



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS**

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



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**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

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

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

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

**Deputy Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Principal Clerk** — Kathy Burianyak

**Clerk Assistant** — Robert Park

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Sean Darling

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## CONTENTS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ross, L. ....	2997
Lawrence .....	2997
McLeod .....	2997
McMorris .....	2997

#### PRESENTING PETITIONS

Jenson .....	2997
Nippi-Albright .....	2998
Love .....	2998
Teed .....	2998
Sarauer .....	2998
Bowes .....	2998

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

##### Recognizing Contributions of Community Clinics

Conway .....	2999
--------------	------

##### Dedication of Constable Shelby Patton Memorial Park

McMorris .....	2999
----------------	------

##### Remembering Arne Petersen

Wilson .....	2999
--------------	------

##### Arrival of Fourth Flight of Ukrainian Refugees

Jenson .....	3000
--------------	------

##### Bull Rider Wins Canadian Championship

Steele .....	3000
--------------	------

##### Successful Fundraiser for Swimming Pool in Porcupine Plain

Nerlien .....	3000
---------------	------

##### Update on Health Human Resource Action Plan

Ross, A. ....	3000
---------------	------

#### QUESTION PERIOD

##### Affordability and Government's Fiscal Management

Beck .....	3001
Harpauer .....	3001

##### Support for the Health Care System

Beck .....	3001
Merriman .....	3002
Love .....	3002
Hindley .....	3002

##### Cybersecurity Measures Following Privacy Breach

Teed .....	3003
Carr .....	3003

##### Federal Review of Murder Conviction

Sarauer .....	3003
Eyre .....	3004

##### Request for Coroner's Inquest

Sarauer .....	3004
Hindley .....	3004

##### Mental Health and Addictions

Sarauer .....	3004
Hindley .....	3004

##### Interpersonal Violence Rates and Support for Second-Stage Shelters

Sarauer .....	3005
Eyre .....	3005

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Ottenbreit .....	3005
------------------	------

#### SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

##### Food Pricing in Saskatchewan

Wotherspoon .....	3006, 3016
Bonk .....	3008
Teed .....	3009, 3015
Kaeding .....	3011
Bowes .....	3012, 3016
Nerlien .....	3014, 3015

Goudy.....	3015
Young, A. ....	3015
Jenson .....	3015
Lambert .....	3016
Lemaigre.....	3017
Harrison, J. (point of order) .....	3017
Bowes (point of order) .....	3017
<b>PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS</b>	
<b>ADJOURNED DEBATES</b>	
<b>PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS</b>	
Motion No. 1 — Saskatchewan-First Policies and Legislation	
Harrison, D. ....	3017

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House, 23 grade 12 students from Riffel High School here in Regina. Now accompanying these students is their teacher, Mr. Ford. I will have the opportunity to meet after question period with these students, answer I'm sure some very riveting questions . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Tough questions.

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Yeah, tough questions exactly, but I'm up for the challenge. So, Mr. Speaker, please make sure that each and everyone here welcomes these fine students to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Moose Jaw has brought a team of hard hitters here. We all tend to brag about how good our CAs [constituency assistant] are. Seated in the west gallery, we have my full-time CA, Simone Gemmell; and we have Sherry Young, who both the member from Lumsden-Morse and myself share. And of course we've got Moose Jaw North's CA as well, but I'll leave that to him.

And those three together are better than all the rest. They make a team that is unbeatable in the province, let alone . . . Yeah, so I'd like everybody to welcome Simone and Sherry to their legislature.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

**Hon. Mr. McLeod:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join my colleague from Moose Jaw Wakamow in joining the powerhouse team of CAs that we have seated in the west gallery.

I would specifically point out my constituency assistant, Jacqui Stephens. Jacqui has been my legal assistant as my legal career progressed, and I was fortunate that she agreed to move into the constituency assistant position when I changed career paths. So I can't thank her enough for that, Mr. Speaker.

I've spoken many times about Jacqui and all she does for me and the constituency of Moose Jaw North. She has been more than an assistant; she's been a friend and the big sister I never had. So thank you to Jacqui. And please all members join with me in welcoming her to her Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government

Relations.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the members of the House here, there are three people seated in your gallery that I would like to introduce.

First of all is Hillary Pachal and Andrea Mayer. They work in my minister's office. They do amazing work. If I am making sense in this place, they've probably written it. When I go off script, it doesn't work so well for me. So I want to thank them. Hillary is from Yorkton and Andrea is from Indian Head. And thank them for the work that they do in my minister's office.

I also want to introduce Nicole Entner-McCullough. Of course we always have battling CA comments here. Nicole started on — I remember it very, very well — November the 8th, 2007. Wasn't that a great day? And she's been with me ever since. I can't believe it. Anyway as many have . . . I think maybe this is maybe the second time I've had the opportunity to introduce Nicole. She was here one other time many years ago with a school group. But I just want to thank Nicole for all she does for the constituents of Indian Head-Milestone, let alone me, but for the work that she does for the constituents. It really is amazing.

The CAs are usually the first kind of contact into your constituency. They can make or break an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. And I've been here for 15 years in government, eight years in opposition but more importantly 15 years in government, and it's thanks to Nicole. Thank you for the work that you do.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

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

The undersigned are residents of Kronau and Regina. I do so present.

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

Centre.

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present the following petition from the folks that have signed here.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: Saskatchewan has the highest suicide rate in the country; suicide rates for Indigenous people is four times higher than for non-Indigenous people; Saskatchewan continues to break its own record in overdose deaths, losing 464 people in 2021; one in four youth in Saskatchewan have reported having engaged in self-harm, and one in four youth have reported having considered suicide in the last year; there are 800 children and youth waiting to see a psychiatrist in Saskatchewan.

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.

I do so present.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. Folks who signed the petition today would like us to be aware that recruitment and retention of health care professionals is a particular issue in Saskatchewan's rural health care facilities, leading to many closures of emergency rooms, acute care, lab, and X-ray services.

The ongoing pandemic has created burnout and led to early retirements and resignations, and from the health care workers that I have talked to, this is impacting folks at all stages of their career. Many health care workers unable to take time off, being mandated into overtime, unable to take vacations throughout the summer. It is creating real strain on our health care workforce.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

The folks who signed this petition today are from Saskatoon, Scott, Wilkie, and North Battleford. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition to prohibit conversion therapy. Reparative or conversion therapy is a dangerous practice that targets queer youth and adults and seeks to change their sexual or gender identity. It is but one practice that continues to perpetuate discrimination and violence towards queer people around the world. Many provinces and municipalities across Canada have taken an action to ban

conversion therapy, and it's time for Saskatchewan to stand up and protect vulnerable children and adults from this heinous practice.

Thus the undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* names sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination. Conversion therapy is a discredited and abusive practice which attempts to actively change the sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to ban the practice of conversion therapy and prohibit transportation of youth and adults outside Saskatchewan for such purposes.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories today reside in Grayson, Saskatchewan. 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 fund domestic violence shelters. Those who've signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: the Premier's apology for his government's invitation of convicted murderer Colin Thatcher to the Throne Speech needs to be followed up with real action. Saskatchewan has the highest rates of intimate partner violence amongst the provinces, and Saskatchewan does not provide operational funding for second-stage shelters, which provides long-term housing for those trying to escape abusive situations. And, Mr. Speaker, without these second-stage shelters, people facing intimate partner violence have very few long-term options.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today come from Canora. I do so present.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present our petition calling for universal access to birth control in Saskatchewan. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan has some of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the entire country — that's ages 12 to 20 years old; that cost is one of the largest barriers to accessing contraceptive birth control in Saskatchewan, especially among adolescents; that having consistent and affordable access to contraceptive options is essential for promoting bodily autonomy, preventing unwanted

pregnancy, and saving money on sexual and reproductive health care; that sexual and reproductive health and rights are human rights.

So I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to adopt a policy making no-cost prescription contraceptive available to all Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed our petition today reside in Tantalton, Regina, and Preeceville. I do so present.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Recognizing Contributions of Community Clinics

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was a pleasure to tour the Regina Community Clinic during Co-op Week in October and meet the newish executive director, Dawn Martin. Congratulations on 60 years of championing an excellent primary care model, one that can be looked to today to address many of the challenges in our health care system. The patient-centred, multidisciplinary approach assures continuity of care, a high quality of care, and an attention to the social determinants of health.

Community clinics have contributed so much to the lives of Saskatchewan people. They are a vital part of our shared history and future. As we face a health care crisis worsening across our province, we must look to primary care, team-based models. Thankfully there is no need to reinvent the wheel, Mr. Speaker. These models exist today in community clinics established in response to pushback when the CCF-NDP [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation-New Democratic Party] government brought in public medicare.

I want to thank those who worked diligently to establish and defend these clinics over the years. On this the 60th anniversary year of medicare we learned, thanks to documents accessed by journalist Dennis Gruending, that the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] actually surveilled many who worked to establish these clinics, including my grandparents, Ed and Margaret Mahood. There were even attempts to discredit them on this floor back in the '60 by conservatives who opposed medicare.

I'd ask all members to join me in acknowledging the good work of community clinics and recommitting today to defending a public health care system against cuts and privatization schemes. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

#### Dedication of Constable Shelby Patton Memorial Park

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

on August 20th I, along with the member from Regina Douglas Park, had the honour of attending the grand opening ceremony for Constable Shelby Patton Memorial Park in Indian Head.

On June 12th, 2021 Constable Shelby Patton, a member of the Indian Head RCMP, was tragically killed in the line of duty. The loss of Constable Patton was felt deeply by the community of Indian Head and surrounding area. In response, the town of Indian Head and a community-based volunteer committee began developing a memorial park in Constable Patton's honour.

[10:15]

In August 2021 the committee announced a fundraising goal of 150,000. By December they'd already surpassed their goal and raised nearly \$225,000. Mr. Speaker, our thoughts will remain with those affected by this tragedy forever, and this memorial park is part of the healing process. The community and the province support are displayed by this tremendous fundraising success for this park in Indian Head.

I sincerely thank the dedicated volunteers and community members who organized the heartfelt tribute to Constable Shelby Patton. The healing will continue. And while the scars of this tragedy will fade over time, the memory of Shelby Patton and the memorial park will remain with the RCMP in Indian Head and his hometown of Yorkton and this province forever. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

#### Remembering Arne Petersen

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The province of Saskatchewan, the district of Lakeland, and the hamlet of Elk Ridge has lost an incredible person and citizen. Arne Petersen, architect and creator of Elk Ridge Resort and golf complex, passed away in early October, leaving a lasting legacy.

Leaving his farm home at the age of 15 with no formal schooling, Arne accomplished much few will ever match. With his mechanical genius, Arne started his own company. The Precision Group of Companies is recognized as a world leader in design and fabrication, employing over 600 people at its peak, Mr. Speaker.

His vision of a world-class resort in the boreal forest began when he purchased the land in 1989 just south of the Prince Albert National Park. A true entrepreneur, Arne started clearing the forest, driving the equipment, continued his hands-on approach for many years. Known for his work ethic and humble attitude, Arne was a true gentleman, leader, and risk taker. The many personal stories told at his funeral service held at the lodge at Elk Ridge testify to a life well lived.

