



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

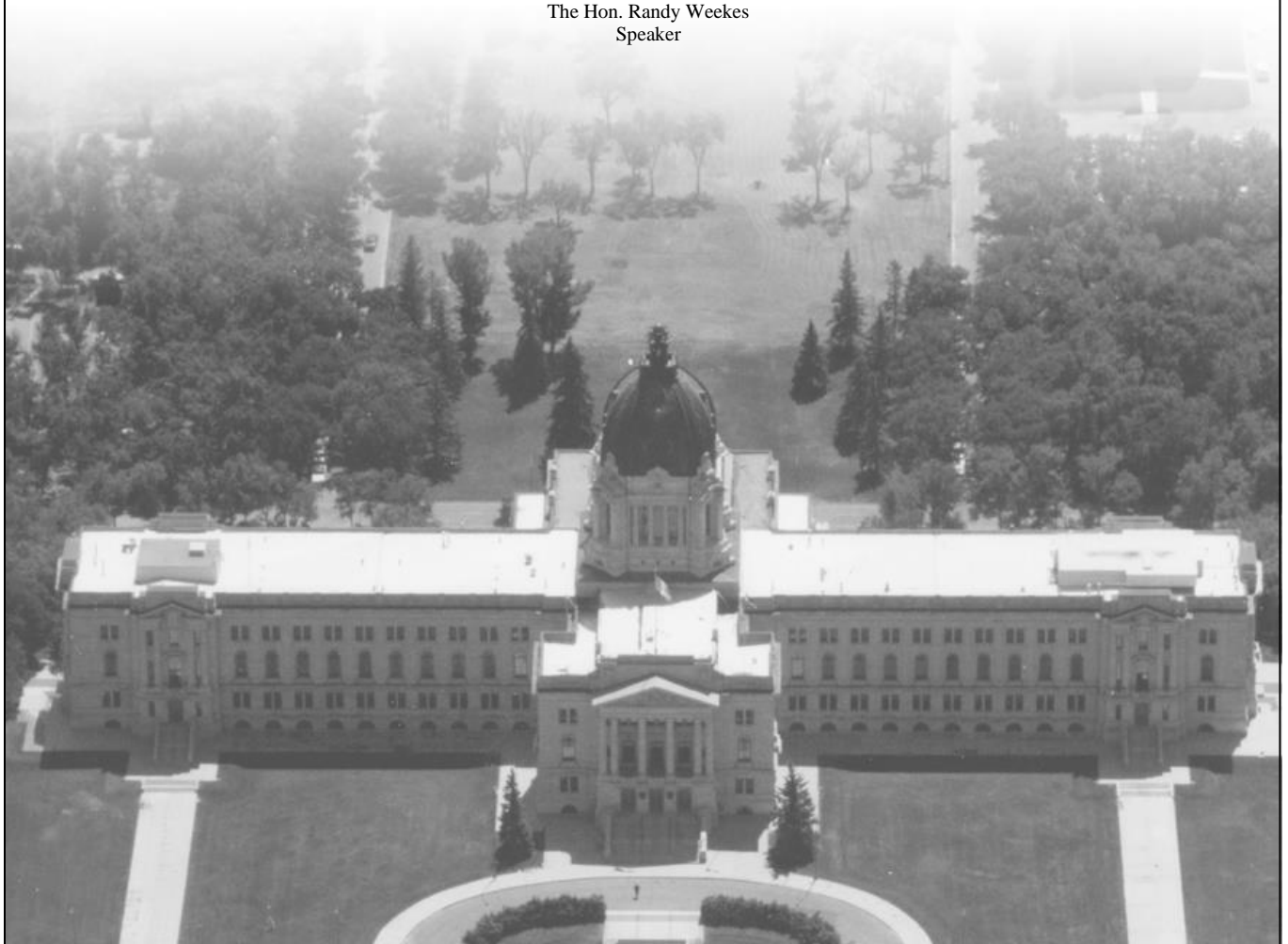
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes

