



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
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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

Sergeant-at-Arms — Sean Darling

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — I would like to table a report from the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to subsection 7(6) of *The Election Act, 1996*. The Chief Electoral Officer has submitted a report regarding actions taken during the constituency of Saskatoon Meewasin by-election.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce 20 public service employees seated in the Speaker's gallery today. They are here today to take part in the parliamentary program for the public service. The program includes a tour of the Legislative Building, briefings presented by various branches of the Legislative Assembly and executive council, an opportunity to sit in the Speaker's gallery to observe question period and other House business, and brief meetings with members of both sides of the House and with Mr. Speaker.

The participants are employees from the following ministries: the Ministry of Advanced Education, Agriculture, Education, Government Relations, Health, Social Services, the Public Service Commission, and the Legislative Assembly Services.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to please join me and help welcoming these visitors to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these public servants to their gallery. I very much appreciate the time that we get to have to have them come here, observe proceedings, ask some questions afterwards. Looking forward to having that conversation today after business, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all of them for all the work that they do in their respective ministries every single day, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming them again to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the Speaker's gallery this afternoon, we have a group of special guests who've joined us here. The Ministry of Social Services has undertaken a youth engagement initiative to gain a stronger understanding of the supports that youth in care need as they transition out of ministry care and into adulthood. The ministry has worked with partners at P.A. [Prince Albert] Outreach, Egadz, and John Howard Society to develop three

advisory teams. The teams are now in their second year and the ministry continues to implement supports and services based on what we hear from the youth advisory teams' priorities.

So I'd like to introduce the members of the teams who are seated in the Speaker's gallery today. From Regina: Blaze, Amy-Louise, and Maximus; from Saskatoon: Vinny, Jay, Leo, Jordyn, Farah, Kyler, and Lily; and from Prince Albert: Shae, Moon, Clarice, Rylan, and Arien. And I'd also like to recognize staff members from those three organizations including . . . We see Don Meikle. Several members know of Don's great work with Egadz in Saskatoon, and for their support in developing and working with these teams.

The work of these advisory teams and our community partners are helping us forge a brighter future for children, youth in care where they will be more supported as they build lives in their communities as independent adults. I look forward to our upcoming meeting with the youth advisory team, and ask all members to help me welcome them here today.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join with the minister opposite and welcome our young guests and staff members from these vital organizations here to your Legislative Assembly. And on behalf of the opposition, I just want you to know how important it is for young voices in our province to be heard, that you're here to provide, as part of the youth advisory team, counsel to the minister.

We certainly value the voices of young people, and know that your advice, your lived experience is valued here in this Assembly. Thank you for being here. Thank you for those caring adults that work in these organizations that are here. Your work is certainly valued by members of both sides. And on behalf of the opposition, we welcome you here to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to join the minister in regards to welcoming the guests from the youth advisory team. Again you're doing nothing but putting a voice to number one, youth that haven't had a voice. And we would like to thank you for that.

I'd also like to single out Don Meikle from Egadz. You've done nothing but provide housing and supports for youth within Saskatoon in particular. And unapologetically, I stole your model many years ago — and I'd like thank you for that — for Regina. But again I'd like to have all members thank Don Meikle and also welcome all the guests that are sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today and welcome seven guests seated in the east gallery here from the Johnson-Shoyama School of Public Policy located

along College Avenue in Regina Lakeview, Mr. Speaker. We are joined by the president of the student association today, Kezia-Grace Macbruce, and I would like to welcome all of the students here today. I look forward to meeting with you after question period. Mr. Speaker, we're so lucky to have the Johnson-Shoyama School of Public Policy here in Regina. And I know that we are richer in the work that we do because of the knowledge that is kept and is disseminated there at the school of public policy.

While I'm on my feet, I would also like to join in welcoming the youth in care, youth advisory team and the public servants to their Legislative Assembly. I think we are all richer when we have these voices here and engaged in the work that we're doing. So I invite all members to join me in welcoming all of these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to introduce two special guests that are in your gallery today. They're Barb and Cal Reid who've travelled down here from Kindersley today. They're joined in the gallery by their middle child, Charles, and they've come down to see whether he really does any work. He is the chief of staff in my office. And anyway these are fine people and I'm glad that they've come here.

They've got two other children. The oldest son, John, is an engineer that lives in Humboldt. The youngest child is a teacher living in Newcastle, Australia. We're pleased that we've got citizens like this that have raised family and lived all their lives in Saskatchewan. Both Barb and Cal are graduates of the University of Saskatchewan, her in physiotherapy and him in agricultural engineering. They have worked their entire working career in our province and made major commitments and major contributions to that. They're very dedicated to their community through Kin Canada and have been members of Kinsmen, Kinettes, or K40 since '86.

Their son Charles follows their lead and in that regard has been a member of a number of Kinsmen service clubs across the province, probably time that he should've been spent either studying or doing his work here. But nonetheless, Charles has been a great contributor, and I'm pleased to have him on the staff that I get to work with every day.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would also, while I'm on my feet, like to join with the Minister of Social Services in welcoming Don Meikle and his guests here. These are some of people that are working with some of the most challenging situations in our province, and I don't think we can thank them nearly enough for the great work that they do. So I'd ask that all members join me in welcoming the Reids and their valuable son Charles and the other guests in the gallery today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition and as SaskPower critic who spends a great deal of my time — not too much of my time, some of my time — working with Charles, I'd like to join in with the minister

opposite and welcome Barb and Cal to their legislature. On behalf of the opposition, I really have genuinely enjoyed working with your son. I think he does great service for his primaries and for the people of the province. So on behalf of the opposition, welcome to the legislature. I hope you have a wonderful time.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I would like to join with all of the members that have made introductions in introducing and welcoming everyone that has joined us here today, whether they be from the public service, whether they be from the Johnson-Shoyama School of Public Policy, whether they be our youth that are here from the Youth Advisory Council. Don, thank you for coming.

But I did notice sitting with the youth that we have, Mr. Speaker, is a fellow from my home community of Shellbrook. He served as a police officer in the P.A. city police for a number of years, Mr. Speaker, and has always been focused on youth, whether they be his own youth, the youth in our community or in the surrounding region or in the community of Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, and that's Mr. Tim Settee. So I'd everyone to join me in welcoming Tim to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet to give a warm introduction to somebody who's very important and very special to me up in the east gallery, and that's my constituency assistant, Betty Martin. Betty came to my office at the start of September to fill in for a maternity leave for my permanent assistant, and she has just hit the ground running. She is bright, she is intelligent, she's a quick learner, and her best qualities are her compassion and her empathy.

Betty and I go way back. I knew I was getting a gem because Betty and I have worked together in the past. She's served our province for 22 years as an educational assistant. I was honoured to work with Betty in my classroom for one year, and she helped me chaperone three trips to New York city with dozens of teenagers. If she can manage 50-plus teenagers on the New York subway system, I know she's got what it takes to do anything that she sets her mind to. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming Betty to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to join with the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation and welcome Barb and Cal. I think he made a minor mistake. It's the great community of Tisdale, and I caught that right away. So I just needed to correct the record and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned

residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring 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 commitment and action 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 political 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 Regina and McLean. I do so present.

[13:45]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for an increase to the personal care home benefit. Those who've signed this petition would like to bring to our attention that the cost of living in the province has created stressors on personal care home operators, who are limited in the services they provide due to the low personal-care-home benefit rate.

Residents are also being affected because the threshold of \$2,000 for a personal care home benefit leaves most low-income seniors without additional funds to pay for their essential needs, as many personal care homes are now costing well above \$3,000 and much higher.

I want to note one particular individual who's here today, a constituent of Eastview, Linda Wollms. Linda collected over 100 signatures that I'll be presenting today, by going door to door in her community to raise awareness. And that is such a shining example of democracy and engaged citizenship from a constituent that I'm very proud of.

The petition today, on top of being signed by over 100 residents of Eastview in Saskatoon, is signed by residents of Moose Jaw, Clavet, Warman, Osler, Wadena, Leoville, Debden, and Canwood. And I'm very honoured to present this petition here today.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to stop the closure of public liquor stores. Thus the undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that the recent decision to shutter the 34 remaining public liquor stores across

Saskatchewan will see the loss of 350 good-paying, stable, unionized jobs; that public liquor stores have remained profitable and self-sufficient while providing good-paying, stable employment to 350 Saskatchewan residents despite the competition of private for-profit liquor stores; that the hundreds of thousands of generated revenue by public liquor stores helps fund crucial public services such as health care, education, and highways.

Mr. Speaker, in short, closing the public liquor stores is bad for jobs, bad for competition, and bad for affordability. Losing good mortgage-paying jobs during a generational affordability crisis is a terrible jobs plan.

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 immediately reverse the decision to close the remaining 34 public liquor stores.

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to immediately create a bipartisan committee on the mental health and addictions crisis.

Those who have signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: Saskatchewan has the highest suicide rates in the country; suicide rates for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan is four times higher than for non-Indigenous people; Saskatchewan continues to break its own record in overdose deaths, losing 464 people, Mr. Speaker, in 2021 alone; one in four youth in Saskatchewan have reported having engaged in self-harm; one in four youth have reported having considered suicide in the past year; and there are 800 children and youth waiting to see a psychiatrist currently in Saskatchewan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately create a bipartisan legislative committee on the mental health and addictions crisis in Saskatchewan.

Those who have signed this petition today come from Air Ronge and La Ronge. I do so present.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present our petition for the first time today calling on the government to fund domestic violence shelters. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that the Premier's apology for his government's invitation of convicted murderer Colin Thatcher to the Throne Speech needs to be followed up with action; that Saskatchewan has the highest rate

of domestic violence of all the provinces; that Saskatchewan does not fund second-stage shelters, one of only a few provinces in Canada not to do so; and these shelters provide long-term housing for people trying to escape abusive situations as well as wraparound services that are essential for domestic abuse survivors; that without second-stage shelters, people facing domestic violence have few long-term options and are left in desperate and abusive situations.