Arne promoted and loved Saskatchewan. Not only will Arne be missed by Madeline, his two daughters, Debby and Darlene and their families, but an entire province and national golfing community mourns with them. Rest in peace, Mr. Petersen, your work is done. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Martensville-

Warman.

### Arrival of Fourth Flight of Ukrainian Refugees

**Mr. Jenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning over 200 Ukrainian refugees are waking up to their first morning in Saskatchewan. Yesterday I, along with the members from Canora-Pelly and Saskatoon Riversdale, had the privilege of being in Saskatoon for the arrival of the fourth flight of Ukrainian refugees. This flight was the first to land in Saskatoon, and upon their arrival these newcomers are provided with temporary living space and services to help get them established. This is the fourth of five flights that we have partnered with Solidaire and Open Arms to bring to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has always been a safe, welcoming place for those fleeing violence and unrest. And we have been so fortunate to be in the position where we can offer refuge to these people. Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely proud to say that this brings the total number of Ukrainian refugees in Saskatchewan to over 2,700. This province has brought in more Ukrainian flights than the federal government. This is only possible because of the generosity and selflessness shown by Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, in this House and in our personal lives we have heard and participated in many amazing fundraisers and initiatives to bring awareness of what is happening in Ukraine. And we will continue to support our sisters and brothers who have been forced to flee their country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

### Bull Rider Wins Canadian Championship

**Mr. Steele:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the reigning two-time Canadian bull riding champion, Jared Parsonage from Maple Creek. Jared followed up with his 2021 championship season with another solid, impressive 2022 rodeo season. Jared returned to the CFRA having secured his first-place finish, which awarded him the Canadian Pro Rodeo top money earner for the 2022 season.

Mr. Speaker, Jared's strong performance of winning over 22,000 at this year's CFRA secured the cowboy's second consecutive Canadian bull riding championship. This young cowboy from a ranch in the Cypress Hills has proven to be one of Canada's best.

Mr. Speaker, Jared is a role model for the countless young cowgirls and cowboys and athletes across southwest Saskatchewan. And when Jared is riding this year in NFR [National Finals Rodeo] they will be cheering him on.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to join with the Maple Creek community to wish Jared a safe and successful finals rodeo in Las Vegas this December. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

### Successful Fundraiser for Swimming Pool in Porcupine Plain

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Mr. Speaker, the generosity of rural

communities continues to impress. On October 28th, Porcupine Plain's Larwood-Shaw Memorial Swimming Pool committee held the In the Bin party. Their event celebrated the end of harvest and was a fundraiser for a replacement swimming pool for the community and surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, The Dam Smokehouse from Nipawin provided the meal. Bucket draws and raffles were the centres of attention until a couple of significant announcements shook the walls. Corey and Cynthia Hood donated the evening's dinner, bar, and band costs. IBAS [Insurance Brokers' Association of Saskatchewan], with Saskatchewan Blue Cross and SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], each donated \$7,000. ProSoils Youth in Motion donated \$15,000. Affinity Credit Union donated \$20,000. And Parkland Co-op topped that with \$25,000.

To top it all off, Wheeler's Transport owners, Vern and Gail Armitage, donated \$100,000. The Wheaton family matched the first \$100,000, propelling the community night's contributions to \$295,000. The Wheaton's contributions made a significant step towards the fundraising goal of 300,000.

Mr. Speaker, let us join in with the community of Porcupine Plain and area in thanking all participating donors. Let's continue to celebrate the contributions of rural Saskatchewan towns and villages to the fabric of our province. Thank you.

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

### Update on Health Human Resource Action Plan

**Ms. A. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to provide an update on our province's health human resources action plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain more health care workers in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health will be leading a delegation from the government, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and post-secondary institutions on a recruitment mission to the Philippines. This mission will focus on recruitment of qualified health care workers, including registered nurses and continuing care assistants, and other high-priority professions.

Over the course of the five-day mission our Saskatchewan delegation will actively promote health care employment opportunities in the province to hundreds of health care workers; provide information to assist potential candidates with the licensing and regulatory process, immigration process, and relocation supports; and interview and provide jobs to offer health care workers with in-demand skill sets.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Health Authority has already been working to recruit internationally trained health care workers. So far 20 continuing care assistants have been hired, and 70 registered nurse candidates begun the process to join our workforce. Mr. Speaker, we will continue working aggressively to add hundreds of health professionals into the health system that will stabilize health services and build a stronger, more sustainable health workforce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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



### Affordability and Government's Fiscal Management

**Ms. Beck:** — Saskatchewan families are facing an affordability crisis. Everyone knows it; everyone it seems except that out-of-touch Sask Party government. People are stressed and they're struggling to pay their bills. Latest numbers by the Canadian banking association show that Saskatchewan has the highest rate of mortgage arrears in the country. Not just the highest, Mr. Speaker, but five times the national average.

To the Premier: does this sound like growth that works for everyone?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that there is inflationary pressures on citizens in Saskatchewan, as well as across our nation and in many other countries. Mr. Speaker, we're well aware of that, and that's why we made the decisions that we made earlier this year to have an affordability tax credit cheque go to all adults within the province of Saskatchewan, one that the members opposite have criticized but yet they voted for unanimously within this House.

The NDP simply have no credibility on this file because they stand and say we do nothing, while the citizens are receiving \$500 cheques, Mr. Speaker. So that is hardly nothing. The citizens don't see that as nothing. And yet the NDP, who voted for it and supported it, are now saying that it's nothing.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure the minister understands that these are not people who want a bigger house. These are people who cannot pay the mortgage on the house that they currently have.

Families can't pay their bills, and they're struggling just to put food on the table. Meanwhile the Premier is plowing ahead making life even more expensive — higher taxes, higher fees, higher energy and power bills. Mr. Speaker, it makes no sense.

Why is the Premier, why is the Premier choosing to make life more expensive when there are five times as many people in this province at risk of losing their homes than anywhere else in the country?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, yet again the NDP have no credibility on affordability. Quite frankly, in this budget and in each budget in the province, due to measures that this government's taken, there is \$2.2 billion invested into affordability.

Under the NDP, PST [provincial sales tax] were higher than it is today. Under the NDP, personal income tax was higher than it is today. Under the NDP, the low-income tax credit is lower than it is today. Under the NDP, the seniors' income plan was stagnated for 16 years and much lower than it is today.

Disability tax credit was lower than it is today. The caregiver tax credit, lower than it is today. And there was no personal care

home benefit. There was no active families benefit. There was no children's drug plan. There was no graduate retention plan.

Mr. Speaker, we will go with our policies over what the NDP did. They have no credibility on affordability whatsoever.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, those lines might play well with those backbenchers, but they certainly are not going over well with the people in this province. Now let's go over why, why this out-of-touch Sask Party government is raising fees and taxes, Mr. Speaker. It's to pay for their decade-and-a-half-long run of mismanaged projects and their own entitlement — an \$8,000 flight to North Battleford, hundreds of millions of dollars wasted on failed projects like AIMS [administrative information management system] and Linkin, even billions, Mr. Speaker, on GHT and the bypass.

Year over year that government blows through Saskatchewan people's money, and year over year they come looking with higher fees and taxes to pay for it. Mr. Speaker, why is the Premier forcing Saskatchewan people to pay the price for that government's own failures when we have more people again at risk of losing their homes in this province than any other province in the country?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, we have an NDP that want to spend more on almost every area. They do not want to raise taxes, and they do not want the debt to go up. Mr. Speaker, none of that can be done all at the same time. They just simply do not understand that, Mr. Speaker.

We have balanced the budget, Mr. Speaker. We have paid down the operating debt by \$1 billion. We have the second-lowest debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product]. We have the second-highest credit rating, Mr. Speaker. And private sector forecasters are saying that we're going to lead the nation in GDP growth, Mr. Speaker.

There has to be a tax base. There has to be a debt reduction, Mr. Speaker, in order to be sustainable going into the future. And we will take the credit rating and the debt-to-GDP ratio that we have right now in this nation, which is leading.

**The Speaker:** — I just want to remind the Deputy Premier to refer to the NDP as the NDP opposition. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

### Support for the Health Care System

**Ms. Beck:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we saw it on display. Out of touch. We've got a Premier and a Finance minister happy to brag about how great things are, but when it comes to actually helping Saskatchewan people who need it, they plead poverty.

Mr. Speaker, I have never, I have never seen a bunch of people so keen to keep jobs that they obviously have no intention of actually doing, and that includes when it comes to the crisis in our emergency rooms. We've called for a targeted plan to address the ER [emergency room] wait times and the funding to support

it. All we've heard from members opposite are excuses.

Can the Premier give us one good reason why he's not urgently investing in emergency care to get things under control?

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

[10:30]

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as the Premier has outlined before in question period, this is the most ambitious plan that we have in our country to be able to address the pressures that not we're just facing here in Saskatchewan, that all of our country is facing, Mr. Speaker. The difference is we started this investment back in March, Mr. Speaker, with investments plus an additional \$20 million, Mr. Speaker, to be able to do what we needed to do in our recruitment plan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to provide the House with some updates. We have over 3,000 applications coming in from the Philippines which I'm travelling to tomorrow to be the first Canadian government representation in the Philippines to be able to recruit, Mr. Speaker. That shows our dedication.

Mr. Speaker, we have over 70 nurses from the Philippines that are ready to come to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We also have an additional 40 applications that are in the process, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've also on a retention side of things, on a retention side of things, in our updates, going from part-time positions to full-time positions, we have 64 more people already hired.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe the most ambitious travel itinerary and spending on flights over there, but I think that's about it. And the Premier, the Premier should visit an emergency room. Mr. Speaker, he should live in the shoes of people like Janna and Jream. They waited a full day for a bed after little Jream was almost intubated.

Mr. Speaker, either he doesn't know how bad things are or he simply doesn't care. This morning in Saskatoon there were 64 people waiting for a bed, people who are sick enough for a bed but there's no bed available. And it's surely just as bad here in Regina. Mr. Speaker, this is not situation normal and it shouldn't be treated that way.

Again, will he step up and fully fund a plan to address the crisis in our emergency rooms?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd ask the Leader of the Opposition to please tell me where that 64 people are, Mr. Speaker, because I have an update as of two minutes ago. We have 13 open beds at the University Hospital. Mr. Speaker, at St. Paul's Hospital we have nine open beds. Mr. Speaker, at the City Hospital we have three additional open beds. Mr. Speaker, and also at our children's hospital we have 23 open beds. So I'm not sure where she's talking about, Mr. Speaker. If she has that information, I ask her to present it to Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you is that our recruitment plan is working. We are bringing individuals, not just growing our own in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We're getting individuals that are coming from across Canada and around the world because they know what's the potential within Saskatchewan that we have, Mr. Speaker. They know that we're providing fair and adequate compensation, Mr. Speaker.

We have four individuals who have already accepted the \$50,000 recruitment. Four more than we had, individuals that are hard to recruit that we have been able to bring in to northern Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, this minister will acknowledge the staffing crisis we have in health care without acknowledging that it's been 15 years of Sask Party government mismanagement of health care that has led us here. What we're seeing now, we're seeing now the impacts of that failed leadership on our health care workforce.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are cascading failures in our health care system and these failures often become visible in the emergency room. The family doctor shortage leaves people with nowhere to go but the ER. Patients in ERs need hospital beds, but they can't get them because they're full. And they're often full because of alternate level-of-care patients, usually seniors, seniors who can't be discharged because they have no long-term care spaces.