Premier — Hon. Scott Moe

Leader of the Opposition — Carla Beck

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)

Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)

Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)

Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)

Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)

Docherty, Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)

Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)

Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)

Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)

Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)

Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)

Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)

Harrison, Daryl — Cannington (SP)

Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)

Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)

Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)

Kaeding, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (SP)

Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

McLeod, Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)

McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

Meyers, Derek — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)

Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

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Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)

Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

Skoropad, Hon. Dana — Arm River (SP)

Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

Stewart, Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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

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Principal Clerk — Kathy Burianyak

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Legislative Assembly are available
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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I would like to introduce an old friend of mine who's seated in my gallery. His name is Rick Dempsey. He was a Saskatchewan boy and went to Alberta, and we are both vocational agriculture alumni. And I would just like to welcome Rick to the Assembly.

I recognize the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Assembly, I'd like to introduce 25 grade 4 students from W.S. Hawrylak School right here in Regina. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Da Costa. And the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Rochdale will have to take over my duties and speak with you. And you'll have lots of questions for her; make them really hard. I'm sure you'll enjoy her. But anyway, I ask all members to welcome these students to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'm delighted to introduce a constituent of mine, Tana Cugnet, who is here accompanied by her husband, Dan. Tana is an accomplished artist, Mr. Speaker, and all of the members, in fact anybody in this building, will have an opportunity to see her artwork on exhibit here until the middle of January.

And I would invite all members to not only help me in welcoming Tana and Dan to their Legislative Assembly but encourage everyone, if they can, to take part in a reception from 4 to 6 this evening and get a chance to say hello and to meet Tana. And so I would ask all members to welcome Tana and Dan to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite to welcome the Cugnets to their Assembly. Tana, Dan, it's awesome to see you here today. I look forward to the exhibit down in the Cumberland Gallery. I'm a huge fan of Tana's work. I admire it often on Twitter and I've gone to her page and looked at her gallery. I think I'm due at some point to make a purchase, Mr. Speaker.

These two are real community leaders as well, Mr. Speaker. They give back in many ways to the community. Their family has for generations through the region, Mr. Speaker. A special shout-out to Dan as well. I mean, their family is highly involved in agriculture, in a very proud and important energy sector as well, Mr. Speaker. And Dan himself is a talented artist as well. I look forward to his show sometime here in Regina. I think he's

released two albums this year, Mr. Speaker, hot on the heels of *Rodeo Cabaret* last year, Mr. Speaker, I believe. But it's a real honour to have them both here in their Assembly.

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

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I'd like to welcome back Lester Cey to his Legislative Assembly. I will be doing a member's statement on some of the great work that his son's company and he does with them as well in our Indigenous community, in our province, and actually Canada and in the United States. So I'd ask all members to welcome Lester to his Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to stop the closures at Wilkie and District Health Centre. In March of 2020, this community was told these were temporary closures. It's been over two and a half years. They're set to lose their doctor next month and this government needs to step up and make a plan to provide health care to the residents of Wilkie and surrounding communities.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to stop closing emergency department and out-patient services at Wilkie and District Health Centre.

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

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

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — 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.

This petition is signed by residents from Kindersley. I do so present.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Honoured to rise again and present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. Folks who have signed this petition today are concerned about recruitment and retention of health care professionals, especially in Saskatchewan's rural health care facilities, including acute care, emergency room, as well as lab and X-ray service disruptions that are prevalent across our province.

They would like us to note that the ongoing pandemic has created burnout and has led to early retirements. And again the health care workers that I speak to are feeling pressure at all stages of their career, whether they're new to the health care workforce or if they've served us for decades. These concerns continued to be present at the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention, and this petition references the 94 per cent of rural leaders who voted to support a resolution acknowledging the nursing and health care worker shortage last year.

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.

This petition today is signed by residents of Scott and Wilkie. I do so present.

