cases concerning delinquent payments to landowners and will also allow for the arbitration board to issue an order for payment for oil and gas companies that owe landowners money, which is important. It is important.

And we've been hearing some preliminary feedback from stakeholders about this bill. Essential that the, you know, imbalance of power between rural landowners and oil companies is righted, that's certainly something we've been hearing. And we want to ensure that this bill will actually accomplish that. We've been hearing a number of concerns so far that that will not properly resolve the imbalance.

So of course there will be further consultation with our lead critic and with stakeholders across the province on this. But as I said, it's very important to right that imbalance and to ensure that rural landowners are actually getting paid for the land that they are leasing and are not being left in the lurch.

So just, you know, another thing to note. The opposition has been calling for a framework of this variety to right this imbalance for many years now. I understand Alberta has already got legislation in place, these protections, and so it's good to see us at least potentially trying to catch up with this bill on the government's part. But again, really important that we see meaningful corrections made through these amendments. And so, as I said, there will be further consultation to determine whether this is going to adequately protect the interests of rural landowners. So far hearing concerns that it may not.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will at this point move that we adjourn debate on Bill 95, *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Amendment Act, 2022*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 97

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carr that **Bill No. 97 — *The Architects Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pleasure to stand, speak up to Bill 97, *The Architects Amendment Act*. This is a piece of legislation that aligns us primarily with the rest of Canada on this front, allows the association of architects the authority to issue licences and practise in Saskatchewan. So essentially, you know, enables the issuing of those architect licences to persons and corporations in the trade agreements. It also has some information about allowing the Government of Saskatchewan to identify trade agreements that are relevant to the Act.

I know, as we mention, our critics are doing due diligence in these areas, engaging with stakeholders on these important pieces of legislation. You know, there are some thoughts I had on this, is that we're very interested to know what the criteria will be for identifying these relevant trade agreements. There was not a lot of information on this front.

But I just want to quickly . . . I won't talk too long on this. I just want to quickly give a special shout-out to all the architects and architectural technologists that are working in our province and in this fantastic field. You know, I myself am quite an avid follower of architecture, always buying *Dwell* magazines, *Architectural Digest*, anything I can get my hands on. So very, very interested in the fruits of this legislation and want to give a special shout-out to Saskatchewan Polytechnic and their diploma in the architectural technologies field. I know a number of folks who work in this industry and who practise, and I'm always very interested in following their careers with great interest.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this point I won't talk for too long. I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 97. Thank you so much.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 98

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 98 — *The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet and speaking on Bill No. 98, *The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act*. I think as has already been mentioned, there are a number of important amendments that have been tabled for this legislation focused on loss and damage and cost recovery for those identified as at fault for emergencies and the ability for the agency to seek remedy for those costs when they're acting on behalf of other levels of government and so forth. The bill will allow the minister to have the power to calculate and/or waive the debt owed to the Crown incurred or determined to have been incurred by either persons or municipalities.

And you know, for me I find it a particularly interesting piece of legislation with the number and types of emergencies that the Public Safety Agency has been responding to. We're seeing these kinds of emergencies happening with greater frequency and severity and duration, I guess, a lot of it being driven by climate change and global warming leading to severities in the types of storms and emergencies as a consequence. We see that in the form of flooding incidents which of course have increased in frequency. We see that in terms of hot summers' dry conditions leading to higher frequencies of forest fires. And the burgeoning costs associated with responding to those emergencies, not just within our Crown forest, of course, but also in municipal areas

even, you know, grass fires and in non-forested areas as well. And certainly the need for a balance there between both on the prevention side and the protection and response side.

Obviously on the protection side that means ensuring that all those who are on the land, own the land, use the land are doing so in a responsible manner, that they are given the correct information and ensuring that they are taking the necessary steps to prevent . . . And I did note in the amendments to the legislation that there is mention of, you know, where there is liability in conforming with those requirements.

And so it's an interesting balance in terms of, you know, identifying where there is liability for cost recovery or costs incurred related to emergencies, which now has an expanded definition, and you know, when those costs are being borne by the taxpayers. And the impacts that not just taxpayers but also municipalities and First Nations and landowners and so forth are being addressed in a fair and balanced way.

I take note of the fact that the devil will be in the details on this piece of legislation. It empowers the minister to develop regulations that will determine those costs and implement policies around whether to pardon municipalities or others from being liable for such costs. And certainly any time that, you know, we have that situation and, you know, that discretion for the minister to sort of set those parameters that it's being done in a fair and balanced, prudent sort of way.