These are not new issues, but ones that this government is doing nothing about. Again, what is the urgent plan to address this crisis before it gets worse?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I think the question was about long-term care spaces, amongst a bunch of other things as well. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan has made significant investments into this area for the past number of years.

In this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, we're spending \$750 million in long-term care annually. That's the annual amount that this government spends into long-term care. There's more funding in this year's budget, \$18 million for long-term care capital improvements in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, including six and a half million for the design and procurement activities for specialized and standardized long-term care bed spaces here in Regina. More funding to address some maintenance upgrades, ventilation upgrades to facilities; continued work and continued dollars for the Grenfell long-term care facility; more funding for the La Ronge long-term care facility.

Mr. Speaker, that's just the very top of what this government is doing. There's more to come in the years ahead, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, that minister should understand the

question. It was about alternate level-of-care beds and the backlog that it creates in our ERs.

I'll try it again, Mr. Speaker. There are currently 163 patients in Saskatoon hospitals alone. These are folks who no longer need acute care but there's nowhere else to go. This adds to ER waits and the potentially fatal waits for care in our ERs. This government used to have a fully-funded patient initiative to address these exact issues, but they gave up and they stopped funding it.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister honestly think that his mission is accomplished if a four-year-old cancer patient has to wait a full day to get a bed in a hospital? And if he doesn't agree with that, if he agrees with everyone else that that is wrong, will he commit to an urgent solution today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are making significant investments into long-term care in this province, into home care, into other initiatives allowing seniors to age in place in their home communities. Mr. Speaker, as part of that, we need to be able to open up these beds, open up these facilities, build these new facilities, and add more capacity to the health care system so that we have a place for these patients to transition to, therefore opening up other beds for other patients, Mr. Speaker.

It's something this government has been committed to for a number of years here. We've added a number of new long-term care facilities, brand new long-term care facilities across this province, Mr. Speaker. In many cases, offering more beds that were previously available in these long-term care facilities in the north part of the province, in the south, right across Saskatchewan, adding more beds here in Regina.

We're going to continue to do this work, Mr. Speaker, regardless of the negativity from the members opposite. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Cybersecurity Measures Following Privacy Breach

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's time for this government to run on its own record. This is a government that can't seem to get anything right: \$160 million on a health IT [information technology] system that's still dark; a Social Services Linkin project that's now costing five times what it should have; half a million people's health records breached in an eHealth cyberattack.

And now the Information and Privacy Commissioner is reporting that 40,000 people were impacted by the SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] data breach last year. Why is this government wasting millions on IT contracts that don't deliver, while continually failing to protect the privacy of Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, SLGA takes the safety and security of people's information seriously. As we're all aware, the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority was subject to a cybersecurity incident last December which impacted the organization's computer systems.

Upon learning of the incident, SLGA took the steps to secure its systems and mitigate the impact to the data of their operations, Mr. Speaker. We sent direct notification to regulatory clients who are considered high risk after the cyber experts found evidence of data possibly being published.

Mr. Speaker, we also sent out a draft news release as well as an email to all of our clients in our database to notify them of that breach at the time, Mr. Speaker. The Privacy Commissioner himself said, "I find SLGA took steps to contain the privacy breach when it discovered the attack." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Mr. Speaker, this minister should know a thing or two about privacy breaches after her recent gaffe. But this is no small thing we should be brushing under the rug — 40,000 people, Mr. Speaker. In this data breach, records, budgets, contracts, employee data was breached and some prior contracts were leaked. Credit card information belonging to suppliers leaked: credit card numbers, expiry dates, security codes.

From top to bottom, this government is failing on the basics. What is the plan to ensure that the privacy of suppliers and employees are secured moving forward?

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

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and once again I thank the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, SLGA appreciates the advice and the assistance that was provided by the Privacy Commissioner regarding this file. SAGL also appreciates the Privacy Commissioner recognizes that SLGA took many appropriate steps when dealing with the cyber incident.

I would also like to take the time to thank all of the employees who took time away from their families over the Christmas season to ensure that customers could still be served, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, SLGA will carefully review all of the recommendations made by the Privacy Commissioner regarding this incident, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

### Federal Review of Murder Conviction

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, Odelia and Nerissa Quewezance were convicted of murder 30 years ago. Advocates have called for their case to be reviewed for a potential miscarriage of justice. The federal Minister of Justice has said, "It has been determined that there may be a reasonable basis to conclude that a miscarriage of justice likely occurred in this matter."

Does the Minister of Justice support the federal review of this

matter? And will she ensure that her ministry co-operates with the review?

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

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are aware that there's a federal review currently under way in this case, Mr. Speaker, and we must let that take its course. Of course these convictions were upheld at the Court of Appeal. The Supreme Court decided not to hear the case. And it would be inappropriate for me, Mr. Speaker, to comment further.

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

### Request for Coroner's Inquest

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked this government to commit to a coroner's inquest, a public-facing coroner's inquest to look into how Shayne Turner died. The minister didn't answer the question. So I'll ask again. Will the Sask Party government ensure there is an inquest — a coroner's inquest, public facing — into the night Shayne Turner died? Yes or no?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said yesterday, I've had a meeting with the Turner family. I've committed to them that I would raise this with senior leadership at the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority], which I have done. Mr. Speaker, I'm awaiting further information from the SHA.

It's also, Mr. Speaker, my understanding that the coroner is reviewing this case in order to determine whether to proceed with an inquest. And we're going to allow the coroner to make his decision as he chooses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, government has made this request of coroner's offices in the past, just what this family is asking for, not for a private investigation like the minister has said he's done internally. They want something public facing. They want a public coroner's inquest. So I want to ask the question again.

Will the Sask Party government ensure there's a coroner's inquest into the night Shayne Turner died? Yes or no?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll allow the coroner to make his own decision.

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

### Mental Health and Addictions

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, that will be disappointing for the

family to hear. Shayne Turner, Samwel Uko, Steven Rigby, they all went to the hospital as a last resort. They were begging for help and they didn't get it. All these deaths could have been prevented.

Why won't the Sask Party government agree to a bipartisan committee to look at the mental health, addictions, and overdose crises facing our province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Saskatchewan continues to make significant investments into mental health and addictions: \$470 million this year alone into that area, over \$403 million specifically targeted towards mental health initiatives, and the remainder towards addictions initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Samwel Uko case I can report, Mr. Speaker, that the coroner did provide of course a report and recommendations which were submitted to the SHA, responded to by the SHA at the end of October, and which the SHA has accepted all of those findings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, time and time again there have been requests from our side to work on this issue in a bipartisan way. Our colleague, the member from Cumberland, had put forward a bill that was passed by all members, and we all applauded each other for doing that. However, nothing came to fruition.

Mr. Speaker, there's been offers of assistance, of reaching out for help to try and address this again in a non-partisan way. But when the rubber hits the road, Mr. Speaker, the action doesn't come from the government. This is a very simple request. These are committees that have been created for all sorts of different reasons historically in this legislature. There is no reason why one can't be created for this particular salient, poignant issue facing Saskatchewan residents today.

[10:45]

So I'm going to ask that question yet again of this minister. Why won't the Sask Party government agree to a bipartisan committee to look at the mental health, addictions, and overdose crises facing our province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the suicide bill, Mr. Speaker, it states in the bill that:

Within two years after the coming into force of this Act and every year thereafter, the Ministry of Health will include in its annual report an update of the progress and activities related to the strategy for suicide prevention.

Mr. Speaker, so that is done on an annual basis.

Mr. Speaker, we have made several commitments towards the prevention of suicide and other mental health initiatives in this province over the past number of years and continue to expand upon those initiatives, Mr. Speaker. We have asked and I have asked that the Pillars for Life strategic planning and oversight team engages with families, those that are affected by this and impacted, as we help to work with them to help improve the programs and supports that we have.

Mr. Speaker, there's additional work that is being done when it comes to integrated youth services. We've recently contracted with the John Howard Society to lead as the backbone organization to get the first of our integrated youth services initiatives off the ground in this province, Mr. Speaker. And there's other important work that is going to be done and announcements coming soon with respect to suicide prevention initiatives.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, this isn't a request coming from the opposition. It's coming from families across the province, families whose loved ones have died in absolutely tragic circumstances. Families who are sick and tired of having to come to this legislature to get this government to pay attention to what they're trying to say, Mr. Speaker.

Apparently traffic safety was enough of a concern for there to be a bipartisan committee created in the past on that, but this issue apparently isn't sufficient enough, according to this government. Again, this is a request coming from the families. Why won't the Sask Party government agree to a bipartisan committee to look at the mental health, addictions, and overdose crises facing this province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's disappointing for the member opposite to indicate that families have to come to this legislature to be heard. Mr. Speaker, we as MLAs have met with families. And now they yell from across the way, Mr. Speaker, on a very important issue.

Myself as the minister responsible — numerous MLAs on this side of the House, but myself — I have travelled around this province over the past number of weeks and months meeting with families, meeting with communities, meeting with those and dealing directly with those that come with issues regarding mental health and those sorts of initiatives, Mr. Speaker.

I've been in communities such as La Ronge where I was earlier this summer. I met with a group called Men of the North. That's one example. I've been in North Battleford. I've been in Black Lake, Uranium City, Kamsack, Yorkton, right across this province, Mr. Speaker. The member for Athabasca, who serves as the Legislative Secretary for Mental Health and Addictions, is also helping and assisting the government with this good work. We continue to have that outreach with families so that we can help to make improvements for everyone right across this province.

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

### **Interpersonal Violence Rates and Support for Second-Stage Shelters**

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Well mission not accomplished, Minister, because the families are still coming to the legislature. We saw them there this week. We are asking to work together in a non-partisan way on this issue, but they continue to stonewall this very, very serious request.

Mr. Speaker, another stonewalling of another serious request: Saskatchewan has year after year the highest rates of intimate partner violence in the country. And yet Saskatchewan is one of only a few provinces that does not provide operational funding for second-stage shelters for women fleeing this violence. We are also the only province, Mr. Speaker, with a government that invites convicted wife-murderers like Colin Thatcher as guests to the Assembly.

When will the Sask Party government stop embarrassing our province and neglecting survivors of violence? When will they start providing operational funding for second-stage shelters?

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

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina Lakeview has said we will never be able to build enough shelters. We will never be able to build enough shelters. It's about root causes. And, Mr. Speaker, she was getting at the complexity of the issue, an issue that no jurisdiction in the world has solved and that we must always try to solve. We must always try.

Mr. Speaker, \$25 million the government has invested this year in emergency intervention and prevention. Mr. Speaker, last week we committed funding to Hope Restored. Addressing trafficking is addressing root causes, Mr. Speaker — exploitation, violence, coercion, often within the sex trade. Second-stage housing is usually dependent on shelter, emergency shelter services, Mr. Speaker. So we have to make sure that these are strong and in place, and our commitment is to find the right wraparound of first- and second-stage supports.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 67.