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 immediately fund second-stage shelters to support people fleeing domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed the petition today reside in Preeceville, Sturgis, and Kamsack. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Movember Hockey Classic

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night was a great event in the bustling town of LeRoy. The members from Kindersley, Moose Jaw, Melville-Saltcoats, Saskatoon Riversdale, and myself joined with Maury Simoneau and Team BHP to take on Jansen project contractors for the 4th annual BHP Movember hockey classic.

It was a good matchup, but the best team did win in the end, though they had us on the ropes in the second period until we moved Four-Point Francis up from defence to the power line. The main thing about the game wasn't the outcome, but the fundraiser and, even more importantly, the awareness campaign through Movember.

Mr. Speaker, men need to take their health seriously, and when they reach my age certain tests are very important. Maury Simoneau, a good Melfort boy, has led BHP Team Movember through the years because he has a very personal connection to men's health. His brother has been fighting cancer for a number of years, and he would like to see others get in and tested to avoid what can be avoided.

So thanks to Maury and his team who gave and raised \$21,000 so far. Thanks to BHP, the world's largest Movember corporate giver. And thanks to my colleagues for giving up their night and strapping on the skates for a good cause, especially our member from Melville-Saltcoats who literally took one for the team and strapped on the goalie pads.

Before we headed out on the ice we did pray that no one would get hurt and may have asked that the contractors would play a little less than they were at their best. So thank God for a safe game, Ann Paton for a great event. And men over 50, it's time to get tested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for Iranian Women

Ms. Ritchie: — Mr. Speaker, Maya Angelou once famously said, no one of us can be free until everyone is free.

And so today I rise in solidarity with the Iranian women and people across Saskatchewan because of that undeniable truth. For the last four decades the Islamic republic has oppressed women and denied their collective rights. Two months ago, 22-year-old Mahsa Amini was brutally killed after being held in custody by Iran's morality police for refusing to wear the compulsory hijab. She lost her life standing up for women's rights, for equality, and for freedom of expression on behalf of all Iranian women.

Mahsa, strong in her beliefs and convictions, was brave enough to oppose the fear and violence of an oppressive regime. On October 1st the member for Saskatoon Eastview and I had the honour to attend a rally organized by the Iranian community of Saskatoon. I brought greetings and shared heartfelt condolences for the grieving and despair of Iranians in Saskatoon and around the globe. I share in the grief of the many friends and colleagues of Iranian descent that I have the great honour and privilege of knowing. And as the official opposition, we stand with those opposing the tyranny and injustice. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in condemning the actions of the morality police and offer support to the many fighting for justice in Iran.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Macklin Centenarian Honoured for Lifetime of Community Service

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to share with the members some incredible achievements of a constituent of mine. Susan Conly is truly a remarkable citizen of the town of Macklin. She was born on December 9th, 1919, in an early winter blizzard, which makes her next birthday her 103rd. She took most of her schooling at the Twynholm one-room school in the RM [rural municipality] of Eye Hill. For grade 12 she moved into Macklin and then attended normal school in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, Susan taught in several country schools for a few years, then decided to further her education by attending secretarial school in Winnipeg in 1941. Upon completion, she stayed at the college, teaching servicemen. She taught until she married in 1949 and then started to raise her farm family.

Susan has given a lifetime of service supporting her community. As an avid reader herself, she was keen to help others. She taught adult education classes in Macklin, had a weekly column in the local newspaper, and was instrumental in writing and publishing the Macklin history book. No project was beyond her scope. Susan was truly a master at making dreams become a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in wishing Susan an early 103rd birthday next month and to also thank her for a lifetime of service to her community of Macklin.

Thank you.

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

Support Local for Holiday Shopping

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the hard work of the thousands of workers, small businesses, and job creators who have been frantically and merrily preparing for the holiday season. As we all know, this has been a hard economic year for too many, and a recent survey by the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] has indicated that 48 per cent of folks will be spending less this year with food, fuel, and fixed costs like utilities through the roof under this government. It's sad, but it's no wonder.

Now Saskatchewan people are festive, frugal, and loyal, and as we approach this holiday season, let's all remember to do what we've done so well through the years of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn — and that is support local. Workers will be going out to try and make the season merry and bright, and entrepreneurs across the province will be frantically stocking, managing supply chains, and losing sleep over holiday orders, and doing their best to steer and strategize through a critical time of year for retailers.

There is no better time to support these workers and entrepreneurs than this Saturday, November 26th, which marks the official start of holiday shopping with Small Business Saturday. I'd ask all members to join me in rallying the good people of Saskatchewan to be safe, to be merry, look after your neighbours, and support local. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota.

Lifetime Advocate Wins Spirit of Cosmo Award

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today Miners Construction hosted a fundraiser in Saskatoon called the Spirit of Cosmo Breakfast. Funds raised will go towards installing accessibility projects at Cosmo as part of their Building Miracles project.

The event centred around the Howard Stensrud Spirit of Cosmo Award given to a person, group, or business which has enhanced the quality of life of people with intellectual and related disabilities, Mr. Speaker, in the Saskatoon area. And I'm proud to congratulate Al Anderson, a constituent, a lifetime advocate for people with disabilities on receiving the Howard Stensrud Spirit of Cosmo Award this year. Not only is Al a fixture on the sporting scene in Saskatoon, he was also pivotal in so many ways in developing organizations and facilities for people with disabilities throughout the province.

So on behalf of the government, Mr. Speaker, congratulations, Al. Thank you so much for your continued efforts, amazing mentorship and wonderful work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Farmer Recognized as Leader in Sustainable Agriculture

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this month, Ernst & Young announced the prairie regional winners for this year's Entrepreneur of the Year award. Mr. Speaker, Kristjan Hebert of

the Moosomin area is one of seven prairie entrepreneurs of the year.

Since 1978, Hebert Grain Ventures has grown from 320 acres to over 30,000 acres now. But as the Heberts know, it takes a family to run a farm and Kristjan credits his success to the great team he is blessed to have in his corner. Their grain ventures utilized the latest climate-positive practices and cutting-edge technology. Earlier this year, Kristjan was also internationally recognized for the climate action taken on their farm. Mr. Speaker, Kristjan was the only Canadian farmer recognized by the international climate-positive leader program when he was awarded the climate leadership award in agriculture from Corteva Agriscience.

Kristjan's efforts in growing his farm operation and maintaining such high standards are a testament to the innovation Saskatchewan farmers show. Mr. Speaker, through you, congratulations to Kristjan and the Hebert Grain Ventures on their success. I wish them the best of luck in the national awards competition later this month, where I'm sure they'll showcase more of what they do best: sustainable agriculture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Set to Lead the Nation in Economic Growth

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More great news about our economy. Our GDP [gross domestic product] is forecast to grow a record 7.9 per cent in 2022. With the second-lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the nation and a growing population, we will continue to lead the nation in economic growth. Having such a strong economic outlook for the next three years allows us to invest directly back into the people that make this province great. Mr. Speaker, this government invests 2.3 billion every year in affordability measures, this year including a \$500 affordability tax credit, an extension on the zero per cent small-business tax rate, and a billion dollars of provincial debt paid off. That's growth that works for everyone.

[14:00]

Our strong economy is reflected in the record growth of our largest city, Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, The Conference Board of Canada is predicting that Saskatoon's GDP will outpace every other major city in Canada for the next three years. There were 9,900 new jobs added in Saskatoon in the first quarter of 2022 and the per capita household income of the city has risen as well. While members on the opposite side believe there's nothing to be proud of, here on this side of the House we're very proud of Saskatchewan, its people, and the resources we produce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Affordability Measures

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, while I'm certainly no fan of the

politics of the current Premier from the wild rose province, I'm sure the front benches of that Sask Party government must've found the announcement out of Alberta yesterday interesting. I know that I sure did. We saw targeted cash supports to children and those who need it most, a suspension of the fuel tax, and breaks on electricity and on natural gas. Mr. Speaker, it sure sounds a lot like what we've been calling for for months. Because these solutions aren't partisan; they're common sense.

Now I'm sure the Premier will say he'll take no advice from us. But this once, on this issue — providing affordability relief to the people of this province — will he listen to the Premier next door?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't say that I would never take advice from the members opposite. I just haven't yet. Most certainly we saw the announcement yesterday in Alberta, and a credit to Premier Smith, the UCP [United Conservative Party] party, on taking action on affordability in the province of Alberta, like we have here in Saskatchewan a number of weeks ago. The affordability that Canadians are challenged with, Mr. Speaker, most certainly is not unique to any individual province. It is something we are dealing with from coast to coast to coast.

Mr. Speaker, I had reported out yesterday that we had mailed 360,000 cheques. That was as of late last week. We've had an update today. There's actually 450,000 cheques that are out. Remaining, about 375,000 to go out. So about 225 million is in the hands of Saskatchewan people as we speak, Mr. Speaker, as we provide \$450 million to Saskatchewan families to provide them with some affordability relief in these very challenging inflationary times.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, that Premier simply has no credibility on affordability. He promised those cheques in August, that they'd be out by fall, and by his own admission yesterday — and we've heard an update today — hundreds of thousands of those cheques will likely not be delivered until December. Mr. Speaker, it's yet another sign of an out-of-touch government when nearly nine months, nine months into an affordability crisis and most adults in this province have yet to see a dime of relief.

And children, Mr. Speaker? Well their households will not see any targeted measures to support them. Meanwhile with skyrocketing household bills being paid on credit cards for yet another month, Mr. Speaker, why is this Sask Party government so out of touch and failing so badly when it comes to making life in this province more affordable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I believe the affordability tax credit cheques will be out likely in the month of November. Mr. Speaker, first I've heard that they might be later than that. People are working feverishly to ensure they're out.