And I think there has been concerns already highlighted related to some of these costs being off-loaded onto municipalities. That is an area that is a particular concern as the municipal affairs critic for the official opposition. Obviously municipalities are already under significant burden in terms of the variety of costs already that are being off-loaded, whether that's in the areas of housing and mental health and addictions, so on and so forth. So you know, I hear this all the time. It's basically municipalities who have a very limited tax base and ability to raise funds and respond to crises, yet are the ones, sort of, left holding the bag in so many cases. So I will be paying close attention to that aspect of the bill.

I do note that there are a number of consequential amendments to *The Wildfire Act* associated with this bill. And I don't want to take up too much more time. I'm sure that our critic will have many questions on this bill. And I will be doing my part, certainly, to assist in that outreach with stakeholders to understand the consequences and impacts of this legislation. I think it's fair to say that as always, we want to make sure that there is both that accountability to the parties responsible that I believe this legislation is attempting to address.

But of course, no legislation is worth its weight without enforcement. And I do want to take this opportunity to, again, highlight my great displeasure, dissatisfaction with how we see other comparable pieces of legislation not being enforced. And there I make mention particularly of drainage legislation and the rights of those to follow legislation around following drainage.

So with that, I will conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 98, *The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act, 2022*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 99

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 99 — *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter my remarks regarding Bill No. 99, *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*. This Act, this amendment will allow the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency to make improvements to the Sask911 system to modernize it to accept texts, photos, video calls.

Mr. Speaker, 12 years ago, one of the First Nations, Ministikwan, Ministikwan Lake First Nation, had a tragic accident in their community where their 911 call was dropped and some members in their community died. I think we have to look more at the connectivity out in these communities, in these remote communities, and Ministikwan would have benefited greatly had they had access to cell coverage, cell service in their community. And I'm pleased to know, pleased to see that these amendments are happening to modernize.

[15:15]

Thinking about those communities that do not have cell coverage and are paying for those services, they ought to be receiving the basic services — and one of them is the 911 — and have access to it.

I'm sure my colleagues here and the critic for this area will have more to ask. With that, I'm prepared to allow this to go in its usual way. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 99, *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*. miigwech.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 101

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 101 — *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief today with respect to Bill No. 101, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2022*, Mr. Speaker. This is incredibly important legislation, I should say, as in how it relates to people and the duty that that government has or any government has, Mr. Speaker, to people and children within this province, some of the very most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker. So there's a sacred obligation of government as it relates to its duties on this front.

I'm going to be brief here today because this legislation and any changes within it are incredibly important, and we need to make sure that the changes that have been brought about are in the best interests of young people — many that are in such a vulnerable spot, Mr. Speaker — and that we're taking every opportunity to strengthen legislation like this, Mr. Speaker, in the interests of young people, the most vulnerable in our province.

I'm confident in our incredible critic, the member for Elphinstone, in leading this dialogue with stakeholders and young people and organizations across Saskatchewan as she has been. We would invite all of those organizations, all those that are impacted, all those that extend care, all those that recognize injustice and hardship in the lives of young people to connect with our critic, and of course the government, because it'll be our effort to make sure that legislation is in the best interests of young people. And we'll take every opportunity to strengthen the legislation before us.

With that being said, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 101.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 102

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 102 — *The Constitutional Questions Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur les questions constitutionnelles*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet again this afternoon and enter into debate on Bill No. 102, *The Constitutional Questions Amendment Act, 2022*. This is a bill that is remedying a bit of a gap in the procedure and will now allow for the Attorney General to be served notice of any challenge to any law pertaining to the Constitution and also *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. There are some other consequential amendments, housekeeping variety, you know, to sort of give more neutrality to pronouns of "he" and "she." Of course we always welcome that.

The more interesting part here and the one that I certainly have a lot of questions about and I'm sure that our critic, the member for Regina Douglas Park, will certainly be delving into in terms of,

you know, the consequences of the Attorney General being given that standing where there are challenges to the Constitution Act. I think that, you know, it's certainly something that is an important democratic step so that we ensure that where there are determinations in the Court of Appeal, that the Attorney General have standing, but certainly we want to make sure that happens in a fair and balanced way.

And of course we see the changes surrounding the human rights code to be of particular importance, and I can only I guess speculate on, you know, what has sort of driven those amendments. It's not clear to me, but as you well know, Mr. Speaker, there have been several recent cases and events where we've seen those rights be infringed upon, be disrespected. We've seen that in the area of children in our educational system and their rights to expression around their sexual and gender identity. And so certainly we welcome any challenges that will ensure that the Attorney General can uphold those very important rights for our, particularly again, the most vulnerable in our society, and ensure that individuals have those rights protected. And certainly we welcome that.