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

Mr. Teed: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present our petition to prohibit conversion therapy. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: conversion therapy use discredited and abusive practices which attempt to actively change sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* names sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination; the practice of conversion therapy, or reparative therapy, is seriously harmful to individuals and is opposed by the Canadian Psychological Association, the World Health Organization, and the American Psychiatric Association.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child indicates that children should not be discriminated against based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to ban the practice of

conversion therapy and prohibit transporting youth and adults outside Saskatchewan for such purposes.

The undersigned residents reside in Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise once again to present our petition calling on the government to fund domestic violence shelters. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that the Premier's apology for his government's invitation of convicted wife-murderer Colin Thatcher to the Throne Speech needs to be followed up with action; that Saskatchewan has the highest rate of domestic violence among all the provinces; that Saskatchewan does not fund second-stage shelters, one of only a very few provinces to not fund those shelters, and these shelters provide long-term housing for people trying to escape abusive situations; that without second-stage shelters, people facing domestic violence have few long-term options. The people who have signed the petition today . . .

Pardon me, I'll read the prayer:

We in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately fund second-stage shelters to support people fleeing domestic violence.

The folks today who have signed our petition, Mr. Speaker, reside in Preeceville and Canora. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Children's Books Feature Indigenous Illustrator

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Azby Whitecalf of Sweetgrass First Nation has completed the illustrations for a new children's book called *Buffalo Wild!* by author Deidre Havrelock from Saddle Lake Cree Nation. Mr. Speaker, the book *Buffalo Wild!* is Azby's first book and the first big professional project she has done since finishing university, where she majored in character design.

The book tells an Indigenous-themed story, something that speaks to Azby, being an Indigenous person and an artist. The story is about a young Indigenous boy named Declan who's obsessed with buffalos and lives with his grandmother. Declan's kohkom tells him stories about the buffalo.

Azby also has another children's book coming out soon called *We Belong to the Drum*, about a child who develops a sense of belonging through the music of the powwow drum. The author of this book is Sandra Lamouche and it will be available in a dual-language version, both English and Plains Cree. Azby says it's an important time in the world when more people want to hear from more Indigenous voices and learn about the many Indigenous stories.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating Azby Whitecap on their first and second book illustrations, and all the best of luck to Azby on her future collaborations. Thank you.

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

Canadian Western Agribition in Regina

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Western Agribition kicks off today in Regina. It's an important week for our province and for our city. For over 50 years, people from all over the world have gathered in Regina for the world's premier beef and livestock show. It's an opportunity for Saskatchewan's livestock producers, farmers, innovators, and entrepreneurs to show and network. It has also played a crucial role in educating young people about Saskatchewan's pivotal role in raising and harvesting the food the world needs.

Not only is the Canadian Western Agribition an opportunity for producers to meet and market, it boasts a lineup that truly has something for everyone. In addition to the barns, livestock shows, and competitions, this week will also feature trade shows and shopping, a pancake breakfast, and dancing in the dirt, rodeos, and jousting, making Agribition truly an attraction for all.

Mr. Speaker, I've been pleased to attend Agribition almost every year that I can remember. Even after moving to the big city, it's been a much-anticipated, annual date for my dad and I.

Today I want to especially thank the new CEO [chief executive officer], Shaun Kindopp; the incredible Agribition board and staff; and all of the producers and exhibitors. And I ask all members to join me in celebrating Saskatchewan's agriculture and agribusiness leaders as they descend on Agribition, guaranteed to be a great time in the Queen City.

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

Potash Pre-Employment Course Collaboration

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to highlight Morris Interactive, an award-winning Saskatchewan consulting firm working with agriculture, mining, oil and gas, construction, financial services, the public sector, health care, and working with over 170 First Nations and Métis organizations.