I did understand as well in Alberta that the cheques, I think they're \$100 a month — I don't know when they start — but over the course of the next six months, Mr. Speaker. But our affordability measures most certainly will be out shortly, Mr.

Speaker.

And the Leader of the Opposition does raise an interesting point, Mr. Speaker. You know, our household utility bills, in this province, Mr. Speaker, we have the second-lowest utility costs, utility bundle across the nation of Canada. We are seeing it increase in Saskatchewan like they are across Canada. Part of that is due to the costs of fuel that we are seeing increase, Mr. Speaker, again due to inflationary pressures.

But part of that is due to federal policy that is being implemented as well, Mr. Speaker, federal policy that has a cost attached to it, which we identified in our white paper is a precipitous for Bill 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act* that is on the floor of this legislature. And I would ask earnestly, Mr. Speaker, I would ask earnestly for the members opposite to give that Act a read, to stand up for Saskatchewan people. Let's pass it unanimously and send it off to the federal House for the necessary constitutional changes.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, you know he is struggling when he reaches back to that terrible white paper. Now the cost of everything in this province is going up, yet that entitled, out-of-touch Sask Party government seems to be doing everything they can to make life even more expensive.

And some of those, Mr. Speaker, who are most impacted by this rising cost of living are seniors in this province who live on fixed incomes. Yet seniors have been completely left out, completely left out of any targeted measures implemented by that government. Why, Mr. Speaker? How did the Premier fail to address the unique needs of seniors in this province when it comes to the rising cost of living?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our support for seniors, there's 17 million additional dollars in this most recent budget that was introduced by our Ministry of Finance to support seniors in the province. That's on top of the investments that we make each and every year.

One of those investments I would highlight, Mr. Speaker, is that we did increase the seniors' income plan for the seventh time in the last 15 years. The seventh time, Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite that in 16 years didn't see fit to raise the seniors' income plan even once. That's one example of this government's commitment to seniors in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And on the general topic of affordability, Mr. Speaker, we are facing inflationary pressures in Saskatchewan, like they are in Alberta and as they across the nation of Canada. But we do have a story to tell. And I'd like to read a quote in — not my quote — a quote from September the 13th, 2022 by the Leader of the Opposition in the SaskToday. And it goes like this, Mr. Speaker. I quote:

I think we have one hell of a story to tell in this province about the quality of life, about the opportunity that's here. We need to be telling that story. In an affordability crisis,

we have some of the best rates as a province, the most affordable housing in the country.

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

Personal Care Home Benefit

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I do think we have a great story to tell. I'm pretty proud of that quote. It's just that government I've got some problems with.

Mr. Speaker, we're joined today by families, staff, and operators of personal care homes. Many seniors in our province rely on the personal care home benefit, which provides help to seniors who live in personal care homes with the rising costs of their care. But, Mr. Speaker, the amount that they receive in that benefit hasn't risen by . . . in a decade.

And this is made even worse by the fact that federal increases to things like OAS [old age security], to the seniors' income plan are clawed back dollar for dollar by that government from that benefit. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, literally, literally taking money out of seniors' pockets in an affordability crisis.

Will that Premier commit today to increasing the personal care home benefit and ending the clawbacks on Saskatchewan seniors?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we did introduce the personal care home benefit in this province to allow for private care homes to provide residences for people in communities right across Saskatchewan and to help subsidize and make able many of our seniors to find a place to live in their community, wherever that may be.

That program has an income threshold to it, Mr. Speaker. And when things like the seniors' income plan do increase, like they have seven times under this government, this program does have an income threshold to it, Mr. Speaker. But the fact of the matter is that under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, there was no personal care home benefit whatsoever.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, seniors and older adults built this province, and they should be able to know that in their later years that they'll be able to have a roof over their head, food on the table, and enough money in their pockets to cover their basic expenses.

But that is not the case today in Saskatchewan. Personal care homes regularly cost more than \$3,000 per month, and I have heard of care homes that cost upwards of \$5,000 a month. But the threshold to support seniors earning under \$2,000 hasn't been increased in 10 years. Will the minister commit to fixing this problem today?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, the personal care home

benefit is in the Ministry of Social Services' budget. I would like to say I'm glad the NDP is advocating for private delivery of care in the province to support the public system. That's a change from what we've heard from them, Mr. Speaker.

As the Premier had mentioned, Mr. Speaker, this is a program that was brought under this government, \$31 million to seniors since 2012. I'd correct the member opposite as well. This has been raised in the past by this government as well. It was \$1,800 initially; 2,000 as mentioned, Mr. Speaker.

But we will look at that. It is true that as income increases . . . That's the designation of the plan. If someone comes into some money, then that falls off as we go. That's the design of the . . . [inaudible] . . . As I mentioned before, we are looking at this program very closely as we understand there's inflationary pressures as we go along, Mr. Speaker, and we are looking at increasing that.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the arrogance of this government is a slap in the face to the folks who are here today. Here's the fact: the cost of living of everything is going up. Inflation in Saskatchewan is the highest in the country. But when other support programs like OAS and SIP [seniors' income plan] go up to help cover rising costs, seniors relying on the personal care home benefit see a dollar-for-dollar clawback. Every time OAS goes up, the amount from the personal care home benefit goes down. Why does the minister claw back dollars from seniors living in personal care homes?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — It's not only OAS or GIS [Guaranteed Income Supplement] or whatever program it might be. It might be private income or something changes in personal circumstances. People come on the program, people come off the program every year based on individual circumstances. I've heard; I've seen the letters. We are looking at this very closely, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the other things we've done, as the Premier mentioned, for seniors is the seniors' income plan. Of course we have the seniors housing program that we have with Sask Housing, the Saskatchewan housing benefit for those low-income seniors, the life lease program, the seniors' education property tax deferral program, Mr. Speaker.

So we have several programs available to seniors. I've committed to look at this one.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the clawback program doesn't just hurt residents. It also hurts their families, and it puts personal care home operators and the folks providing care in a terrible bind. We're joined here today by folks who operate personal care homes in Saskatoon, Regina, Debden, Warman, and Martensville. Their costs of operating are going up — like everyone else — but they can't pass those costs on to the

residents, who haven't seen an increase to the personal care home benefit in a decade.

Does the minister realize that these clawbacks and underfunding hurt not only the residents but the operators and those providing care?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, again we've heard from residents, but we've also heard from operators. And they provide a valuable service, taking pressure off the public system as well. This government brought this program in. There was absolutely nothing under the NDP. Let's keep that in mind, Mr. Speaker.

And so what I've said, what I've said is we will look at this program. Yes, we will. And, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to look at that. We understand the pressures that the private care system in Saskatchewan is experiencing, and again we will take a very close look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Utility Rates

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan's Crown corporations are in a unique position to help people in times of need. But in this affordability crisis, this government has done the opposite. Instead of lowering or freezing SaskEnergy rates to help families struggling to pay the bills, this government is choosing to hike rates by 23 per cent.

[14:15]

This was done without consultation and blindsided families when they are already struggling to put gas in the tank and food on the table. It was a heartless mistake. Will this government stop making life more expensive and scrap this rate increase today?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan remains one of the most affordable provinces in Canada, largely due to the fact that we have the lowest auto insurance rates and natural gas commodity costs in Canada. Mr. Speaker, we felt there was a need to help the citizens of our province. A \$500 individual affordability payment was made to citizens in our province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Crown sector, CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] provided dividends of \$150 million to the GRF [General Revenue Fund] in 2021 to support government priorities such as health care, education, and infrastructure. The sector is forecasting capital spending of one point billion dollars in 2022-23 and an average of \$1.6 billion over the next years. These are expenses that will continue to serve the citizens of our province. And I've got more things that I can suggest about where we go in the future, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Well, Mr. Speaker, that does not address the realities facing Saskatchewan families today. In Alberta they've extended their natural gas rebate program to help people pay the bills. This week the feds introduced a plan to help families with home heating, and BC [British Columbia], Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland have all stepped up to help with heating costs. Meanwhile this government is jacking up SaskEnergy rates by 23 per cent.

Why is this government choosing to make life more . . . [inaudible] . . . in the middle of a generational affordability crisis? Will the minister do the right thing and cancel the rate hikes today?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite will know that there is a process that takes place. Utilities make a determination of what they project their needs to be. They make an application to the rate review panel. That matter comes to cabinet so it can be reviewed. So there's a careful analysis that's done.

Mr. Speaker, we're not going to take advice from the members opposite on this issue. The member from Regina University pointed to Manitoba's recent reduction in natural gas rates as something Saskatchewan should implement. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we followed Manitoba's lead, we would increase our rate from \$4.20 a gigajoule to \$5.23 a gigajoule. That's what the members opposite want us to do.

Mr. Speaker, we're not going down that road. The members opposite have no credibility on affordability. They are not offering any benefit to the citizens of Saskatchewan. We need to look after the people in our province. We're going to continue to do that. Right now we're dealing with a federal government that wants to triple the carbon tax, and what the federal government is proposing to do is absolutely wrong.

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

Fiscal Management and Support for Federal Policies

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Exhibit A, Mr. Speaker — an arrogant, entitled, out-of-touch lot over there as a government. During an affordability crisis, Mr. Speaker, this government's plowing ahead with hikes to taxes and hikes to energy and hikes to power in order to pay the bills for their years of mismanagement on project after project and on our public finances.

Hundreds of millions of dollars alone on IT [information technology] contracts like AIMS [administrative information management system] and Linkin, projects and costs that have gone sideways and through the roof, Mr. Speaker. Billions more on the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal and the bypass mismanagement, the biggest overrun in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker, cranking up taxes and fees year over year to pay for their failures.

Why should Saskatchewan people be forced to pay higher taxes, higher energy bills, higher power bills for this government's

record of mismanagement?

The Speaker: — I recognize Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I would preface my remarks by saying that the NDP have continuously demonstrated they have no credibility on the economy.