**The Speaker:** — Question 67 has been tabled.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order. Order. Order. Order.

### **SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE**

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

Rosemont.

### Food Pricing in Saskatchewan

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I was struggling to hear where we were at in the orders of the day because we have the House Leader over there heckling across that our members over here need to smile more while they ask questions about intimate partner violence, Mr. Speaker. Like, give me a break. But, Mr. Speaker, that out-of-touch House Leader over there, you know, I could give reams and reams of this speech about him, Mr. Speaker.

But what I'm going to do is focus on the motion that we've brought forward in good faith to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, something that addresses the very serious concerns that Saskatchewan people are facing as it relates to the crushing cost of living, and that call for an all-party . . . for a special committee to investigate grocery food pricing, meat pricing in Saskatchewan, and the anticompetitive behaviours within that meat-packing industry, Mr. Speaker, as well as addressing the disproportionate and excessive costs that those in the North are facing with respect to groceries.

We brought this call to this government in good faith, Mr. Speaker, to the floor of this Assembly. It's been a call that's been made by people. It was made by the stock growers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And there's an important role and responsibility for all of us in this Assembly to lead on this front and to be a part of that investigation.

Thankfully we do see a committee in Ottawa. The committee of agriculture has taken on a special committee on this front, an investigation on this front, and that's important and that's good, Mr. Speaker. All parties will be involved in that work. And thankfully as well, the Competition Bureau has committed federally as well to look into this matter, and I believe they'll be reporting out in the coming months. They'll be a part of this investigation.

What we're calling for is for the Saskatchewan context to be represented, Mr. Speaker. We're sort of hit two ways on this front, Mr. Speaker. Of course we've got people and families that are struggling with the excessive costs at the grocery store, Mr. Speaker, hit on front after front on the cost-of-living crisis. And then of course we have livestock producers in this province who simply aren't receiving a fair deal, Mr. Speaker, aren't receiving a fair shake.

We see a real decoupling on this front, Mr. Speaker, from what once was correlated, and that's the price at the meat counter and the price that a producer would receive for live cattle, Mr. Speaker. And you know, it's not just about the margin for many producers in Saskatchewan. It's about the existence for many producers in Saskatchewan who, because of a factor like this and the raw deal they receive, Mr. Speaker, are facing very serious hardship.

And it's important, Mr. Speaker. We're glad to see those actions in Ottawa. We're glad to see that committee. We're glad to see the Competition Bureau investigate these matters. But on this matter of all matters, it's critical that Saskatchewan represent this province and producers and people, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I get a kick out of this government here, you know, who like to decry what we see coming from Ottawa on many days, Mr. Speaker. We share our concerns on various fronts there as well, Mr. Speaker. But then when it comes to grocery pricing and meat pricing and a fair deal for livestock producers in Saskatchewan, this government says, oh no, we trust Ottawa to just take care of it. What a weak approach to representing the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, and the producers of this province.

Now the reality is Saskatchewan is leading the nation with food price increases, and this is hard for families. This is hard for families. We've got, you know, on front after front, costs that have gone through the roof. We know what those costs are at the pumps, Mr. Speaker. We know all of the costs that this government is piling onto families and households across Saskatchewan with new taxes by way of the PST, Mr. Speaker, by way of property tax increases, by way of energy bill hikes and power bill hikes as we head into winter, as we head into Christmas, Mr. Speaker.

So we have a situation that Saskatchewan people are experiencing that isn't fair, isn't right, and we should all be interested in providing relief. We have a government over there that of course has made this situation worse. But you would think when it comes to groceries, when it comes to meat pricing, when it comes to fairness for consumers and for producers, that this government would be willing and interested to do their part and to work together to be a part of that work and of course to interact.

That committee would interact directly with the federal committee of agriculture that's focused on this front, as well as the Competition Bureau's investigation, Mr. Speaker. It's the kind of committee we've seen struck in the past. We've seen it for energy. We've seen it for traffic safety.

I was a member of that energy committee, Mr. Speaker, and it was a good process. And we went out across Saskatchewan. We had experts that were brought in. We had various folks that we brought in as witnesses. We had folks that we were there to question, Mr. Speaker. And in that case we went out across Saskatchewan. I recall meetings in Estevan, meetings in the far . . . up in, well not the far North, but in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker, and in other parts of the province as well. It's kind of what our job is, Mr. Speaker.

And I look at, like, a lot of my friends over there, Mr. Speaker, that are in the backbenches of that big government that's grown so tired and entitled, Mr. Speaker. Like, let these guys show up and do some work, Mr. Speaker. It must be difficult sitting back there day after day, Mr. Speaker, maybe hoping and praying to be able to deliver a member statement at some point through the fall session to make news in, you know, whatever community they represent. But this is kind of our job, Mr. Speaker, and you know, it matters to people. So it's really reflective of an old, tired government that's just not up to the challenge, Mr. Speaker, that's not fulfilling their duty to Saskatchewan people.

The cost-of-living increases, of course — and they've been made so much worse by the hikes of this Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, and the new taxes and the tax increases at a time of crushing cost-of-living increases — are certainly made worse as well by the pressure at the grocery store, Mr. Speaker.

The average family will be paying \$966 more this year, Mr. Speaker, for the escalation, the inflation at the grocery store. And of course, you know, we see supply chains that need to be investigated. We know manufacturing that needs to be reviewed and investigated. We know corporate out-of-province grocers that are, you know, certainly reporting good profits at Bay Street, Mr. Speaker, but certainly not delivering for folks in Moose Jaw or Melville or Regina, or name your community across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that need to be investigated as well.

And you know, as I say, we've got this double whammy in Saskatchewan which, you know, really should have just as big or . . . you know, an impetus for this government to act. You know, we have the minister heckling about the federal government, Mr. Speaker. We share concerns with that federal government, which is why again . . . Why would this government vacate the space on this front?

[11:00]

Why do they think that that federal government will just take care of it? Why will the federal government know and understand the realities of livestock producers in southwest Saskatchewan who are stuck in another year of drought this year, Mr. Speaker, and are dealing with serious hardship? How do we think we should vacate the field and leave it to Ottawa, leave it to all those parties in Ottawa to know the situation here?

I think that's weak, Mr. Speaker. I think it's wrong and I think it's naive. And I think it'll be too late, Mr. Speaker, to enter in when we realize that, oh, maybe the committee down there didn't quite understand some of the context of what livestock producers or stock growers are dealing with here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

You know, and we're not alone in making these calls, right? Of course consumer advocates have made this call. People are calling for action and Saskatchewan livestock producers, beef producers, have made these calls directly, Mr. Speaker. I'll read a little bit of what the stock growers . . . Of course the stock growers made a real solid entry on this front. And I want to give a shout-out to the stock growers, as well as, you know, the cattlemen and APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] and, you know, all the agricultural organizations, Mr. Speaker, for their work to represent producers through that horrible drought and in these times right now as well, Mr. Speaker, where that drought has really continued and persisted in southwest Saskatchewan and west central Saskatchewan.

And of course they're going to need some solutions and they're going to need some action and support from this government that even goes beyond this investigation and fairness around meat pricing, Mr. Speaker, to be able to make the winter and make sure they have the feed that they need, and that we're not forcing a situation where we see a devastating sell-off of herd that's so vital to the prairie way of life, so vital to food security, so vital to management and stewardship of grasslands, Mr. Speaker.

So that's the context that we're dealing with. We have a government that's sitting on their hands and not doing their part around meat pricing. And frankly we have a government that's not doing their part right now in responding to the hardship and realities that producers are facing down in southwest

Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I was chatting this week with a rancher down from southwest Saskatchewan — real proud guy, Mr. Speaker. He's been there for years, for generations, Mr. Speaker. And tears, tears coming down, rolling down his face, Mr. Speaker, at the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention, describing the hardship that they're facing and the devastating consequences if we don't see proper support to get through this time of horrible drought, Mr. Speaker, and make sure they have access to the feed to support those herds and their operations, and better support into the future, and some hope which this could provide, Mr. Speaker, if we are able to address and ensure a fair deal for producers in this province.

The stock growers called for a investigation on this front in July. We joined that call, Mr. Speaker. The stock growers have led as well on the very important piece around bolstering local meat processing and abattoirs in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And it's something that we're pushing for, something we're working with, creates economic opportunities in rural parts of Saskatchewan, all across Saskatchewan, provides new markets and better pricing and new opportunities for producers in this province — a fair deal, Mr. Speaker.

And it of course provides an opportunity for consumers, Mr. Speaker, around this. I get a kick out of hearing the member for Last Mountain heckling during remarks like this. I hope he's up in, you know, response here today because I know a lot of good folks, livestock producers that he represents, Mr. Speaker, and he and his government are failing them right now. Mr. Speaker, they're failing them.

The stock growers of Saskatchewan have shared that . . . you know, a few things. They say, the SSGA [Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association] says packers and retailers are limiting supply to drive up prices since "packers and retailers know there's no one else to take their place or profits," Mr. Speaker:

Industry members are questioning packers' strategy, which seems to be limiting the amount of product available at the retail level, keeping boxed beef prices high while allowing fed cattle supplies to build in the countryside, which keeps cattle prices low.

Mr. Speaker, that describes some anticompetitive behaviours from the consolidated, out-of-province corporate meat-packing industry, Mr. Speaker, that just aren't getting it done for producers and aren't getting it done for consumers. And that's where there's a role for this government, any government worth their salt, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it goes on to say . . . The president here from the stock growers, Deobald, says, "Canadians are at risk of losing access to Saskatchewan-raised beef if producers continue running losses," Mr. Speaker. And that's what we see. That's the hardship that I've heard from producers throughout the Southwest right now and in other parts of the province, Mr. Speaker, is that you've got producers that have worked so hard to build up genetics and to build up that herd that are now selling off, Mr. Speaker.

And what do we want to become? A net importer on this front?

Do we think . . . What, do we want the Americans to feed us? Do we want, you know, other parts of the world to feed us? Like, step up. Let's lead. We have the best beef in the world, Mr. Speaker, and we're compromising them with a rigged system that fails producers and that fails consumers. This should be a common-sense thing to support and something that we all support.

I'll move my following, the motion, Mr. Speaker:

That a special committee on food pricing be created to examine food pricing issues in Saskatchewan, including but not limited to factors related to supply chains, manufacturing, transportation, and anticompetitive corporate practices impacting the price consumers pay for food in grocery stores; factors related to meat processing and packaging that increase prices for consumers and decrease prices paid to livestock producers; and factors related to disproportionately high prices for food in northern Saskatchewan; and further,

That the special committee on food pricing may co-operate, correspond, and share information with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and/or the Competition Bureau of Canada as needed.

This should be a no-brainer to support.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for Regina Rosemont:

That a special committee for food pricing be created to examine food price issues in Saskatchewan, including but not limited to factors relating to supply chains, manufacturing, transportation, and anticompetitive corporate practices impacting the price consumers pay for food in grocery stores; factors related to meat processing and packaging that increase prices for consumers and decrease prices paid to livestock producers; and factors related to disproportionately high prices for food in northern Saskatchewan; and further,

That the special committee on food pricing may co-operate, correspond, and share information with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and/or the Competition Bureau of Canada as needed.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Moosomin.