On October 14th I had the pleasure of bringing greetings to the International Minerals Innovation Institute scholarship awards banquet and met many great award winners. Recently Morris Interactive, in partnership with Mosaic, IMII [International Minerals Innovation Institute], Gabriel Dumont Institute, and the Cowessess First Nation, has collaborated to develop a potash pre-employment course for young First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals, called digital transformation in potash mining.

[13:45]

Cowessess First Nation piloted the first course, and recently Mosaic announced their ongoing support, providing a million

dollars for five years. This course involves eight weeks of in-class learning, mine tours, and industry leader presentations, followed by a two-week practicum on Mosaic's Colonsay mine site. The pilot completed with nine graduates, five who have already secured mine-specific careers. This program brings together a diverse range of organizations, First Nations, and partners to achieve one goal — student success.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all members to join me in recognizing Morris Interactive and the great work that Mathew Cey and his team are accomplishing. Thank you.

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

Christmas Light Display on Saskatoon's Clinkskill Drive

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every year something magical takes place in Saskatoon Eastview at the home of Scott and Shelly Lambie, something so special that it attracts thousands of visitors from Saskatoon and beyond. From mid-November to early January, the greatest Christmas light display in the province can be found on Clinkskill Drive. It strikes awe in visitors young and old, as well as first-time visitors, and folks like my family who make 10 or 12 visits a year.

Scott began this project in 2008 with four controllers and 25,000 lights. Fourteen years later, he's up to 19 controllers, over 85,000 lights on 1,000 strands that coordinate with Christmas music that he transmits locally at 89.7 FM. He starts planning in January and he starts setting up in September.

This work has been a labour of love for Scott and his family, but after 15 years he's ready to hang up the staple gun. He announced via a Facebook post that's been viewed over 70,000 times that this will be the last year of the Clinkskill lights. Folks in our community and around the city have made visiting the Lambie home part of their family traditions. And we are full of gratitude for all of Scott's time, energy, creativity, and investment into brightening up the holiday season.

I encourage all members to visit the Clinkskill lights and to join me in thanking Scott Lambie and his family for 15 years of holiday magic.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

2022 Outstanding Young Farmers Award Winners

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to rise in the House today to congratulate Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan's very own Cody Straza and Allison Squires of Upland Organics, one of Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers 2022 winners. They were joined by the co-winners from Quebec. They were among many competitors from seven regional finalists across the country vying for the prestigious award.

I had the pleasure of attending, along with the member from Melville-Saltcoats, the gala announcement of winners on Friday, November 26th in Saskatoon. Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers program is an annual competition recognizing farmers that exemplify excellence in their profession and promote the tremendous contribution of agriculture.

Cody and Allison met at the University of Saskatchewan. He purchased his first cattle and land before pursuing his engineering degree, and she was working on her Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] in toxicology. In 2010 they bought seven quarters of land in Wood Mountain and began Upland Organics.

In 2015 they introduced a seed cleaning plant to reduce their grain dockage and improve revenue. In 2019 they raised 300 head of cattle to trample cover crops, eliminating the need for fall tillage. They expanded their markets by adding value and diversifying, and most recently backgrounding calves for the market.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Cody Straza and Allison Squires of Upland Organics for their remarkable contributions to Saskatchewan's agriculture and farming landscape. Thank you.

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

Towns Collaborate to Support Ukrainian Refugees

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a nation, we have witnessed the invasion of Ukraine by Vladimir Putin and the effects it has had on the Ukrainian people. However, Mr. Speaker, we have also seen tremendous support from this province's people for all Ukrainians.

Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight one community in my constituency, the town of Lemberg. Community members came together and formed the Lemberg Refugee Community Fund, which integrated seven families into the communities of Lemberg and Neudorf. With the help of both communities, refugees received employment as welders, skilled farm labourers, specialty software engineers, agricultural mechanics, and electricians, and they also aspire to open a beauty salon.

Mr. Speaker, it warms my heart to see residents of this province welcoming newcomers with open arms, providing them with a sense of community. It is even more inspiring to see Ukrainian people arrive in Saskatchewan with grace, strength, and determination to contribute to the success of this province.