Mr. Speaker, last week that member, the member for Rosemont, demanded an inquiry into the increase in the cost of living. I have good news for the House. We have looked into this, and as it turns out the increase in the cost of living is the result of all of the policies they support, Mr. Speaker.

Those would include a carbon tax — at the very top of the list — implemented by their leader Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh, which is continuing to increase, which they fully support, Mr. Speaker. That would include things like the clean fuel standard, another policy that they are very supportive of. That would include the fertilizer reduction mandate, Mr. Speaker, more policies that they and their party are fully supportive of. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they want to see these policies accelerated. That would include the no-more-pipelines bill which they have supported as well . . .

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, of course we've been clear in our opposition and concern to the carbon tax and federal policies that aren't in the interest of Saskatchewan. But of course that minister just wants to deflect, Mr. Speaker.

If there was a list of things that people in Saskatchewan couldn't afford, well, top of the list would be that Sask Party government right there, Mr. Speaker. You know, they can't afford a new, wasteful, redundant provincial police force, Mr. Speaker — \$20 million — instead of investing in police forces in Saskatchewan and making investments in our communities. They can't afford paying millions of dollars each and every year on a P3 [public-private partnership] contract for a mismanaged bypass and the biggest overrun in Saskatchewan's history to a company in Paris, France, Mr. Speaker.

Regular people can't afford a government pleading broke, with tax hikes and cost-of-living hikes on front after front, as billions get wasted week after week. Why won't this out-of-touch Sask Party government accept any . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Again and again, demonstrating their complete and utter lack of credibility on every single economic question, Mr. Speaker. Here's a serious question for the House: has anybody ever heard those members opposite criticize Justin Trudeau? Has anybody ever heard that happen?

And the answer to that is of course they haven't, Mr. Speaker. Of course they haven't. The reason they haven't is because they support all of Justin Trudeau's policies. If they have any criticism of Trudeau, it's that he's not moving fast enough in implementing those policies, Mr. Speaker.

In fact actually last session I put to the House, would those members opposite rather have Justin Trudeau running Saskatchewan than this government? One of the members opposite said, yeah, in fact they would, Mr. Speaker. And they refused to deny that out in the rotunda, Mr. Speaker.

I put that to the House again because I think they actually would support Justin Trudeau running this province over this government, which is again why they are offside of the vast majority of the public in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, more deflection from that minister. Of course this official opposition will stand up to Trudeau or whatever leader is not acting in our interests, just like when Stephen Harper ripped up equalization and his commitment for Saskatchewan.

And we'll take no lectures from that out-of-touch minister, that government, or that Finance minister, jet-setting Finance minister. You know, \$8,000 flights to North Battleford, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is that this government's record speaks for itself. They tripled the debt, and they brought in the largest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history. They have no credibility when it comes to affordability or our public finances. Does that minister accept any responsibility for the damage they've done to households or to our public finances?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — You know, Mr. Speaker, here are some facts that the members opposite are completely ignoring. The fact is our budget's balanced right now. The fact is we did so and paid down the debt by \$1 billion. The fact is we have the second-lowest debt-to-GDP in our nation, Mr. Speaker. The fact is we have the second-highest credit rating in our nation, Mr. Speaker. And the fact is the private sector forecasters are forecasting that Saskatchewan, this great province, will lead the nation in GDP growth, Mr. Speaker. That's facts that those members opposite are just ignoring and playing politics with rhetoric.

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

Request for Coroner's Inquest

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Shayne Turner, like too many in this province, struggled with addiction, but he wanted to get better. On November 8th of last year, following an overdose, he begged hospital staff to admit him to Regina detox. He begged seven times. Instead he was sent home and by nightfall he was gone. Growth that works for everyone, Mr. Speaker.

Now the family is fighting for a coroner's inquest to clear up why the mental health and addiction system failed him so badly. Will the minister commit to calling a coroner's inquest into what went wrong the night Shayne Turner died?

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

Addictions.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I met yesterday with Shayne's family, with his mom and with his sister as well and had a discussion about what's happened. Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Turner family has written to the coroner requesting that he conduct an inquest into the tragic loss of Shayne Turner's life due to drug overdose. It's my understanding that the coroner is reviewing that case in order to determine whether to proceed with an inquest.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I raised the case with senior leadership at the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] this morning and have asked for answers as to what happened in this case as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 109 — *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2022 (No. 2)*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 109, *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2022 (No. 2)* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 109 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall 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 Deputy Whip.

Ms. A. Ross: — I wish to table the answer to question 66.

The Speaker: — Question 66 has been tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*.

The federal *Income Tax Act* was amended in 2021 to allow defined contribution pension plans to offer variable payment life annuities, or VPLAs, to their members, Mr. Speaker. This has prompted changes to *The Pension Benefits Act, 1992* so that defined contribution plans registered in Saskatchewan can offer VPLAs to plan members. A VPLA is a new statutory voluntary retirement income vehicle that allows retirees to pool their investment and longevity risks, providing an affordable option which reduces the risk of outliving retirement savings.

Mr. Speaker, another amendment to the federal *Income Tax Act* in 2021 allows pension plan members with assets in certain registered products to transfer money to an insurance company to purchase an advanced life deferred annuity, or ALDA. An ALDA is an annuity under which payments can commence as late as age 85. Before the recent *Income Tax Act* amendment, the tax rules required that any annuity purchased with registered money commence by age 71.

Like the VPLA, the ALDA was introduced in response to pensioners, particularly those who are not members of a defined pension plan or benefit plan who are concerned that they will outlive their financial assets.

Mr. Speaker, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022* would allow certain types of pension plans to establish a solvency reserve account within the pension plan. Solvency deficiency payments could be remitted to this fund and, subject to certain conditions, could later be withdrawn by the plan sponsor when the plan is in surplus.

Mr. Speaker, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022* also includes amendments which allow pension plans to use letters of credit. In the pension context, a letter of credit is a promise from a financial institution to pay to the pension fund an agreed-upon sum of money towards a solvency deficiency in certain circumstances, most notably if there is a deficit on plan wind-up. In lieu of solvency deficiency contributions being made to the plan, the letter of credit could be used to cover up to 15 per cent of the solvency liabilities.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, additional amendments made by this legislation will discharge liability for administrators of pension plans to enter into a buyout annuity contract with an insurance company and amend the rules for contribution holidays; will also allow the regulations to be amended to require that certain defined benefit plans eliminate solvency deficiencies on termination of a pension plan. The legislation also enhances the powers of the superintendent, which will improve their ability to enforce compliance within the Act.

Mr. Speaker, these updates to *The Pension Benefits Act, 1992* will add flexibility for plan sponsors, enhance benefit security for plan members, and provide the superintendent with additional tools to enforce compliance with the Act. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 108 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 108. The minister laid out at length the changes that are reflective in this piece of legislation, largely technical in nature and reflective of changes federally with the federal *Income Tax Act*, Mr. Speaker.

Due to the technical nature of this bill and the changes, I'm encouraging any folks who have interest and thoughts and perspectives on the changes in this legislation to reach out to myself as critic if they have any feedback or comments about the changes, proposals that they think that would better enhance this legislation as well, Mr. Speaker.

In order to facilitate that work at this time, I am prepared to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 108.

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. 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 Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 102. Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly small bill making mostly housekeeping amendments to this legislation, with the addition of a clause that requires that the minister's office now be notified should there be any sort of court action that could strike down — through the human rights legislation — any sort of government legislation, keeping in line with other provisions you see that are similar in nature in other bodies of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to having the opportunity to ask questions of officials with respect to this legislation, just making sure that there isn't anything that I missed, which I sometimes do. In order to facilitate that work, I am prepared at this time to conclude my remarks on this bill.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 102 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt this motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

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

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 Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to be on my feet to speak to Bill No. 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act*, and also to enter on record some of my remarks.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill has three main points. And it's reasserting that Saskatchewan has exclusive jurisdiction over the exploration, development, and management of natural resources, forestry, power generation, and fertilizer use. It is also the bill that amends the *Saskatchewan Act* and the *Constitution Act* of 1867 to add provisions reasserting exclusive legislative jurisdiction over natural resources, forestry, power generation, and stressing the importance of those sectors to Saskatchewan. And it also wants to establish an economic impact assessment tribunal, which will examine and report on the impacts of federal policies on Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, you know, this is a bill that is of great concern to the Indigenous people in this province, and it's important to get on record some of those concerns that these folks have raised repeatedly. And so I guess what I also want to say is that this bill actually does nothing to help Saskatchewan people. And I guess the other thing is that the Nations in this province, First Nation and Métis people, they weren't consulted on this bill.

And I wanted to read and enter in here some of the remarks and concerns that different Nations have presented in the last . . . since this was introduced. So the FSIN, for example, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indigenous Nations executive are offended by the Minister of Justice's introduction and first reading of *The Saskatchewan First Act*, noting that the bill completely ignores the inherent treaty and constitutional rights of First Nations:

The legislation doesn't mention First Nations, and it conflicts with the treaties as understood by the elders and leaders who maintain that since the signing of treaties, we never relinquished any rights over our lands and resources, including water.

Said Chief Bobby Cameron of FSIN. The blatant disrespect that

this province continues to display is unbelievable. First Nations see the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, 1930, NRTA, as an ongoing infringement on our inherent treaty and constitutional rights.

So that's one piece here. And also on November 1st when the minister introduced the first Saskatchewan Act for the first reading, they go on to say the Act's purpose is to assert and confirm jurisdiction over certain matters under federal jurisdiction which brings economic harm to Saskatchewan. Essentially the province is asserting provincial jurisdiction over the natural resources in Saskatchewan. No consultation was carried out with First Nations in Saskatchewan on the development of this legislation.

In 1930 the federal Crown transferred the administration and control over the lands and natural resources to the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta in the NRTA via the *Constitution Act*, which placed the three provinces on the same footing as other provinces, and the other provinces had ownership of public lands and resources.