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was a very interesting speech from my good friend over there from, the member from Rosemont. And I'd just like to say, in his remarks to our member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, I think they should go back and their rural caucus can discuss a lot about this, how that they're standing up for Saskatchewan agriculture producers. I think it'll be a lively debate over there, should take about half a second or so.

But, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of . . . I, like anyone else, doesn't appreciate having the price of my food increase. It's something that affects all of us in Saskatchewan, all of us in Canada, and it's something that we do need to take seriously, we need to look at,

we need to find ways to address and to look after.

There's a few interesting things in this motion that I do agree with actually. Like, we have to look at the factors relating to supply chains, manufacturing, transportation, anticompetitive corporate practices impacting the price consumers pay for food at the grocery stores. Now there's a lot of things we can go into, but first maybe we need to understand some of the trends and what are affecting the price of food in Canada today.

And since 2021 the price increases includes sold in stores measured on the year-over-year basis have outpaced headline consumer inflation, growing faster than 10 per cent in August, September, and October. Food prices have risen due to multiple factors that have put upward pressure on costs along the food supply chain: supply chain disruptions, which we saw all through COVID; labour shortages, which we're struggling with because our economy is so strong and we don't have enough people to fill all the jobs in this province; changes in consumer purchasing patterns; poor weather in some regions, which we really did experience for . . . well, I know our farm came through four years of quite poor weather and thank goodness this year was much, much better; tariffs; higher input costs — now this is something we'll get to later on in my remarks — increased taxation, this is another big factor that we have to talk about; and higher wages, which we can all agree in Saskatchewan is a good thing. Unlike past trends, many of these conditions and pressures have been occurring simultaneously and in a more pronounced manner leading to broad-based increases in food prices.

Prices for food rose less in October, 10.1 per cent compared with September, 10.3 per cent on a year-over-year basis. Prices for some supply-managed food commodities, such as dairy products which rose 10.6 per cent and eggs which rose 13.8 per cent, increased year over year in October mainly due to approved producer price increases from their respective governing boards which are federally regulated and reflect rising input costs.

Now in Saskatchewan in 2021, the prairie provinces experienced a severe heat wave and drought conditions contributing to higher prices for meat, particularly beef, and grain products. Now in Saskatchewan, as you know, we have very few completely vertically integrated meat and processing plants here so that didn't affect the price for our food as directly as it would in some other areas. There was a 10.6 per cent increase in food prices in Saskatchewan for October '21 to October '22, ranking fourth amongst all provinces. So I don't know how the member opposite that we just heard said that we have the highest food price increases in Canada because that's not borne out by the facts, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan's unit labour cost in food manufacturing increased by 19.2 per cent from 2017 to 2021. Now this is a good thing. That's showing that the people that work in this province are getting a fair wage for the work that they do and producing excellent products that we all rely on.

So if we looked a little bit further in the food prices in northern Saskatchewan, prices for food in northern Saskatchewan have always been a bit higher than they are in the south due to transportation costs and geographic challenges. Northern communities have limited road access and some are only accessible by air. That's something that we all understand, so we



know why the prices are a little bit higher there.

Some communities have no local grocery stores and have to travel long distances to buy groceries or rely on convenience stores which have limited options and higher prices. The 2018 *Cost of Healthy Eating in Saskatchewan* found the average costs for a family of four in northern Saskatchewan was \$316.81 per week compared to the average in southern Saskatchewan which was \$227 per week.

Government assistance has incremental benefits for income assistance clients in the northern administrative district. Three communities in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, Fond-du-Lac, Uranium City, and Wollaston Lake meet the isolation criteria to receive subsidies through the Nutrition North Canada program. The program subsidizes a list of food for non-food items to reduce their retail cost. Subsidy rates vary depending on the type of transportation used, community location, and the category of items. More savings are provided to nutritious, more perishable foods.

Food sustainability and sovereignty have become a topic of interest in communities in northern Saskatchewan, and that is an excellent thing. It's something that we're working very hard towards. There is increased discussion on developing mechanisms for food production, processing, distribution, and food waste recovery.

Indigenous communities are venturing into agriculture and greenhouse development opportunities to support food security. And I want to give a special commendation to my friend, the member from Athabasca, for the good work he's doing on this front and all the positive interactions he's had with his community members in the North.

But let's break down this motion to better understand it a little bit. One of the parts of the motion says that a special committee on food pricing be created to examine food pricing issues in Saskatchewan, including but not limited to factors related to supply chains, manufacturing, transportation, and anticompetitive practices that are impacting the price consumers pay for food in grocery stores and decrease profits to livestock producers.

Now this is where the guise of compassion ends, I guess, for the members opposite, and the political theatre begins. Because obviously there are three contributing main factors to this: carbon tax, federal inflationary spending which is resulting in debt and inflation, and the corresponding rise in interest rates that you'll see after a period of inflationary spending.

The carbon tax. Starting on April 1st, 2019 a federal backstop carbon tax was applied in Saskatchewan. This is a tax that we don't want, we don't need, and doesn't work. The tax started at \$20 a tonne for emissions in 2019 and increased by \$10 a tonne per year until it reaches \$50 per tonne in 2022.

[11:15]

Then the tax will increase \$15 a tonne until it reaches \$170 per tonne in 2030. A \$20 per-tonne federal carbon tax costs a Saskatchewan grain farmer approximately \$1.74 per acre. These costs will increase to 2.93 per acre in 2021 — which it did —

rising to \$12.52 per acre by 2030.

Now, Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that if you raise the input costs for a farmer, that cost will automatically get moved up the line. The next value-added processor will have to pay their share of the carbon tax, which will have to go to the manufacturer, which will have to go to the end consumer. All of that is compounded. It's not a one-off. It is just a tax on a tax on a tax.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am a cow-calf producer. I can tell you very clearly that my costs have gone up because of the carbon tax. This isn't because of . . . Well I shouldn't say; I don't know. But I can tell you that one of the main reasons why my costs have gone up is because of the carbon tax. It is a direct cost that I have to pay. It's one that I have no choice in; I can't opt out of.

I'm producing my cattle as efficiently and as environmentally sustainably as I can. I produce an excellent product. But I'll tell you what. I live 100 kilometres straight north of the North Dakota-Montana border. My friends, my good friends down there who also raise cattle, they don't have to pay this tax. We are not competitive on this field if we're self-inflicting ourselves with these taxes that we don't want, don't need, and have been proven not to work.

Mr. Speaker, if we're worried about the cost of food rising in Canada, there's something we can do. You know, I can tell you the solution is we can ask our members across the way to quit supporting their federal leader, Jagmeet Singh, who said in regards to environmental policy, "We have to make sure we have policies that don't put too much burden on everyday working people." This is what your leader, Jagmeet Singh, said.

Only the NDP would put forward a motion that would duplicate the work of other committees that are in the federal government, when they could be talking to their own leader and saying, we don't need this tax. It's not working. Get rid of it. You'll help all the producers in Saskatchewan.

I will not be supporting this motion, Mr. Speaker, for too many reasons to mention.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to join in on the 75-minute debate motion put forward by my hon. colleague, the member from Regina Rosemont.

And I'm just going to start my remarks here today by . . . I'm pretty sure we already had that carbon tax debate last Thursday, and we were all pretty much on record saying we don't support that. I think my answer was yes to both questions. So I don't know if it's getting any more traction from us at least.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke in response to Bill 95, so the surface rights acquisition Act, and I spoke about fairness, Mr. Speaker. Fairness for landowners, fairness for farmers in their relationships with oil and gas and resource sector companies benefiting from these strategic partnerships.

You know, Mr. Speaker, our proposal to create a special committee on food really is no different. During a generational

affordability crisis that's seeing huge, huge profits made across the country on the backs of consumers and producers alike, there is a great, great need to address fairness in this market. In fact we owe it to the people of Saskatchewan to ensure that their hard-earned dollars are going the mile that they need. It's literally our jobs in this Chamber.

Folks work so hard for their dollars, and they deserve to be able to feed their families after a long day's work. They deserve to see the politicians they elect doing that work as well. And, Mr. Speaker, we also owe it to seniors and low-income folks and families to ensure that their quality of life is maintained.

You know, we've heard calls from families, from seniors across this province that people are buckling under the weight of the steep rise in cost of food. You know, we're not far off Thanksgiving and we're not far off Christmas. When folks are going to be heading into the aisles, they're going to have to be making some tough choices. You know, turkeys at Thanksgiving, sometimes were up \$60. You know, people had to make a tough choice because it's either go into debt or pull from your savings or host a family for a dinner, you know, and that is sad, Mr. Speaker.

We've also heard directly from the stock growers on this topic. And I'm going to quote a news release from their website, where the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, the president, called on both the provincial and federal governments to conduct a pricing investigation to address the significant imbalance in cattle and beef pricing markets.

The SSGA president, Garner Deobald, says, "though each industry sector has its own frustrations, we agree that price transparency and discovery, packer capacity, and pricing spread are our biggest joint concerns." You know, Mr. Speaker, we are heeding these calls from consumers and producers alike. We are calling on the Government of Saskatchewan through this motion in joining us to address these issues that we are hearing.

Mr. Speaker, opposition parties from across western provinces have been clear on this issue. My colleague from Regina Rosemont joined with the Alberta NDP critic of Agriculture, Heather Sweet, and Manitoba NDP Agriculture critic, Diljeet Brar, to call on the federal ministers of Health and Agriculture, outlining their concerns on these measures.

People in Saskatchewan want governments on their side, not on the side of wealthy corporations. Instead we have a government that at every chance piles on the federal government while keeping a hand out for federal transfers, and tells us that on this front we can just rely on that federal committee.

Mr. Speaker, I've got some quotes as well from the Minister of Agriculture when we presented this motion calling on this special committee. The Agriculture minister said he spoke with the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association and told ranchers raise the concerns yourselves; keep politics out of something like this.

When you're in a free-enterprise market like we are, I think it's important for the industry, the stakeholders, to really reach out to the Competition Bureau to see . . . [that there is] unfair practicing happening here or not.

Mr. Speaker, just another example of this government pushing the issue onto those consumers, those producers, and not taking any responsibility for an issue that they could fix.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? As New Democrats we are committed to working together to find solutions. We know that that's the only way we are going to find the solutions to the big issues facing Saskatchewan people. As elected officials we owe it to the people of Saskatchewan to put aside party lines, get to work on solving these crises.

Voters on the doorstep told me point blank, above all else, they wanted their elected representatives to work together. They told me they didn't want . . . They wanted to elect an MLA who is going to put an olive branch forward to the government, to work with the government on issues, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly what we've done.

What better way is there to examine an issue than by gathering the best and brightest of this House and putting them to work. Mr. Speaker, there's a lot we've mentioned before. There are a lot of backbenchers over here that need to get to work, Mr. Speaker, a lot that need something to do. And that's why we proposed a special committee.

Time and time again we called on all-party committees to address issues, and we know these committees have worked. We've seen it work in the past. We've seen it work on energy. We've seen it work on safe-driving programs. Really successful, successful all-party committees addressing issues that are really important to Saskatchewan, and that's why again we've called on this government to form an all-party committee on mental health. We've called on this government to form an all-party committee on food pricing. But we continue to see those requests go unanswered.