I ask all members to join me in thanking the communities of Lemberg and Neudorf for being shining representatives for Saskatchewan residents and in providing not only homes for refugees but ensuring jobs, transportation, and a very supportive community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Improvements to Highway 3

Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to join the Premier, Minister of Highways, and my colleague from Prince Albert Northcote on Friday to celebrate the completion of the Highway 3 twinning project northwest of Prince Albert.

It was an emotional morning, Mr. Speaker, as we were joined by Lexi Zbaraschuk and her family along with the Rothwell family,

both whom have experienced unimaginable tragedy on that stretch of road. Safety is a top priority for our government, and speaking to and celebrating needed improvements with these families is a testament to why it is so important.

Mr. Speaker, improvements include protected T-intersections and continuous lighting, which makes night driving along this highway safer. And the seven and a half kilometres of twinning is in addition to new passing lanes from last year. Mr. Speaker, this \$21.4 million project provides capacity for future growth, but most importantly it improves safety for commuters and will no doubt save lives.

Focusing on growth allows our government to invest in projects like this that strengthen our trade corridors, Mr. Speaker, projects that support people, keep them safe, and give them what they need to prosper — projects that improve quality of life and ensure everyone shares in the benefits of growth. Mr. Speaker, that's growth that works for everyone. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we'll get a look at the government's books. Now the high-flying Finance minister has already signalled that we're in the black and will likely confirm that they're sitting on windfall revenues.

The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that so many Saskatchewan families aren't benefiting. They're falling behind on bills faster than anywhere else in the country. We had the biggest jump in food bank use in the country. And right here at home, we've just learned that two former Camp Hope residents sadly passed away this weekend. Mr. Speaker, they had been homeless.

To the Premier: does he think that people going without, at risk of losing their homes, or even dying in the streets is growth that works for everyone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed correct that very soon the people of Saskatchewan will see where we project that our budget is at, at mid-year. It's the same time every year where we've been able to present that mid-year report.

Mr. Speaker, she is also correct that our books were far more healthy, which we displayed in the first quarter. But where she maybe did miss the mark a little bit was that nobody benefited from that windfall, when in fact that is indeed false.

All of the adults in Saskatchewan benefited with an expenditure of \$450 million, where every adult in Saskatchewan who filed income tax will receive a \$500 cheque. She's incorrect that small businesses won't be helped because we're going to extend small business tax rate at zero per cent for the following year, for another year. She's incorrect that all people won't benefit through a write-down of existing debt by a billion dollars.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, an economy isn't doing well if people aren't doing well. Now I'm sure tomorrow we'll hear more self-congratulations about windfall revenues, but that's cold comfort, Mr. Speaker, if it isn't accompanied by real relief for Saskatchewan people.

To the Premier: what new help will be introduced tomorrow to help with the crushing cost of living made so much worse by that government's own new fees, tax hikes, and rate hikes?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, again she will have to wait for that report tomorrow. But what will not happen is we will not go back to what it was like under the NDP where the PST [provincial sales tax] was higher than it is today, where personal income tax was higher than it is today, where education property tax was higher than it was today, where the low-income tax credit was lower than it is today, the seniors' income plan was lower than it is today, the disability tax credit and caregiver tax credits are lower than it is today. That is what we're not going back to, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provision of Health Care in Rural Communities

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, more evidence of a government completely out of touch with the reality that Saskatchewan people are facing.

Now I have a simple question to the Premier: does he think that people seeking emergency care in our province should be finding out that their emergency room is closed only once they've arrived at the front door?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We continue to make investments into the health care system. We know that we have some challenges when it comes to health care in emergency room departments and a number of temporary service disruptions. But those are the challenges that we're committed to addressing, and make sure that we're making investments into health care, Mr. Speaker.