And I'm not going to spend too much more time on this particular bill, as I say, because I know that our critic for this area is certainly going to have the opportunity. And I will be reaching out as well to my constituents and hearing from them in terms of any concerns or questions that they may have so that we can feed that into the process as it moves forward. And I'm just going to check my notes one last time to make sure I haven't missed anything. And seeing nothing, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 102.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 103

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 103 — *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to put a few comments on the record about Bill 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*, although I will be brief again today. I think that, like my colleagues who have shared their thoughts on this piece of legislation, I'll certainly support any movement towards improving accessibility in our province for persons with disabilities.

And I also want to commend how powerful it was to see many of the individuals and organizations, stakeholders within the sector, here as this bill was introduced. Certainly that's the kind of thing that I think that we want to see happen when legislation is brought forward, that that consultation is done and that those experts are consulted and listened to. And I can't be certain that that's happened here, but I do commend their presence here on

that day. It was very much good to see. If anything, I think it points to the fact that this legislation may be a tad bit overdue as the changes brought forth in this bill were needed years ago.

Mr. Speaker, we're very concerned about accessibility and for many of us we think about that in our constituencies. And we'll definitely be reaching out to individuals, organizations, and stakeholders as we continue to look at this bill. And we'll also lean heavily on our just incredibly effective critic for this area, the member from Regina Elphinstone, who has done a phenomenal job building relationships with individuals and organizations who advocate for persons with disabilities. And so we'll be leaning on her mightily to ensure that this piece of legislation does what it's intended to do and meets the expectations of folks in Saskatchewan.

But at this point, Mr. Speaker, I will voice support for the bill, but I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 104

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 104 — *The Local Improvements Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I won't be long on this Bill 104, *The Local Improvements Amendment Act, 2022*. So this Act, my understanding is the Sask Municipal Board approval no longer is required for notice of intention, bylaw, cost determination, lifetime rates assessment, and schools are exempt from local improvement levies. They were already exempt from property tax.

And this removes detailed definitions of what counts as local improvement projects to avoid restricting municipalities. If costs go beyond the estimated 20 to 50 per cent, the board must give notice to landowners liable for a share of the cost. If they go beyond by 50 per cent plus, the landowners are exempt for paying beyond the 50 per cent plus.

So I won't say any more on this because the critic for this area will probably have a lot more to say. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 104, *The Local Improvements Amendment Act, 2022*. miigwech.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 105

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 105 — *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill No. 105, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2022*. This bill does make some useful changes to the Act, one being that it would be made easier to set up polling places in both hospitals and personal care homes. Definitely it's crucial that voting be accessible to everyone in our province who has the right to cast their vote, so this is good to see.

It also stipulates that all municipalities must hold at least one advance poll, which is very positive. The more options people have to vote, the better, Mr. Speaker. Another useful change is the amendment allowing returning officers to temporarily postpone an election in cases of emergency or bad weather. I'm sure we all recall the last municipal election in 2020 and the disruptions that were caused by the snowstorm at that time, which was a barrier for many people who were seeking to exercise their democratic right to vote. So I think this is good too.

I think amendments overall such as these make participating in the democratic process easier for Saskatchewan people, and that's always a good thing, so I'm happy to support those aspects of the bill.

One significant objection to this bill, however, Mr. Speaker, is that we've heard loud and clear from many stakeholders that it does not change the scheduled date for municipal and school board elections, which is contrary to the recommendation that was made by Chief Electoral Officer Michael Boda. The issue with the scheduled date remaining as is, is that Saskatchewan voters in 2024 will be casting their ballots for the municipal election only two weeks after the provincial election.

And the timing of this has been problematic in election years past as the impact of voter fatigue and confusion is significant when elections are so close together. It detrimentally affects engagement and ultimately voter turnout, which is already historically very low for our municipal elections here in Saskatchewan. So I do believe this is a hindrance to people exercising their right to vote. I hope the government will reconsider this aspect of the bill.

In addition to voter fatigue, there is also the issue of volunteer fatigue, Mr. Speaker. Elections of all varieties rely on thousands of volunteers, many of whom would like to and would normally work on both municipal and provincial elections. And I think we crucially need a robust, willing, and available pool of volunteers in order for elections to run smoothly and in order for voters to be able to participate in our democracy.

So as I said, I think that's certainly the most glaring issue with this bill, and I hope it will be reconsidered in keeping with what the recommendation was from the Chief Electoral Officer for

good reason.

And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I will now move that we adjourn debate on Bill 105, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2022*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:30.]

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