Mr. Speaker, I really hope the members opposite who are heckling here . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — He's saying we shouldn't be door knocking.

**Mr. Teed:** — Oh, no door knocking. Mr. Speaker, I'm hearing a heckle: stop door knocking, stop talking to those constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I really hope that the members opposite have some good talking points come the next election cycle when their constituents ask them, what work did you do to work with your colleagues in the House to address the concerns of the Saskatchewan people?

Mr. Speaker, it's just a . . . I just think it's a bad look on this government to vote down olive branches of working together. And, Mr. Speaker, the door knocking I'm mentioning is door knocking I did for about 82 days during the last by-election. That's where I heard these comments. And I think we did a pretty good job there.

Mr. Speaker, I'll end with one quick example of another area where we're seeing this government roll over to corporate profit. You know, in nowhere else is this shown more than the privatization of our Sask liquor stores.

Mr. Speaker, regardless, regardless of what system you have — be it a hybrid model, hybrid model of public and private, which we've seen for the last 14 years, Mr. Speaker — we've seen profit after profit come out of those public stores. But we continue to see this government roll over for their big buddies at corporate Sobeys and selling off public stores and turning all that revenue . . . throwing that revenue right into the pockets of the shareholders, Mr. Speaker.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue from our Sask liquor, Mr. Speaker, that's going into health care, education, fixing the roads. No, we're going to send that off to private companies to earn those profits instead of putting them back into Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

So I doubt that we're going to see any movement on this issue on challenging big Toronto grocery stores from this government who are so ready to invite them in and take our profits, Mr. Speaker, that were originally designed to go back into our system.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll end this on a very clear stance. We are willing to work hard. We are willing to be at the table. And we are willing to work together with this government. And we've put the olive branch out, Mr. Speaker. All this government has to do is say, yeah, we'll work on the big issues together. Let's show our constituents that we can all actually be adults in this room today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you so much.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing me to weigh in on this, you know, on this very important motion that's brought forward by the member from Regina Rosemont.

But I do need to get a few things, I think, on record right away here. And I'm just finding it really special hearing comments from our new member from Saskatoon Meewasin regarding some of the comments regarding Liquor Board stores. So you know, that is a special presentation that he's made, and obviously we have a number of issues based around that.

But I think the one thing — it's funny — where we hear from our opposition here talking about their stance on the carbon tax. Yet I just googled their website, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And on it, it's a comment from their previous leader. And here's his comments regarding a carbon tax:

Saskatchewan people need a plan. They need a plan to distribute carbon pricing revenue model using a means tested rebate. The fairest way to reallocate these funds.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're talking about a carbon tax. They're not refuting a carbon tax, they're still accepting the premise that a carbon tax is essential, Mr. Speaker. It needs to recognize, incorporate into rebate structures, the distinct needs of rural communities and agriculture producers, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's not what they present here in this Assembly, but that is what they present to the public out there, Mr. Speaker. And that's where credibility issues come from, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, when we see . . . or lack thereof, in what we see in the two different sides of the carbon tax debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The other thing I'd like to get on record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is unfortunately our member from Regina Rosemont indicated that we have not done anything to support our ag and livestock sector, especially during the last couple of years of drought.

[11:30]

Just want to get into the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of things, a number of key priorities that we've had to support our livestock sector and our crop sector. Doubled the low-yield appraisal threshold values, Mr. Speaker. We increased the farm and ranch infrastructure program to significant values to allow our producers to drill wells to provide water for their livestock producers; created the livestock price insurance program and significantly enhanced all parts of that, whether it's the forage rainfall insurance, forage yield insurance, wildlife damage compensation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the drought response initiative, over \$119 million, direct support to the livestock producers; over \$2.3 billion in crop insurance claims were paid out to producers, the highest pay-out in history.

Let me repeat that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. \$2.3 billion in crop insurance claims. Highest per-acre coverage in crop insurance history, highest crop insurance budget in history, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Those are all things that we have done to support our ag sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in times of need.

Now let's get back on track. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our Minister of Ag has been having very extensive discussions, both formal and informal, with industry stakeholders from across the food spectrum, including a number of producer groups. Collectively they agree that if there's to be a specific entity that should be undertaking a grocery pricing probe, it should probably be the Competition Bureau of Canada. My suspicions would be they'd quickly find out that ultimately, carbon pricing is going to be a significant effect in some of the increased prices that we see.

The other blatant fact is that producers in value-added industries are at the mercy of world dynamics. I believe our member from Moosomin talked about that. Interest rates, supply chain logistics, freight, fuel costs are all part of the expense side of the ledger, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we see increasing costs.

Thought the *Toronto Star* October 7th editorial piece by Diane Brisebois got to the point very succinctly. In it she indicates that food inflation needs to be understood, both figuratively and literally, from the ground up. The reason the prices have risen sharply on grocery shelves is really straightforward — vendors, the manufacturers, processors, wholesalers of food have been raising prices repeatedly and almost across the board.

And that is overwhelmingly the biggest driver of higher food costs. That's a given. That's granted. But that's not to castigate the vendors, but a simple statement of fact. Vendors' own costs are soaring, primarily because the prices from suppliers, growers, and importers have been increasing at unprecedented rates.

And farmers have been hit hard, facing massive cost increases from fertilizer, fuel, and feed. We're experiencing a very unique

confluence of events — war, extreme weather, soaring fuel costs — piling on top of supply chain disruptions and certainly labour shortages that arose during the pandemic. The NDP might like to pretend otherwise, but the single biggest villain is Putin's invasion that struck at grain and fertilizer exports of two of the world's biggest producers, Ukraine and Russia, driving up global prices for these commodities.

Grain is critical, not only for bread, staples like pasta, cereals, and cooking oils, but as the base for the majority of products in the core aisles of all our grocery stores. Grain also feeds most animals raised for meat, eggs, and dairy.

Dairy. The supply-management industry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the wholesale prices set here in Canada. It's risen by over 10.9 per cent in 2022. Again, the government-established Canadian Dairy Commission has responded to rising costs at the farm level for feed, fuel, and fertilizer, which are then passed on to processors and ultimately to the grocers.

But there's still uncertainty, really, as to where prices . . . when they're going to stabilize. Of course, you know, some big geopolitical and climactic risks that we still have in front of us. Well it's critical for both industry and government to look at the whole picture, not just the surface, and to factor that into any policy approaches for commentary.

So let's bring this down to the micro level. Let's discuss the role of the federally imposed carbon tax, that it plays in increasing costs at the producer level. Every farmer and rancher pays an escalating carbon tax on every piece of product that not only comes onto the farm but what also leaves the farm. Inputs that are used for production of every food item, whether food, fuel, or fertilizer, has a federally imposed carbon tax on it. Every piece of equipment that's manufactured either in this province or in this country that helps to generate that commodity, is subject to a carbon tax.

Then once that product is harvested it needs processing, drying, or maybe further improvement before shipping. Now apparently the drying part may not be or may be subject to a carbon tax; we're still not sure yet. But then that product is loaded onto a truck. Then move that to a processor. Well hopefully that processor's in Saskatchewan or soon will be, but again, shipping subject to a carbon tax. Whether on a plane, train, or automobile, it's subject to a carbon tax. Then it goes to a mill or a malt plant or a crush plant or a fractionator plant. Every switch turned on or a gas belt activated, has product flowing through it — subject to a carbon tax.

Then finally we get that product maybe into a loaf of bread, jug of canola oil, can of beer, maybe salad. Every component going into that process has attracted a carbon tax on a portion of that process. Really, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm sorry, but that pittance that the federal government sends me every quarter is nowhere close to the exposure that we've been exposed to in the carbon tax in every single process getting that item onto my plate every mealtime.

Now I'd like to question the opposition on how you'd like us to proceed with minimizing or worse yet maybe nationalizing the profits that our valuable value-added processors exist in this province may be subject to. You know, I believe there's a lot of

historical examples of probably some ill-conceived ideas to control inflation that both this province and federal government has undertaken in the past that really have not gone too well for us as consumers.

So it's interesting, you know, as this party, this government has been engaging with real Saskatchewan producers, real livestock owners, real manufacturers, the more we talk to producers and manufacturers the more we've been finding the true threat is the federally imposed carbon tax to our economy.

We've seen energy bills for our hog and chicken producers that have anywhere from 30 to 40 per cent of the energy costs made up of carbon tax. Our equipment manufacturers are seeing carbon tax . . . over 30 per cent of their energy costs are made up of carbon tax. The worst part is that carbon tax is subject to GST [goods and services tax] — a tax on a tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we haven't even projected what the costs of the newly minted clean fuel standard, methane reduction standards, Bill C-69, and all the other ill-conceived policies that the federal government's going to be inflicting on us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really find it ironic that probably — or maybe it's more wonderland thinking — that the opposition supported a carbon tax that's ultimately meant to increase the cost of fuel to reduce consumption. Now that policy is actually effective, increasing the cost of fuel. Now they want to reduce the price of fuel, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So there's honestly a lot of cruel irony in that process, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So how about we eliminate the carbon tax.

Let's support innovation. Let's support all of the great things that are going on in this province in our innovation sector, whether it's University of Saskatchewan, in the private sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have got so much great things going on here that I cannot support the motion put forward.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to take part in today's debate calling for a special committee on food pricing. Mr. Speaker, we're all aware that the cost of food has hit the roof, surpassing even the incredible rates of inflation we have seen and leaving many Saskatchewan people unable to afford basic nutritious food for themselves and their families.

Just a few examples of these soaring costs, Mr. Speaker: we know that since March, meat prices have increased from anywhere between 10 all the way up to 31 per cent. Even items as common as carrots also up nearly 30 per cent. Mr. Speaker, more and more people in our province are passing over entire aisles in the grocery stores and skipping some meals altogether.

In far too many cases, Saskatchewan people are being left with no other option but to count on our food banks to feed themselves and to feed their families. Food insecurity is rising sharply, Mr. Speaker. Michael Kincade, the executive director of Food Banks of Saskatchewan had this to say in recent weeks:

We're struggling with dire needs right now. It's not necessarily whether you have a job or that anymore. We're seeing more and more people who are employed having to

come back and use the food banks.

Mr. Speaker, a recent report released by Food Banks Canada shows that food bank usage in Saskatchewan has increased dramatically. There were nearly 45,000 total visits to Saskatchewan food banks just in the month of March, Mr. Speaker. This represents an astonishing 37 per cent increase in food bank visits since last year alone.

And the worst situation of all, Mr. Speaker, over 40 per cent of those who are visiting our food banks here in Saskatchewan are children. This is appalling and it must be urgently addressed by the government. Yet what do we see? We continue to see the Sask Party government stand idly by, allowing Saskatchewan people to suffer and desperately continue to go hungry with one of the highest rates of food bank usage in the entire country. How is that growth that works for everyone, Mr. Speaker?

What's more, *Canada's Food Price Report* predicts that the average household of four will pay nearly \$1,000 more in groceries this year, and it shows that Saskatchewan is set to lead the nation in food price increases in 2022.