And Chief Heather Bear here, it says here, "The honour of the Crown is at stake when the province imposes legislation that will have long-term impacts on the First Nations' ability to exercise our inherent and treaty rights." So that's from FSIN.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan:

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is disappointed and frustrated with the provincial Government of Saskatchewan with the introduction and first reading of *The Saskatchewan First Act*, an Act that ignores the constitutional rights of the Métis within Saskatchewan. The Métis Nation is of the firm view that the province must evolve its approach to natural resource development in collaboration with the Métis. The legislation does nothing to advance Indigenous rights, and it reinforces consultation policies that are unconstitutional and which work to minimize and marginalize Métis voices.

This is what the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan President McCallum says:

Métis in Saskatchewan and our government want to see Saskatchewan prosper, but it cannot be achieved through the denial of our inherent rights. The rights of Métis peoples are constitutionally protected and must be reflected in Saskatchewan's approach to natural resource development. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continues to call on the government to work with Indigenous governments to create dialogue, and they must play a key role in both the provincial and federal regulatory processes and need to be included in these processes from the onset.

Lucky Man Cree Nation, they ask questions that . . . Again, they want to know why this government has left out any mention of First Nations treaty and the province's responsibilities and obligation under treaty whenever it is making a decision that concerns natural resource development. And this Act suggests provincial authority over what I've said earlier, but one of the questions they have is . . . They say:

We agree that actions are needed to restore balance to the

exploration of natural resources in this province. However the balance is in favour of Saskatchewan at the expense of First Nations, and there's no meaningful benefits coming to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, our treaty rights are constitutionally protected, and it limits this province's legal authority over First Nations and Métis people's rights in this province. So this Act makes no mention of what this province is going to do to protect the treaty rights.

And these folks ask what is the relationship between the province and First Nations? What role does the province have in protecting First Nations rights, culture, and way of life? By refusing to mention treaty, is Saskatchewan saying that economic assimilation is the only option available to Indigenous people?

And they ask these questions. Where and when were meetings held to consult Nations? And which Indigenous organizations and representatives were invited to participate in these consultations? And they want to know who actually participated.

So when this government introduced *The Saskatchewan First Act*, legal scholars, they say, legal scholars cited in the press have already noted the impotence of this legislation in effecting real change. It appears designed to send a message. Nevertheless it concerns us that Saskatchewan's message omits its parties in treaty. Saskatchewan is drafting law and policy in a way that completely ignores us.

How does the province plan to implement its obligations under treaty? How can the province provide certainty and minimize risk to investors if the province does not demonstrate the barest knowledge or understanding of its obligations under treaty, especially when it comes to natural resource development as described in *The Saskatchewan First Act*?

And the chief from one of these Nations goes on to say that risk managing Indigenous peoples rather than relationship managing is not the way in building safer and richer communities or more prosperous province.

[14:45]

I have a lot here. I have a number of them that I could probably go through here. So here it says . . . Here's another one from another First Nation chief.

So the most important aspects that are left out of the Saskatchewan first Act is that First Nations and their rights to the lands and resources of this province . . . The province's control over natural resource is subject to First Nations' rights under treaty. Our treaty sets up a balance between the right of the Crown to develop natural resources and the rights of First Nations to continue practising their rights, culture, and way of life.

So, Mr. Speaker, this has been of great concern. And when it comes to consultation, Indigenous people, First Nations and Métis people in this province have been consistent about the lack of consultation, and in this Act there wasn't. They feel they were not consulted. And that demonstrates this government's respect to the Indigenous peoples in this province.

When we look at consultation, consultation has not been happening. And it's just not this Act, and I'll talk about it here again. When policies, legislation was created, Indigenous people were not consulted. The NRTA of 1930, Indigenous people were not consulted in that. And Indigenous people today . . . That's 1930 the NRTA was created. This is 2022 and today Indigenous people are still not being consulted.

And some of those bills and some of those Acts I'll talk about, and policies, include the 1930 NRTA, the Sixties Scoop, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration program, the community pasture program, the agricultural Crown land sale program, *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*, the Crown conservation easements Act, and of course *The Trespass to Property Act*. And now we're going to see another amendment to that.

So these policies that governments create and in particular the Saskatchewan government, Sask Party government creates impacts First Nations people and they're not happy. I have many letters here that I could read off, but I'm sure you do not want to hear it. But I just wanted to record some of those, enter for here and have it recorded that there are First Nation and Métis people that are not happy that they haven't been consulted.

And when that white paper was talked about, introduced, you know what it did to First Nations people? It brought us all back to the 1969 White Paper, and First Nations people created the Red Paper back then. And many of these Nations that are writing to me and cc'ing me reference that, where your Act came from this white paper and constitutionally protected treaty rights are not being discussed.

And their questions and concerns are who is going to protect our constitutionally protected treaty rights? How is our children, grandchildren going to exercise their inherent right to hunt, fish, gather, pick berries if our treaty rights are not being protected? If development continues to happen, how are the Nations — these treaty, First Nation, and Métis people in this province — going to exercise their right if we keep ignoring them?

And, Mr. Speaker, these people are serious. This Sask first Act completely ignores the inherent treaty rights. And we talk and we give a lot of lip service to reconciliation. We give a lot of lip service to . . . And we pat ourselves on the back for the little bits of crumbs that are being thrown Indigenous people's way. Yet the constitutional protection of Aboriginal and treaty rights require this province, this provincial government, to take these rights seriously. And it clearly has not demonstrated that.

You as a government, as backbenchers, have not consulted with your constituents, the First Nation. And many of us have First Nation communities and Métis communities in our constituencies and no one . . . And according to the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, according to the FSIN and other independent Nations, they're saying that you have not consulted them. And they do not trust this government to protect their constitutionally protected treaty rights.

And it is important that we take that seriously because, if we're going to talk about reconciliation, we'd better be walking our talk and stop giving lip service to reconciliation. And we have to start thinking about how are we, how is this government going to

protect those constitutionally protected treaty rights? And we better start taking that seriously because Indigenous people in this province are fed up with the platitudes of reconciliation, the inaction on meaningful duty-to-consult.

And the other thing they have a question with was that this tribunal, they want to know, what is it going to cost? How much is that going to cost the taxpayers of this province to create a tribunal? And who is it going to benefit?

So those are things that are important to have recorded in this House — the questions, the concerns that First Nation and Métis people have in this province when it comes to *The Saskatchewan First Act*. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to conclude my remarks, and I'm sure others will have more to say on this. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act*. 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. 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 Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet today and speaking on Bill No 94, *The Public Pension and Benefits Administration Corporation Act*. As you know, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that will create a non-profit, non-Crown corporation to administer public and municipal employee pension funds, replacing the PEPP [public employees pension plan] and the MEPP [municipal employees' pension plan] with the above.

So I would just start by mentioning that I had appreciated very much the opportunity last year when the representatives from the plan administrators provided our caucus with a presentation and shared with us some of the concerns that they had with the current arrangement for administering the plans. Issues around recruitment and retention were two things that stood out for me in terms of ensuring that they had the, you know, highly competent, qualified individuals within their organization to ensure adequate administration.

But I guess I would also say that I'm equally concerned with the potential impacts that this change in administration could have on the actual members of the plan, you know, the 100,000 retirees, contributors, and fund receivers. And it's with great concern that I learn that, you know, the degree of consultation on this proposed change was less than stellar, I suppose you could say.

Obviously this is a matter of utmost concern and interest to

members of the plan. And of course their livelihoods are directly affected by, you know, the success of the plan and want to ensure that, where there are issues, where there are concerns with the ability for the plan to be adequately administered, that they indeed are also engaged and informed about some of those challenges, and that there aren't any inadvertent risks imposed on them as members.

I did note in some of the remarks from my colleagues here in opposition on some of the feedback that has been received in terms of, you know, the questions and concerns around any responsibility for adverse effects from this change and its administration, or rather adverse events, I think, is how it's been described. And so there certainly are some open questions here in terms of how that risk will be reapportioned, if and when these proposed changes go forward, and ensuring that these risks are not in the process offloaded onto plan members.

Of course we as . . . You know, this affects all plan members, including ourselves here as caucus members or rather legislators. And we'll definitely be watching with great, great interest and helping to contribute to the review of this bill as it goes forward.

I do also want to mention though that, you know, we still have a situation here where so many Saskatchewan employees don't have the benefit of a pension plan and, you know, upon retirement are going to be in very dire straits.

The member for Saskatoon Eastview spoke at length during question period today about, you know, what those realities are in terms of folks who don't have additional pension plans and the scaling back of old age security benefits from the government and how those costs are becoming untenable for those in private long-term care facilities.

And so while we certainly appreciate some of the concerns that have been raised and we want to see that the plan stays viable, strong, and successful going forward, I think that there are some concerns that we want to get to the bottom of before lending our support to it. I will leave my remarks at that for now and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 94.

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 Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand and put some remarks on the record for Bill No. 95, *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Amendment Act, 2022*. In short this bill amends the Act to allow surface rights boards of

arbitration to hear cases involving delinquent surface lease, which usually involve compensation being owed to landowners. If an operator doesn't pay their lease to a landowner, this board will now ensure that their owed compensation is expedited to the landowner.

[15:00]

It outlines important details around time frames for landowners to make complaints to that board, as well as the time frames that the operators have to object to those complaints and then so, you know, call a hearing on those matters. It also ensures that the board will notify the ministry of these decisions and powers to ensure that the operators provide payment to the ministry. It looks like this legislation makes sure that there's some teeth in this process.

Included in this are some housekeeping and modernizations of the Act that are most welcome, as this piece of legislation was drafted in the 1960s. And with huge advancements in resource extraction methods, it's very important to bring this legislation up to date.