It's why in September this government, over and above previous investments, announced in the budget, announced a \$60 million four-point plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain health care workers in this province, Mr. Speaker. That includes in hospitals right across Saskatchewan, including our emergency room departments and hospitals and health care centres right across all of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, "some challenges" is a rather shocking understatement by that minister.

Now I was in Kindersley this weekend, the heart of potash country . . . I was in Esterhazy this weekend as well, Mr. Speaker, the heart of potash country. And we dropped in . . . Well, Mr.

Speaker, they might want to hear this. We dropped in on the hospital there and we found a notice posted to the door letting people know that their emergency room was closed. It directed people to either Moosomin or Yorkton, almost 100 kilometres away. Or, Mr. Speaker, to Melville, which had been updated — actually it was pencilled in on the notice — noting that there were weekend closures in that hospital as well. None of these service disruptions can be found on the SHA's [Saskatchewan Health Authority] service disruption page.

Again does the Premier think that it's safe for people seeking emergency care in this province to be sent hundreds of kilometres away?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is why the government announced in September a four-point plan, as I said earlier, to attract, train, recruit, incentivize health care workers right across this province.

Mr. Speaker, that includes a number of these communities. I had the opportunity to visit Esterhazy earlier this summer, along with about 30 other communities across Saskatchewan, to talk directly to front-line health care workers. And we're starting to see some successes as a result of the hiring that's happening in places like Kamsack, places like Biggar, places like Redvers, Mr. Speaker.

We're committed to doing that work in rural communities. We're going to restore services so that people in rural Saskatchewan have access to the right care at the right place at the right time, right across our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the four-point plan is not working, and we see evidence of this every day. We're talking about the safety of citizens in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, maybe the minister would want to imagine this: there's an emergency and you arrive at your local hospital only to find a notice saying, sorry, please go somewhere else.

Rural citizens in this province are having to create their own Facebook pages to share service closures because this government would rather spend their time spinning and ducking than actually ensuring that those ERs [emergency room] are open when people need them.

To the Premier: why is this government keeping people in the dark about emergency care, and will he commit today to publicly sharing current information about closures?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we won't commit to is closing 52 more rural hospitals like the members opposite did. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, the so-called Leader of the Opposition, disparages the good work being done by the SHA and health care teams right across this province, the number of successes we've seen as a result of the four-point plan.

[14:00]

And we're making some positive impacts, positive inroads, Mr. Speaker, as we've heard earlier, communities like Biggar and Kamsack where services are starting to be restored across this province.

Here's some of the quotes from some of the town leadership across Saskatchewan. From the mayor of Biggar, Mr. Speaker, who says:

We owe a big thank you to the official from the SHA for their open dialogue on a regular basis that brought us to this point. It is truly a step forward and our town is thankful.

Mr. Speaker, that's according to Jim Rickwood, mayor of Biggar.

We have more work to do, Mr. Speaker, but this government is committed to getting these services restored.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, there's one government closing hospitals today and they're sitting right over there. So here's the respect that they're showing to rural residents. Because the issue raised today by our leader is not an isolated incident.

When I was in Kamsack and Canora this summer, there were signs on their doors as well. Now if you had an emergency and you went to the Canora Hospital, there'd be a note on the door that told you to head to Kamsack. And then when you got to Kamsack, you would find a note on the door that told you to go back to Canora.

I'll ask if any of the folks . . . any folks on the government benches to imagine that if their families had an emergency, is this the kind of care that they would be okay with for their loved ones?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also note, when it comes to the community of Esterhazy, that there will be three new lab techs starting in Esterhazy this week.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other initiatives that are under way and positive moves that are happening. Thanks to Kamsack Hospital's successful recruitment of seven registered nurses, they're reopening five beds earlier . . . this month. Kamsack also recently welcomed three new physicians to that community, and the recruitment continues in Kamsack, Mr. Speaker.