Coming back just for a moment to food banks, Mr. Speaker, the Health minister himself, he used to be the executive director of the Saskatoon Food Bank. You would think that surely at least the Health minister would have an understanding of the dire need of people in this province when it comes to food bank usage. I hope at least to see him show some leadership here and convince his colleagues to support our motion.

But coming back to this food price report and over \$1,000 more for families paying this year on groceries, we are leading the nation in food price increases, Mr. Speaker. We're number one in growth in this area, which is really sad to say. And we're second last in terms of wage growth in Canada. Wages have increased a measly 2 per cent in Saskatchewan over the last year.

And on top of that, this government continues to legislate the lowest bottom-of-the-barrel poverty minimum wages in all of Canada. That's what this government thinks working people are worth — minimum wages that won't even allow people to afford to eat. What the people of Saskatchewan deserve are living wages, Mr. Speaker.

So of course it's not just low-wage workers we know that are being left to suffer. It's all those in our province that are subjected to this government's inhumane Saskatchewan assistance program, or SIS [Saskatchewan income support]. Anti-poverty advocates from across the province have been ringing the alarm bells about this program's inadequacy for those Saskatchewan people who are most economically marginalized, but their pleas have been met with stone-hearted disregard from this government.

That report I referenced earlier from Food Banks Canada, Mr. Speaker, that report shows that in 2022 nearly 45 per cent of total Saskatchewan food bank visits were made by people on social assistance. So people can't even afford to eat because our social assistance rates are so disturbingly low, Mr. Speaker, and because food prices have been left to rise unchecked. This is completely inhumane, and the government needs to get to work fixing their broken social assistance program.

Mr. Speaker, there's also the glaring issue of food insecurity in northern Saskatchewan, the most prominent across our entire province. People in our province's North are currently paying \$16 for a jug of milk. And I hope the member for Athabasca over there in the back is listening up. Sixteen bucks for a jug of milk. What are you doing to support your constituents in the North of our province? And will you support this motion in support of your constituents who elected you?

Mr. Speaker, \$18 in northern Saskatchewan for a bag of apples. That's what the member from Athabasca is allowing his constituents to endure unless he will come ahead and support this motion with the opposition. It's outrageous. It's not sustainable. And we need to be looking at tangible solutions for those prices, especially in northern Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to push this government to meaningfully address the affordability crisis on multiple fronts. And, Mr. Speaker, it's essential that one of those affordability measures reflect our most recent call for this special committee.

Last week our leader stood with our affordability critic, the member for Regina Rosemont, and they called on this government to act and to show leadership, Mr. Speaker. The opposition has called on this government to initiate an investigation into skyrocketing food prices and to create a special committee of the legislature to work with the federal agriculture committee on food prices.

Mr. Speaker, why should grocery chains be allowed to profiteer and endlessly enrich themselves through corporate greed while Saskatchewan people are left going hungry? Why should that be something that this government allows to happen and stand by? And as the Minister for Agriculture said, just let them work it out themselves, you know, free enterprise; our hands are just washed of this. That's their attitude to the struggles and suffering of average Saskatchewan people and these producers.

So, Mr. Speaker, these companies, like I said, these corporate grocery companies should not be allowed to take advantage of inflation to drive up their profits. Loblaw Companies Limited, for example, has seen their first quarter profits shoot up 40 per cent from last year. Of course Loblaw's claims that they aren't taking advantage of inflation, Mr. Speaker. No, nothing to see here.

[11:45]

But we've seen how they operate in the past. We've seen very clearly. I'm sure we all recall just a few years ago, about five years ago, Loblaw's was at the centre of a conspiracy to inflate bread prices alongside other major grocery chains. And we know this corrupt price-fixing lasted for over 14 years, Mr. Speaker. So why should we trust them now? You know, why should we just leave it up to free enterprise? We've seen how this happens before. We've seen this show.

So then after being caught red-handed, Loblaw's, they tried to buy customers off with \$25 gift cards. What a joke. According to some estimates, this corrupt practice would have cost the average family around \$400 over those 14 years — 400 bucks. But here's a \$25 gift card. Wow. Thanks a lot, Loblaw's. So I mean we need to shine a light on these practices, you know. These grocery

chains, they need to be held accountable, Mr. Speaker.

So according to the Competition Bureau of Canada, grocery prices in Canada, we're learning, are increasing at the fastest rate seen in 40 years. The Competition Bureau announced a probe into grocery store profits just last month. And soon, Mr. Speaker, we can expect to see executives from the top Canadian food retailers summoned in front of the House of Commons agriculture committee for a parliamentary inquiry into corporate profits during the inflation crisis.

So will the Sask Party support this inquiry? Will they co-operate with these efforts? Will they strike a special committee on food pricing to examine food pricing issues in Saskatchewan as we have been calling for? Will they for once set aside their differences with the federal government and collaborate in good faith on behalf of Saskatchewan people on this matter of dire urgency? I hope for the sake of Saskatchewan people that the answer will be yes, Mr. Speaker. Lives and livelihoods are depending on it.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll wrap up my remarks. I will conclude in support of the motion made by my colleague, the member for Regina Rosemont. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There is an awful lot to unpack in all of that from that side of the House, and I fear that I'm probably going to bounce around a little bit because there's so many phrases to pick up on and so much in the motion that just is all over the map. So please allow me to make a few comments and deal with this particular motion.

First of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to recognize that the Saskatchewan ag producers, along with our province's industry associations and municipal leaders and of course our government, I think we collectively do a pretty darn good job — in fact an excellent job — of meeting with the standing committees at the federal level.

And you know, obviously we meet regularly with the SSGA and we're very familiar with their position. And we of course support the work that that incredible organization does in the ag world. But I want to recognize also at the same time that in the NDP opposition world, the government knows all and should find a way to interject itself into the market at every possible opportunity.

So I'm going to digress just for a second on one point. The member from, I believe it was Regina Rosemont, raised the fact that the average consumer is going to pay \$966 more in household costs this year for food costs. Well you know, I think if . . . I was looking at my own energy bill and my own cost of living, and I can assure that member that I am paying more than that in carbon tax alone — in carbon tax alone. And I think the member should recognize that.

And if he really wanted to have an impact, he might actually go to Ottawa, speak to Jagmeet Singh and Justin Trudeau or on one of those committees that they believe so much in, and actually state publicly in the public forum at the federal level that they do

not support the carbon tax and therefore they do not support their federal leader.

The member from . . . I believe it was the member from Saskatoon Meewasin or the member from Saskatoon University said, heaven forbid, don't leave it up to free enterprise. I'm going to come back to that in a couple of minutes. Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Thank you. I can't hear the speaker myself so please hold your voices down, please. I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is important and I would like the members opposite to hear this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's obviously an awful lot of factors that impact the cost of food and food production and so on. And I think it's been well canvassed by my colleague from Moosomin and my colleague from Melville-Saltcoats on some of those factors, so I'm probably not going to get into that particular piece too much.

But I do want to mention just a couple of things that I think are incredibly important. And part of it is the ongoing rhetoric by the federal Minister of Environment, Steven Guilbeault, who is talking about all kinds of things that influence and affect the production of goods.

And frankly, while I'm going to get into it in a second, I want to talk a little bit about why this needs to be put in perspective. But the rhetoric that comes from the federal level is concerning in that it drives some of the decisions that are affecting our cost of living, and we need to keep that in mind.

But I want to touch on one big, big, big issue here. And I really struggled when I read this motion to kind of get an understanding of where it might be coming from. And you know, I really think it's in the DNA, it's in the DNA of the opposition party, the NDP opposite. It's actually in the DNA of that party to consider how they should manage the economy, how they should own and manage and control and dominate and manage the economy. So some of us in this House are of a vintage, I have a couple of colleagues that certainly would remember this . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, I'm actually going to go back to 1975 in fact.

Some of us recall — and that's why it's important to put this in context — the wage and price control Act, which was actually called I believe the *Anti-Inflation Act* of 1975. In a *Maclean's* article written by Peter Brimelow in 1976, he said, and I quote:

Certainly NDP leader Ed Broadbent's recent campaign against the AIB has done nothing to shake government ranks, being distinguished mainly by an apparent inability to differentiate between net income and profit margins.

So even back then they knew nothing about the economy. And I'll further quote:

People don't realize that the 1975 inflation rate was actually less than 1974's 10.9%. It's against this background that

Pépin's talk of controls as a "war" requiring "almost passionate public support," or Pierre Trudeau's musings about a "new society" and the need for greater "authority" in our lives, must be placed.

Sound familiar? Sound familiar? My friends, this is Trudeau 2.0, supported by Jagmeet Singh.

So it goes on:

With some exceptions, such as Paul Paré, president of Imasco Ltd., businessmen have acquiesced in controls, partly because they are cravenly afraid of government displeasure and partly because of their mortal terror of inflation. But in reality they are deeply demoralized, because of long-term trends they believe they see in Canada toward state control. The AIB, despite its officers' contention that it is temporary, is regarded as symptomatic of a deeper disease. Given that the AIB itself followed inexorably from the government's November, 1974 blunder of stimulating the economy to avoid a U.S. style recession, thus inflating Canadian costs right off the international map and necessitating a painful readjustment, it's not surprising that business views Ottawa's birthday celebrations for controls with a baleful eye.

The *Anti-Inflation Act* was submitted to the Supreme Court for reference in 1976. The ruling: only parliament or under a law of parliament, the Government of Canada can assume responsibility for declaring a state of national emergency.

So even back in 1976, the federal Liberal government was putting themselves into provincial territory. And even the inflation Act had to be referred to the Supreme Court as a reference case.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my point is that the NDP collectively have worked with the Liberals for generations against the interests of the province of Saskatchewan. And until they actually stand up and support *The Saskatchewan First Act* and other things that are important to Saskatchewan producers and Saskatchewan people in the public domain, we will know exactly where they come from, exactly where they stand. And generally speaking, they're sitting squarely on the fence on just about everything.

So this concept of a planned economy does not work for me. And there is no chance — no chance — that I will support this motion from the members opposite. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The 65-minute period has expired. The 10-minute period for question and answer period will begin. I recognize the member from Melfort.

**Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the member from Saskatoon Meewasin — and I know you weren't around here then — but why are you surprised that Saskatchewan people are increasingly burdened by the price of food and inflation that we're all facing? Did it not strike you or your provincial-federal counterparts that a carbon tax was going to put us into this situation, resulting in shrunken Canadian dollars to pay for the inflating costs of our social and physical needs?

And did it not occur to you, when our provincial government put forward the environmentally and economically sound Prairie Resilience plan, that you should've stood with us on behalf of your constituents who are now struggling to bear up under the results of what our Education minister has called your federal government's job-killing, soul-sucking, unconstitutional, and inflationary carbon tax?

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The word salad questions here that come out of these benches here.

We've been very clear that we've never supported the carbon tax. I think we actually debated that last Thursday. I think these questions might have been recycled, Mr. Speaker.

So yeah, no. Elected only 30 days ago and my constituents sent me here to work with this House to find solutions to the issues that are important to them.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Great to enter in here on the carbon tax. So you know, my question is for the member from Kelvington-Wadena. I heard him talk about his energy bills, and, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House agree. So I would like to read a quote from the CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] News yesterday:

When asked if there would be any potential fee reductions concerning heat and electricity bills for Saskatchewan residents following the introduction of the province's plan, Minister Skoropad said he couldn't answer. "That would be the prerogative of the Minister of SaskEnergy and SaskPower."