Lastly it is important, and I want to note, that this legislation makes important steps in aligning us with other Western Canadian provinces, specifically our neighbours Alberta and BC. This is an important alignment to build confidence in investment into our province.

Mr. Speaker, we welcome the amendments proposed in this Act and have been pushing for them for quite some time. In short, our party has and will always advocate for fairness for both farmers and landowners, as well as oil and gas companies or other resource companies. This legislation comes at a very apt moment as we're seeing quite a boom in revenue from the resource sector, specifically in the oil and gas sector. So this is a sector that's in very good shape to address the needs of the landowners who are partnering in this resource extraction endeavour.

We are optimistic that this legislation will do what it needs to do, but as always we will continue to do our due diligence, consult with stakeholders on both sides. I know our critic has been working very hard on this. We'll be sure to reach out to owners and operators on both sides of the issue to ensure that this legislation goes far enough and has enough teeth, so to speak.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak to this bill. I will now move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 95.

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

University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 97, *The Architects Amendment Act, 2022*. This bill, Mr. Speaker, will allow for the issuing of architect licences to persons or corporations in trade agreements. It will also allow the Government of Saskatchewan to identify trade agreements that are relevant to the Act. The bill will further allow the Saskatchewan Association of Architects to issue licences to practise architecture in Saskatchewan to those identified in those trade agreements.

Mr. Speaker, one aspect we, as the opposition, would like to know more about with this bill is what exactly the criteria will be for identifying relevant trade agreements. We don't have a lot of detail around that. There was really no mention of this made by the minister in her remarks. So we'll look forward to hearing more from her on this front.

And I just did want to mention, as the critic for Advanced Education, I'd also like to draw attention to the important work being done by Sask Polytechnic here in our province, and the outstanding three-year diploma program that they offer through their Moose Jaw campus in architectural technologies. This program notably includes several co-operative education work terms, which is an amazing opportunity in terms of experiential learning, co-operative education specifically.

So, Mr. Speaker, with the bill at hand, we definitely will need to consult further with stakeholders in order to determine if the implications of this bill are overall favourable, and if so, to what extent. And as always, we look forward to hearing from those who will be impacted as well as relaying any concerns that may exist and any potential amendments that may be warranted. So with that, I will now move that we adjourn debate on Bill 97, *The Architects 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. 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 Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and enter some comments into the record on Bill No. 98, *The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act*.

And you know, in looking at this Act, Mr. Speaker, and the minister's stated intention of ensuring that this clarifies who pays for emergency response costs, and how much they pay is sorted

specifically as it relates to wildfire costs incurred when assisting municipality businesses or persons. There have been some great comments put on the record by my colleagues, and just another couple that I will add just to ensure that they are here for consideration by the minister. And I know the critic will be ensuring that that good consultation work is done.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we see this bill is going to address and alter some of the liabilities as it relates to people or municipalities found at fault for emergencies and the costs incurred by the SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency], and also allow the minister at their discretion to calculate or waive the municipalities' debt. In considering this, Mr. Speaker, you know, thorough examination of the regulations is going to be important to ensure that these are detailed and outlined fairly, the power of the minister as it relates specifically to pardoning costs, to avoid getting into a situation of unfair judgment calls or picking winners and losers.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, in considering this and recognizing that it does primarily seek to address wildfires, it is worth considering some of the other work being done by jurisdictions across Canada. Thinking of the provinces as well as the federal government and additionally stakeholders like those here in Saskatchewan, like the Insurance Brokers' Association, who are doing significant work with those jurisdictions I've mentioned, specifically on the issue of flooding and liabilities and the role of municipalities, provincial governments, and the federal government in addressing some of these going forward. And I believe it is anticipated that the results of some of that work will be emerging in December of this year, Mr. Speaker.

So again recognizing, you know, this is primarily based around wildfires, we do see an increase in natural disasters and then the cost borne by municipalities, by homeowners, by governments of all levels, as well as insurance underwriters. And we see the very real costs of that impacting all of us.

The other piece of work that I wanted to mention that I understand is under way as it relates to disaster management and contemplating who pays for it, is of course the disaster financial assistance arrangements that exist and are being worked on federally. You know, Mr. Speaker, this obviously addresses a variety of provincial and territorial expenses that are eligible for cost sharing under the DFAA [disaster financial assistance arrangements] as well as, you know, outlining those expenses that aren't eligible for cost sharing.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, when we look at some of the proportionality that is allocated to Saskatchewan, as well as some of the changes around the ability of the SPSA to incur and determine and award costs, you know, I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that these two programs are working hand in hand, and that there aren't any repercussions from the empowerment or changing of liabilities and responsibilities undertaken by this bill, especially when it comes to ensuring that the federal government is contributing to cost sharing and all of those costs incurred by municipalities and by the province when it comes to natural disasters, which of course, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately will likely continue to rise as we see adverse weather, we see more extreme events, and we see the ongoing implications of climate change certainly impacting our natural landscape but also the built landscape and the bottom lines of governments of all jurisdictions.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, you know, I think we want to make sure all legislation of course balances fairness with obligation. And with a bill like this, especially with some of the work currently under way that I've outlined as well as the comments of my critic, I'm hopeful that they're taken into consideration, certainly by those listening at home if not the minister as well as the critic.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 98, *The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 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 Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to put some comments on the record today in respect to Bill 99, *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act*. On first look at the legislation as well as the minister's comments, I'm pleased to see that there's a modernization process that's laid out here to bring our 911 services into the modern era with respect to services that they provide, as well as the model for collecting fees and funding.

In particular I see that this bill includes a provision for accepting when a person were to call 911 that they would have the ability to do so by text message, providing photos, video calls, and that there's also been efforts made to eliminate or reduce nuisance technology that may exploit the system.

I want to take a minute just to acknowledge who's on the other line of those calls. And you know yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we had first responders here. We were joined by firefighters and paramedics from around the province as part of the Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Association delegation that was here.

But one important piece of that group that is often overlooked are the dispatchers. And the folks who are on the other line of these calls, text messages, video calls, those will be served by a dispatcher. And I want to acknowledge the incredible work that they do in this province, and often the toll that it takes on them when they are receiving calls about troubling or traumatic circumstances. They're certainly putting themselves as part of that first responder cohort whose jobs often have much mental health toll and taking a serious toll on the health and well-being of our first responders.

So I want to acknowledge the work of those dispatchers, and I do truly hope that they were included in consultation on this bill, as that modernization to accept various forms of communication. I hope that they were consulted, that they will be provided with

ample training and professional development as their jobs change. I hope that they'll be supported throughout the process.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks, and very interested to see the debate on this bill continue as we hear from our critic and other members in opposition. But at this time I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 99.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is 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 University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, it's always a pleasure to put comments on the record. It's a real privilege for any member in this House to do it, but in particular today on Bill 101, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act*.

You know, our critic and my colleagues have done an admirable job canvassing, kind of, the breadth of this Act and it is, I think, encouraging to see it opened up. And I wanted to speak to one piece in particular of this legislation that I understand is being updated and that, Mr. Speaker, is the section of this legislation that applies to youth who are considered under section 10, which I understand is just, you know, the term that we use, kids covered under section 10.

And for anyone who's not aware of what this means, I wasn't either, Mr. Speaker. I had a piece of casework come through my office about a year ago that, you know, really encouraged me to become more familiar with this Act. And you know, thankfully, Mr. Speaker, I actually haven't had that much casework, related to child and family services as, you know, all members know it's incredibly tough. And we owe a huge amount of gratitude to the folks who work in this sector as well as, you know, grace and compassion and additional support for the children and families who are unfortunately impacted by this legislation.

[15:15]

But I want to talk about this one piece of casework that came through my office and put these comments on the record in hopes that they are considered by the minister. And I know they will be brought forward by the critic.

So about a year ago, Mr. Speaker, I had outreach from guidance counsellors in one of our school divisions, really trying to help a remarkable young woman who was 17 years old and was considered by virtue of her status under section 10 of the existing legislation to in essence be a ward of the minister. And I didn't

know what section 10 was, Mr. Speaker, and essentially there are . . . In very specific circumstances, there is the ability of a youth, so somebody under the age of 18, to be able to live independently and to be provided funding by the Minister for Social Services in order to do that.

These young people, you know, after meeting very specific criteria, they don't have to go into foster care but are able to live independently and are provided support above, you know, what an individual on SIS [Saskatchewan income support] would receive, Mr. Speaker.

So there is this, you know, pretty remarkable young woman. She's 17 years old, had been living independently for some time through, you know, no fault of her own but was paying her bills, keeping herself fed and clothed, going to school, getting good grades, playing on the senior basketball team, by any standard an accomplished young woman. And that was thrown into, you know, all the sharper relief by the fact that she was in essence a ward under section 10.

But the outreach came to me, Mr. Speaker, because this young woman unfortunately was born in January. So she was in grade 12, and by virtue of being born in January as opposed to, say, late November, this meant that she turned 18 halfway through her final year of high school. And when you turn 18, Mr. Speaker, you age out of section 10. You are considered an adult. You are no longer provided an additional level of care or support.

You know, this individual lost her social worker. She lost access to things like support for transportation, as well as the additional costs that were provided to her, which I believe was . . . It was not significant. I believe she was provided around \$1,200 a month to cover her living expenses, her food, transportation to and from school, Mr. Speaker. You know, a bus pass here in Regina is about \$96 a month.

But because this young woman turned 18 in January, that meant she lost access to this \$1,200 as well as those additional supports which are really important. You know, working through social services, having access to an actual caseworker is a really huge benefit, which we saw as this unfolded.

So we spent a significant amount of time advocating to the then minister of Social Services for this to be extended. This young woman, all she wanted to do was stay in her apartment until she graduated high school. She tried to work through the housing authority, who was unable to guarantee her that they would provide housing to her near a bus stop or that she would be provided housing without a roommate. And as a vulnerable youth and a slight young woman as well — I doubt she was, you know, 90 pounds soaking wet — she was not enthused at the prospect of an unknown roommate the second she turned 18.