The Radville Marian Health Centre resumed full service on November 7th. The Assiniboia Union Hospital, Mr. Speaker, two new SIPPA [Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment] physicians while they continue to recruit other health care professionals in order to enhance service in that community. The Biggar and district health facility, Mr. Speaker, fully resumed 24-7 emergency services in early October with the additional recruitment of four new registered nursing staff. Biggar was able to reopen five acute care beds on October 31st.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue that work to make sure we restore services right across this province.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, it's a great example again of a government who will pat themselves on the back for doing the bare minimum to start to fix a problem that they caused. But here we are. You know, we've got a government refusing to listen to very real concerns from Saskatchewan people, concerns that have come about after 15 years of health care mismanagement.

We spoke with a man who broke his hand while at work in Esterhazy. Because of service closures, he was directed an hour away to Yorkton, only to be asked to come back the next day because they didn't have staff to be able to take an X-ray.

This is a health care system in crisis, and it should be treated like a crisis. What actions will the minister take today to ensure that rural residents are not kept in the dark about the Sask Party government's current health care closures?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, I would direct the member opposite to the announcement on September 7th, a four-point plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain health care workers, an additional \$60 million to bring 1,000 more health care professionals into Saskatchewan. And we're starting to see some of those benefits right now.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health at this very moment is in the Philippines on a recruitment mission to bring more health care workers back to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we've announced a new incentive package of up to \$50,000 for a three-year return-of-service agreement to recruit health care professionals into communities, into hard-to-recruit designations, such as nurses, such as lab techs, such as continuing care aides, Mr. Speaker. These are just some of the initiatives that are part of that four-point plan.

We're also in the process of launching a new health human resources agency, Mr. Speaker, that will be geared towards hiring not just family physicians but also many other health care workers in this province, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to do this good work.

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, injuries don't take the weekend off, nor do potash workers just outside of Esterhazy. Saskatchewan people should be able to get health care in rural Saskatchewan.

And people should have enough money to pay the bills. Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is going through the roof, and as a result of that tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government,

families are paying higher taxes. They're paying higher energy bills and higher power bills. That's all on that Sask Party government, that Premier. How on earth would this Premier choose to make life more expensive for Saskatchewan people, for Saskatchewan families who are just struggling to make ends meet?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Again, Mr. Speaker, the NDP have absolutely no credibility on this issue, and again we'll state that taxes are lower than they used to be in Saskatchewan. And in fact, there was an article in the paper on November 21st by David Bico, who did a study and compared all of the provinces on their affordability and said this, to say and I quote, "Saskatchewan is one of the most affordable provinces for living and raising a family."

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the interjurisdictional comparisons on page 70 of the budget document, you will see that Saskatchewan is the lowest or the second lowest in almost every income bracket for affordability across our entire country.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Let's talk credibility. That Sask Party government brought in the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history and tripled the debt, Mr. Speaker. But the price of groceries is going up by \$966 for an average family this year. One-time support is one thing — and we've called for that relief — but that leaves nothing to pay the higher taxes, fees, and utilities that this government is slamming families with, Mr. Speaker, and nothing to address the cost of raising kids.

Why has that tired Sask Party government that's grown so out of touch, why are they failing to make life better for Saskatchewan people? Why won't they do the right thing and scrap the nonsensical tax hikes and fee hikes today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, again I'll remind the member opposite that taxes are lower than they used to be under the NDP when they were in government. And also they did not have a personal care home benefit. They did not have an active families benefit to help for those cost pressures for families. They did not have a children's drug plan for cost pressures for families. And there was no graduate retention program to help the young people and to keep them in our province, Mr. Speaker. None of that existed.

They did very little to nothing. They did not help seniors. They did not help families. They did not help individuals. And that's why they left this province in droves, Mr. Speaker, in droves. And now they pretend that they know something on this particular topic when they simply do not.