So to the member from Kelvington-Wadena: what has he asked the Minister for SaskPower and SaskEnergy to do to remove his government's carbon tax from the bills of Saskatchewan people?

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm a little confused by the question because it's referring to the province's carbon tax. But I would like to say that if you actually go home, when you go home, actually pull out your energy bill and have a look at the federal carbon tax and the GST that's on top of that carbon tax. Have a look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Jenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Since 2007 Saskatchewan has been a national leader in affordability initiatives, with over \$2 billion in investments made that puts more money, that puts more money into the pockets of people in this province.

[12:00]

The federal government tag team of Justin and Jagmeet are causing inflation to skyrocket because of the ineffective carbon tax and its reckless spending. This is making life less affordable for Canadians.

On one hand the NDP opposition complain about inflation, but on the other hand they endorse the high inflation by supporting the punishing economic policies by their federal leaders, Justin and Jagmeet, on our agricultural producers. Mr. Speaker, it can't be both ways.

Will the member from Saskatoon University acknowledge that the carbon tax is the primary driver of inflation, increased food prices across the country? And will they unanimously support our Sask-first legislation to defend our agricultural producers from federal overreach?

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So to the member's question, you know, despite that side's continued obsession with carbon tax . . . It's all they talk about. It's all they think about. They are obsessed, Mr. Speaker. So I do not agree that it is the primary driver. No, I do not. Do I think that it could have contributed to increases in food prices? Yes. I mean, I think due to transportation there would have been an increase.

But instead of endlessly droning on and on about the carbon tax, why don't these members get to work making life more affordable by striking this special committee on food prices instead of being one-trick ponies as they always are?

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're hearing a lot of talk about carbon tax, but the question and the motion has to do with food prices and affordability for Saskatchewan people. I'd like to ask the member from Kelvington-Wadena would the member prefer that the people of Saskatchewan have more money in their wallets, or Toronto-based grocery chains?

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've been waiting for this question. I wonder if the member would recognize, just in passing, that Federated Co-op is one of the largest retailers in the province.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, we hear just all this nonsense from these folks over here who want to sort of paint some sort of alternate universe. Of course we've always stood up for Saskatchewan people's stated concerns around the carbon tax and stood up against this government as they imposed the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history because of their mismanagement.

The question's simple. To the member for Kelvington: how can

this member not support an investigation that represents fairness for producers and fairness for consumers?

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'm sure the member opposite would know that that investigation is currently going on at the federal level. And we appreciate and obviously recognize the value of that ongoing investigation. So I'll just leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well I guess I'm in danger of being called a one-trick pony, but regardless, thank you. Since 2007 Saskatchewan has been a national leader in affordability, with \$2 billion every year in investments that save Saskatchewan people money. But the federal government is committed to driving prices up and making life more unaffordable for the average Canadian.

To the member for Saskatoon University: will you commit to writing and signing a letter to your federal leaders, Justin and Jagmeet, today and demanding an end to the carbon tax that is making life more unaffordable for all Canadians?

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm so, like, delighted to see the member proving my point exactly. All they can do is read their speaking notes about the carbon tax over and over and over, and Justin and Jagmeet over and over. I mean, why don't these people get to work doing what they were elected to do and represent the people of our province instead of whining and bitching and moaning non-stop?

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to send my question back to Kelvington-Wadena here today because we're hearing a lot from that side. Does the member from Kelvington-Wadena think that the growing number of people, especially children, using the food banks is growth that works for everyone?

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Of course we recognize the challenges that some of our citizens are facing as we move into winter. And I think the Finance minister has addressed this a number of times in talking about the affordability measures that we've put in place. There is no solution that is going to solve all the problems. We're working on these matters day in and day out, and I fully appreciate the work that's being brought forward by my ministers who are involved in those files. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Athabasca.



**Mr. Lemaigre:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I continue to represent Athabasca and a good part of northern Saskatchewan and continue my strong engagement, I just want to quickly point out that Saskatchewan is home to one of the most sustainable agriculture sectors in the entire world. And yet this federal government refuses to listen to reason and continues to impose policies and legislations that penalizes our producers even when they invest into sustainable practices.

Now we have a provincial NDP that claims to support our agriculture producers and understand them. However, the NDP doesn't even know the difference between leafcutter bee and the honeybee. No credibility on that side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

To the member of Saskatoon Meewasin . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Next question. Next question. The time for the 75-minute debate period has now expired. I recognize the Government House Leader. State your point of order.

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — During debate the member for Saskatoon University used profanity in a couple of occasions. I'll give her the opportunity to stand in her place, apologize, and withdraw.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think it was a couple times, although I did have a little bit of a slip. I did have a little bit of a slip-up there when I was responding to the member for Churchill-Wildwood. Got a little carried away in my aggravation.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — You were still . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Excuse me. I'm speaking. If you want to apologize and withdraw, then apologize and withdraw. You are apologizing for using profanity, unparliamentary language in the Chamber. That's what you're apologizing for.

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, I apologize for using profanity and I withdraw.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Thank you.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

##### Motion No. 1 — Saskatchewan-First Policies and Legislation

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Ms. C. Young.]

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

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At the start of this session we formally introduced *The Saskatchewan*

*First Act*. At its root this bill asserts Saskatchewan's exclusive jurisdiction over natural resources, jurisdiction to develop Saskatchewan's natural resources in a way to benefit all of the people of the province, develop them without interference of harmful federal government policies.

Past, present, and future policies of the Justin-Jagmeet federal government threaten Saskatchewan's development of our natural resources and threaten the future of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, leadership matters. Leadership is important in guiding, providing support and services where and when needed, opening doors to opportunity and growth for both individuals and the collective good, acknowledging mistakes and correcting if necessary, all for the benefit of others. I am proud of the leadership of our Premier and all the members on this side of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be clear, this NDP opposition is committed to support the policies of their federal leader, Jagmeet. For further clarification, Jagmeet is the only reason Justin Trudeau remains as Prime Minister and the only reason Trudeau's minority government is allowed to continue to function as if it is a majority government.

Both Justin and Jagmeet have made it clear — very clear — they're determined to eliminate fossil fuels. And those opposition members continue to support them. When will the members opposite confront their federal leader and stand up for Saskatchewan?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, opposition members in this House stood behind and campaigned for federal NDP candidates in the last federal election whose platforms also supported no more pipelines and to leave oil in the ground. The new Leader of the Opposition and member from Regina Lakeview, the member from Saskatoon Fairview volunteered and supported the Saskatoon West candidate who wholeheartedly supported Jagmeet's no-pipelines-at-all-or-ever-again stance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this NDP opposition continues to support the federal carbon tax, or as they like to call it, federal carbon pricing. Make no mistake, it is a tax on a tax on a tax. The sole purpose of the federal carbon tax is to price fuel so high, so high that it becomes unaffordable for families; a tax that makes the cost of production increase, increase to the extent that Saskatchewan's farmers, ranchers, and miners can no longer remain competitive in the world markets, unable to compete with countries like Russia and China.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to remain competitive. We need to keep jobs within the province to grow our population and grow Saskatchewan. Your Sask Party government will keep supporting Saskatchewan, keep Saskatchewan growing, and keep putting Saskatchewan first.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the new federal fuel standard which came into force in June and will take effect next year will have a \$7 million a year impact on both gas consumption and diesel consumption. The opposition also supports this new tax. This is a huge impact, not only on the agriculture industry in the province, but affects retail, rail, trucking, manufacturing, and of course heating our homes and fuelling our vehicles — effectively

a tax on everything.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the federal clean electricity standard will eliminate the use of fossil fuels for electrical generation by 2035, another Justin-Jagmeet policy supported by this NDP opposition, a federal policy that again attacks Saskatchewan and the people living and working in this province. Again, when will the opposition start putting Saskatchewan first and support the people of this province?

Your Saskatchewan government will continue to support and promote our traditional oil and gas and mining sectors. We welcome new technologies and all forms of energy. We support investment, job creation, and innovation in both new and existing sectors that will keep us safe, warm, and secure, all while lowering emissions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, *The Saskatchewan First Act* asserts Saskatchewan's exclusive jurisdiction over natural resources. Our natural resources are one of the main reasons Saskatchewan is weathering the economic recessionary storm being experienced elsewhere.

Economic success and strength doesn't just happen. It happens when regulatory and royalty structures are strong, competitive, and transparent. It happens when you support and promote Saskatchewan production in Canada and around the world, telling Saskatchewan's investment and production story.

Economic success happens when you don't turn your back on workers, when you build on the strengths of Saskatchewan and diversify and expand into new areas of investment and production.

[12:15]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as our Minister of Justice and Attorney General stated in her reply to the Speech from the Throne:

It happens because you create a pro-business, pro-investment climate. This bill is about ensuring and protecting . . . [our economy].

It's about protecting Saskatchewan.

The economic success that Saskatchewan has achieved has been despite federal policies that have done . . . real economic harm, and that risk doing so much more. This bill will create the framework to define, address, and quantify economic harm because that harm is real and is being perpetrated on just one region . . .

We're tired of the condescension, of the double standards, and . . . the contempt for ordinary people and their livelihoods.

We are drawing the line, defending the line, and supporting Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, harmful federal policies continue to impact Saskatchewan. Future federal policies appear to be doing the same. The federal fertilizer emission cap appears to directly attack the food production our farmers work so hard to grow,

food the world so desperately needs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan has what the world needs. We have the food, fuel, and fertilizer. We will continue to support Saskatchewan and the people of the province. *The Saskatchewan First Act* will enable your government to defend our economy, defend our people, and put Saskatchewan first.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting this bill and I ask all members to support this bill. In fact I implore the opposition members to finally stand in support of Saskatchewan people and support this great province. When will the opposition leader, the NDP Opposition Leader, show some leadership? Firstly and finally, will the NDP put Saskatchewan first?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support the motion by my friend and colleague from Lloydminster that reads as follows:

That this Assembly supports the Government of Saskatchewan's implementation of Saskatchewan-first policies and legislation. To that end, we will call upon the Trudeau-Singh coalition Government of Canada to commit to ending policies and cancelling legislation that would prove severely detrimental to Saskatchewan and Canada's economic growth and energy production including, but not limited to, the federal carbon tax, the clean fuel standard, Bill C-69, the clean electricity standard, and the fertilizer emissions cap.

I strongly support this motion, and I thank you.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried. Why is the member on his feet? I recognize the Minister of Education.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It has been moved that the Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:19.]



# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

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**Premier**  
**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

**Hon. Lori Carr**  
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement  
Minister Responsible for the  
Public Service Commission  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority  
Minister Responsible for  
The Global Transportation Hub Authority

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill**  
Minister of Highways  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**  
Minister of Education

**Hon. Bronwyn Eyre**  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**  
Deputy Premier  
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**Hon. Jeremy Harrison**  
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Minister of Immigration and Career Training  
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Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

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Provincial Capital Commission

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

**Hon. Jim Reiter**  
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Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

**Hon. Dana Skoropad**  
Minister of Environment

**Hon. Christine Tell**  
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**  
Minister of Advanced Education