We worked incredibly hard with support from a number of my colleagues, and I also do want to mention, with care and attention from the then minister's chief of staff, Mr. Clint Fox, to try and address the situation — either guarantee her independent housing near a bus stop so she could get to school, hopefully to extend her benefits to continue until she graduated high school. That was all she wanted, was to be able to finish school. But unfortunately, the verdict that was determined all the way up on the minister's desk was that this would not be extended.

So what did this mean, Mr. Speaker? This meant that this young person lost their caseworker and they lost any access to supports. So coming into January, you know, we assumed, based on their date of birth, they would have until the end of January to transition over. But unfortunately they were cut off and told to apply for the SIS program, which as we know does not come close to providing anything near a reasonable level of support to cover basic living expenses like utility bills and shelter.

Fortunately it was a bit of a Catch-22, Mr. Speaker. Because this young person was not yet 18, they couldn't qualify for the SIS program but they had also been cut off from their guaranteed benefits under section 10. Mr. Speaker, this entire situation was just a terrible Catch-22 after terrible Catch-22.

And you know, aside from the ethics of this, Mr. Speaker, it struck me as entirely inconsistent with what we want in this province, entirely inconsistent with this government's plans or this government's goals in their plan for growth. We should not have systems that take young people, who are by all accounts succeeding, and push them onto social assistance, essentially telling them, you can't finish school if you want to live on more than, you know, \$700 a month; go out and get a job.

We should be encouraging these young people to stay in school, to succeed. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, the bare minimum that we were asking for was that this policy be reconsidered so that young people covered under section 10 were at least afforded the ability to finish high school instead of being forced onto SIS, forced to drop out, and thus potentially condemning themselves to an ongoing life of poverty and vulnerability. Mr. Speaker, it's inconsistent with the government's graduation rates. It's inconsistent with any targets that we have for full and healthy participation in society or in economy, and frankly, Mr. Speaker, it's just plain cruel.

So you know, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to share that young woman's story. Through the generosity of people in the city — not the government — this person was able to stay in their apartment until the end of July, giving them a couple months after successfully graduating high school because they were afforded, you know, stable housing. They still had to, you know, scrape by with assistance from food banks and relying on vouchers from school in order to be able to take the bus to school every day so that they could graduate with good grades, which they did.

But certainly, Mr. Speaker, for vulnerable kids who, through no fault of their own, find themselves covered under section 10, we should be able to make changes that let these kids finish high school without forcing them onto SIS and to drop out.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, with the permission of the individual involved, I wanted to share that story in the hopes that it's heard by some of the people who will be making some of the regulations, in hopes that it is heard by the minister and his staff, as well as members opposite, because quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, as I said, it doesn't make sense. It's cruel and it is inconsistent with any measure of success that we set out for young people. It's a simple thing to do. And I would hope that members opposite, specifically as it relates to kids covered under section 10, will consider making changes to ensure that it is not an age 18 cut-off but that we take into consideration the ability and the want of these young people to be able to finish high school.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my entry onto Bill 101 and move to adjourn debate on *The Child and Family Services 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. 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 Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet and be speaking to Bill No. 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*. This is an Act that will apply to Government of Saskatchewan, the public sector, and prescribed persons, requiring them to create accessibility plans over a described time frame and will address accessibility for buildings, for communications, employment, transportation, service animals, procurement, and service delivery.

It also includes the creation of a Sask accessibility office that will advise the minister on legislation and compliance as well as public awareness and education, and also the creation of an accessibility advisory committee that will advise the minister on standards, education, administration of the Act.

I'll maybe stop on that one point and say that I was somewhat concerned in reading the terms of legislation to say that, you know, at least one-half of those members be people experiencing accessibility issues. And I'm wondering about the appropriateness of that ratio. Certainly people that have the lived experience of challenges with accessibility and the fact that it affects so many people here in Saskatchewan, that we probably could do a lot better than just 50 per cent. So I wanted to make that point.

The Act will also include standards that will apply to employers, builders, those providing goods, services, and information, and people who offer accommodation. I assume that that's for the organizations and agencies to which this bill does apply. And it also has the provision for inspectors to undertake compliance checks with the Act as well as including penalties for non-compliance.

I also note that in addition to accessibility and sign language provisions, it also includes Indigenous sign language, which is a welcome addition.

So of course I would say that this is a bill that is long overdue and one that is of utmost importance. Obviously we know that accessibility is an issue that affects many people here in Saskatchewan, many families. And indeed at our most recent party convention, we undertook a similar initiative to ensure the accessibility of our offices.

And indeed I can also say that, you know, a notable omission in this legislation is that it does not apply to the members of this House. And maybe that's for good reason, I'm not sure. But I can certainly relate a story from my own experience, and I think perhaps I've shared a bit of this story in the past before. But as you may know, I do reside within a constituency that is an older neighbourhood, and so accessibility is particularly challenging for older buildings, of which there are many.

And in fact my offices are in a building that is currently seeking heritage status so that it can then apply for grant money to improve its accessibility. And that was certainly a condition that I was very cognizant of before I moved in and signed a lease in this building. At my request, they built a wheelchair ramp. It's not a perfect solution, I regret to say, but I learned a lot about it in the process. It was a very, you know, informative exercise in terms of understanding how accessibility can be delivered, how it can be enhanced, and what it looks like.

[15:30]

Because, you know, barrier-free access means that any individual can come through the same door, have the same experience. And regrettably, we weren't able to achieve that in this beautiful heritage building. Nevertheless we decided to go forward with the condition that the leaser would continue to pursue those heritage grants so that he could undertake the necessary modifications to the front of the building to allow for full access to any and all.

And of course obviously, you know, we are dealing with, oftentimes, residents who are elderly. Stairs can be an issue, the lack of handrails, and a lot of these older buildings really didn't take that into account when they were being designed and built a hundred years ago, of course.

So you know, I do take great interest in this bill. I think it's absolutely important that we're moving forward with ways to ensure all types of accessibility, whether that has to do with mobility, vision, hearing, so on, cognitive, so on and so forth. And I'm really proud of the work we're doing as a party and within my constituency offices to provide better access as well.

Now I did take note of a couple other items in reviewing the comments that have already been put on the record by my colleagues. And I think one of the things that was really interesting here is that it seems that this is sort of a notable exception in terms of the engagement that has occurred prior to the introduction of this bill.

And certainly it was nice to see individuals from the accessibility community present in the gallery when the bill was introduced. Certainly would be a great improvement to see that occurring more often on more types of bills. Certainly we've made a number of criticisms and raised a number of concerns about how oftentimes it feels more like a check-the-box, tick-the-box sort of an exercise by this government.

And you know, as I'm speaking, it does bring to mind, Mr. Speaker, a presentation I had the great privilege to receive when attending the Canadian parliamentarians association regional meetings in Charlottetown this past summer, which you'll recall we had attended, and from the province of Quebec on

participatory engagement and the need for that more broadly to be enhancing civic engagement and involvement in legislative processes. And so obviously a bill such as this impacts so many people in the province. And getting that engagement, that consultation right is an important aspect of developing the legislation.

I might have touched on it briefly; I do want to mention it again here that it's notable that this bill includes sign language as an official language. That seems to me to be quite a marker and one that we welcome.

I want to thank all of those individuals, committees, and groups that have been working so hard over the past number of years to see this bill come forward. I know that our critic, the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre, will certainly have much more to say on this bill, and I will also be reaching out to my stakeholders for their feedback. And with that, I will adjourn debate, move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 103.

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 University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 104, *The Local Improvements Amendment Act, 2022*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill removes detailed definitions for what constitutes a local improvement project, and this is being done so as to avoid unduly restricting municipalities, which seems reasonable. The bill also makes changes so that the Saskatchewan Municipal Board, their approval is no longer required for notice of intention, bylaw, cost determination, lifetime rates, and assessment. So with the changes being brought forward here, municipalities will now be able to approve local improvements through bylaws, as opposed to the Sask Municipal Board, which also seems quite reasonable.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is making it so that schools will now, in addition to being exempt from property taxes, they will now also be exempt from local improvement levies. We do know that school boards across the province have been scrambling due to chronic underfunding by this Sask Party government for years. So, Mr. Speaker, I suppose it's one small positive to see the Sask Party throwing school boards a bone with this exemption. They definitely can use any money that they can in terms of savings, so I guess it's good to see that. We'd like to see proper funding instead of some scraps being thrown here and there, but one can

only hope.

Mr. Speaker, I do know our lead critic for the bill will be doing good due diligence, consulting with municipal sector stakeholders affected by this bill to assess the impacts of these amendments. And so with that, I will now move that we adjourn debate on Bill 104, *The Local Improvements 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. 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 Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I am again pleased to rise and put into record some comments on Bill 105, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act* of 2022. My understanding of this amendment Act is that it gives the power to determine polling places to the returning officers to avoid improper influence. And it also gives the returning officers emergency powers to change the poll hours, dates, locations in an emergency.

And the RO [returning officer] must advise someone of deletion from the voters list only if they've been removed after the list is published. So you know, the returning officer has the authority over voting in hospitalizations and care homes plus homebound voting. So my understanding of this amendment here is it creates a framework for voters registry data use, revision, protection, and information requests.

It's always important to be streamlining the voting process. And also it's important that we encourage voter turnout and to maintain transparency and confidence in the system. So by-elections are very important, and we're very happy that the Sask NDP, we did very well in the Saskatoon Meewasin by-election where our newest MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] was elected. So that is music to our ears and very happy.

I am optimistic that voter lists will be used to keep our elections efficient. And when I think about the past general election, I often thought about the constituency that I represent and the challenges that we've had in polling stations where accessibility has been an issue. And those things have created a lot of challenges for some of my constituents that are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. So I am pleased to know that we're always looking at improving our processes and ensuring that we meet the needs of the people that we represent.

So I'm not going to say much more about this because I'm sure my colleagues and the critic for this area will have much more to

say. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 105, *The Local Government Election 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. 106

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 106 — *The Police Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Glad to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill 106, *The Police Amendment Act, 2022*. Mr. Speaker, this bill will essentially allow the minister to create whatever police service the minister fancies as well as to dictate that force's duties, jurisdiction, and regulations.

Furthermore this bill will give the minister the power to dispatch special constables or another police service to any municipality the minister feels is not doing a good enough job of policing. And not only that, but the municipality will be left on the hook to pay for this, Mr. Speaker, any time the minister chooses to dispatch. So I can imagine that'll make a lot of people really happy.

Mr. Speaker, this is much different actually than the current process in place, which is when there's municipal police misbehaviour, there's a special inquiry that is held, as opposed to a minister just sending out her private force. So it strikes me as highly offensive that when it strikes the minister that a municipal force is not doing its job effectively, that instead of retraining or guidance they will just usher a new officer straight into the area to take over, and then they send a bill for all of this to the municipality on top of it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess the question that we have is, why would we as Saskatchewan people want to pay for a brand new police force of rival officers? We don't need any more police forces, Mr. Speaker. And also very curious, like who even asked for this? I don't think it's the Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. They're more concerned about having proper health care services which they are not being entitled to under this government, proper education services, and affordability relief — none of which we're seeing on offer here.

Further to this, Mr. Speaker, this does just seem to be one more example of redundancy and waste on the part of the Sask Party government, one of the many examples, Mr. Speaker. Just one more example of this government squandering taxpayer dollars on needless projects, all while ordinary Saskatchewan people are made to endure a historic affordability crisis.

And you know, we keep hearing about these cheques that are coming out. We heard our leader today in question period talking

about the suite of measures that the Premier's buddy, Danielle Smith, is introducing in Alberta, very similar to many of the measures we've been calling for. But you know, so far all we're seeing is the promises of a few measly cheques going out to people. We're hearing about multiple deceased people in the province receiving these cheques — another botched job on behalf of the government. Most people not having . . . had even received the cheques so far, months late after the announcement that they made, you know, prior to the by-election in Meewasin which, you know, an attempt to buy votes. And months later many people aren't seeing even a cent of this money.

So it's offensive. It's a slap in the face to Saskatchewan people when they see these kind of vanity projects that really have no need in our province. They do nothing for, you know, the benefit of ordinary Saskatchewan people and seem to be just another power grab on the part of this government. So we certainly don't support this legislation as the official opposition, Mr. Speaker. This bill is also, I should mention, paving the way for the minister's marshal bill, which my colleague will address next, Bill 107. And so with that, I will now move that we adjourn debate on Bill 106, *The Police 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.

[15:45]

Bill No. 107

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 107 — *The Provincial Protective Services Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have the dubious honour this afternoon of being the final debater on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act*, a partisan initiative by this government to, in a very unserious and dubious manner try to, I would say, play politics in a very wasteful and reckless manner. Very concerning for us here.

And I mean, ostensibly this is a bill that is going to augment and consolidate the services provided across what were in formerly other ministries. I have several concerns with this approach, concerns that I am hearing from stakeholders and community members about the priorities and the manner in which this partisan police force will be addressing illegal activity and crimes in the province.

I do recognize that there are concerns coming forward from certain parts of the province about the exposure to property crimes, crimes of violence, and response times to those sorts of events. We saw most devastatingly and tragically with the events on the James Smith Cree Nation how, you know, with those kinds of extreme events, I'm not sure that this police force would, if it had been in place, would have been able to add anything in that

particular case other than maybe confusion and redundancy in that response.

We have heard, I'm sure you're well aware, Mr. Speaker, that the existing police forces have not been consulted, and they have significant concerns and reservations about this police force going forward. It's unclear and very concerning whether this is going to be an initiative that will be able to contribute in a positive way to addressing those valid issues and concerns that reside in parts of Saskatchewan.

But I will also say though that, you know, the objective data indicates that property crimes, other types of crimes are on the decline. And so it seems to be a question of perception over reality. You know, where is the evidence-based policy-making occurring here, you know, to support the creation of a redundant police force while the calls of the existing police infrastructure is going unheard, unheeded.

And I would also say that, you know, an equal concern here is that, where is the balance between prevention and protection? Certainly we, you know . . . It's well documented, well researched. You know, the evidence is out there is that when you can put the focus on reducing crime, you know, as with anything else, you know, whether it's health care and so forth, that is where you will receive the most efficient policy, most cost-effective policy. And this is just another prime example of waste by this Sask Party government.

I think about \$20 million and how that could be spent elsewhere on upstream roots of crime and determinants of crime, whether that be in providing more supports for mental health and addiction. We know, we know that a lot of that crime that we're seeing across the province is being fuelled by addictions, folks that are acquiring or, you know, undertaking property crimes to fuel their substance use habits. And harm reduction would be a far better use of those limited tax dollars and would have a greater effect, or quite possibly likely a greater effect on reducing rates of crime because it is, you know, such a big contributor to that.

Also another contributing factor is rates of homelessness or houselessness, and that these are basically crimes of poverty, you know, when you have unstable financial families and individuals that are resorting to a life of crime because, you know, they don't necessarily have any other means available to them in order to support themselves.

And so obviously I'm not a criminologist. I'm not going to try and claim to be one, but certainly there is good evidence that supports the need for the prevention and addressing the issues around, you know, what leads to these crimes in the first place. But I mean, that's even requiring that I begin by, you know, accepting your premise that, you know, we do actually have an issue here and that the solution is the creation of an entirely new police force, which of course I don't accept that argument at all.

You know, I am not in support of this Act. But I will say, you know, there are many areas beyond property crimes that definitely could be focused on in terms of greater police enforcement, whether that's addressing issues of the domestic violence in rural parts of the province, which is a massive issue, whether that's addressing other kinds of things that aren't receiving . . . I mean it's like, you know, they're complaint-

driven processes, and so the enforcement is lacking.

I will come back to it again, Mr. Speaker. And my prime example being the illegal drainage that is rampant in many parts of this province. Will this police force be directing resources to addressing that illegal activity? And why is it that we put certain types of crime over other parts? I mean obviously violent crime and domestic violence would be, you know, a perfect area that, you know, we'd like to see more focused. I mean obviously, again, prevention is certainly preferable.

You know, just even yesterday quite literally, Mr. Speaker, I was notified . . . And I'm going to be very kind of, you know, vague in my description here to protect the innocent. But even just yesterday I received notice of a Saskatchewan resident that, you know, going through a divorce, lives in a rural area, and is fearful for her life and, you know, threats made by her husband in the process of this divorce. And we know, we know that that period of time when women are leaving abusive relationships is when their lives can be most at risk.

And upon hearing about this issue, I immediately said to my assistant that, well you know, this individual needs to be put in touch with transitional services, and that if there have been actual threats, then those need to be related to the police.

And these are the kinds of things that are the kinds of crimes that we need to see addressed. We know we have the highest rates of domestic violence here in the province. And I'm not seeing anywhere within this legislative bill that that is a priority focus, that issues of mental health and addictions, issues of homelessness or domestic violence, you know, person-on-person crime, that those are the things that this bill is going to be looking at.

It's a very partisan ploy, one that seems to be piggybacking on the efforts we've seen in Alberta in a similar fashion. And it also again seems as though it's just another way to pick a fight with another level of government and create more adversity, when we know that what we need to be doing is having more collaborative approaches to effect good policy that works for everyone, is in the best interests of everyone in this province. When we waste \$20 million on creating another layer of police protective services that . . . I'm not seeing how this is going to work in collaboration with those other levels of police forces when they haven't even bothered to consult and see how they can work alongside of and support those efforts.

And I also think about, I mean, how disappointing it must be for the members of our proud police forces with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and our municipal police forces, that it must seem like a slap in the face, quite honestly, to see this effort come forward when they're begging and pleading for more resources so that they can do their work. And those calls go unheeded and we have the formation of a partisan police force instead that, you know, really there's been no justification or convincing arguments to say how this is actually going to make things better. All evidence is to the contrary. Rather it seems to suggest that it's only going to frustrate processes and not contribute to better outcomes. It's not evidence-based, as I've already said, and so there does not . . . I have not heard any rational, convincing arguments to this point that say that this is the way forward.

Adding to that concern, of course, was the presence of Colin Thatcher here in our legislature during our opening Assembly, and an individual who, you know, a convicted murderer of his ex-wife and, you know, what that says about really what are the priorities of this government when it comes to addressing crime. Soft on lots of other kinds of crime and yet here you have someone who had no business being in this Legislative Assembly. And the Minister for Policing and Corrections, you know, standing up and defending his right to be here was just absolutely appalling and shameless behaviour by a minister who didn't really seem to even understand that this was a man who was still serving out a life sentence. But somehow he was free to be here. It was . . . just boggles the mind, frankly, Mr. Speaker.

We also see issues where, you know, we have a government that, you know, has taken a heavy hand to public demonstrations on government lawns. And is that the kind of thing that this government is going to continue to crack down on? We see at the same time, you know, this contradiction of anti-mask protests given a soft hand. And so it seems it's very arbitrary, very arbitrary here in terms of the instances where they're going to get tough on crime, you know — wife murderers, people breaking the law that, you know, measures in place to protect the public good, the collective good, and yet they're given a free pass.

[16:00]

I want to end my remarks by also, you know . . . the public waste, the money. You know, we are so desperate to see money spent on health care, on education, on mental health and addictions. There is great need in this province that is going unmet and \$20 million would go a long ways towards that. And so it's very disappointing and it is not conducive with growth that works for everyone. Absolutely not. It's an absolute slap in the face.

That's all I want to say on that bill today, and with that I will 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. I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Speaker: — The 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 till 10 a.m. tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:02.]

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