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

Food Pricing in Saskatchewan

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's

history, imposing new taxes on Saskatchewan people while the government enjoys windfall revenues and people are stuck with crushing cost of living. It defies economic sense and the best interests of Saskatchewan people.

This week though livestock producers from across the province and around the world are descending on Regina. They have a lot to be proud of and to celebrate. And here in Saskatchewan their calls for fairness matter and they should be acted on. The big out-of-province meat packers are giving them a raw deal, and families are paying through the nose at the meat counter.

This government blocked our call for action to investigate and get fair prices for producers and consumers. Why won't the Sask Party act on this front to deliver fairness for producers and for consumers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously I want to welcome everybody to the Canadian Western Agribition, the largest livestock show in Canada and probably, I would say, even in North America. And I just want to take this opportunity to thank all the people that volunteer for the greatest show that we could ever see in the livestock industry.

To the member opposite's question, I'll answer the same way I've answered over and over again. And it all comes right down to the cost of food and cost of production, and that all comes right back to the farm gate. Every penny comes right back to the farm gate, to the farmers and ranchers in this province who do everything they can to grow strong, healthy food for the world. We pay carbon tax all through the whole system.

But one I did forget to mention a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, is every time that product is transported there's another carbon tax on it. So there's a carbon tax on a carbon tax on a carbon tax, which those members opposite have stood and supported from day one, Mr. Speaker.

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

Housing Supports

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this government's lack of action on the cost-of-living crisis has had other consequences. No matter who you talk to — tenants, landlords, housing advocates — Saskatchewan is facing a housing crisis, and they all say the Sask Party government is to blame. Nearly 1,000 tenants, many of whom are families, were evicted this spring and summer alone, and it's no wonder why. The Saskatchewan people have waited months for affordability relief. Now eviction has become a reality for too many.

On top of a broken SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program and rising utility rates, many have been evicted and others are facing the impossible choice between paying their rent and having a square meal. Does the Minister for Social Services think that this is growth that works for everyone?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, in terms of income assistance as well as it . . . works with housing. Mr. Speaker, we have some of the highest rates of income assistance, just north of \$600 million that we spend on income assistance, as well as some of the lowest costs of housing.

So we continue to work with folks out there who may need housing, Mr. Speaker. Some of the things we have done to help people not become evicted, if they are on income assistance, we have a reporting mechanism for landlords. So we're able to help deal with those who are in arrears, Mr. Speaker, and who happen to be on income assistance.

I would note that in terms of the SIS program that the member opposite mentioned, we have made changes, \$11 million in the last budget, Mr. Speaker, to help with that. We've increased direct payments, as the member has suggested would be a partial solution, similar to what happened under the SAP [Saskatchewan assistance program] and TEA [transitional employment allowance] program previously. The vast majority of folks out there, 36,000 households who are on income assistance, do pay their bills, similar to what happens in most other provinces in the country, Mr. Speaker.

So we're going to continue to work with our income assistance clients to be able to make sure they have a place to stay.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, Larissa Sellers, a mother of three teenagers, is one of those who's been evicted, and she's here with us today. As reported by CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] this morning, her salary left her picking between buying groceries and paying for a mouldy, cockroach-infested basement suite. She appealed her eviction, which led her to being blacklisted by many landlords. She's trying to find housing while she and her kids are staying between several relatives. Her kids are now upset, stressed, and admit mental health challenges. Does the minister realize that this government's choices are making life harder for families like Larissa's?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of this case. I won't speak directly to that. But again some of the areas that we are certainly working on in terms of income assistance as well as on the housing side, Mr. Speaker, we're working very hard. There's around 18,000 units right across this province that . . . We work very hard in order to find housing.

There's different reasons why someone may be in arrears or may be evicted, not only on the income assistance side but through the . . . and that's why there's the Office of Residential Tenancies. There's a process there to work together with the landlord and the client, and so that is available as well, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of affordability I'll also note, Mr. Speaker, recently there was the \$500 affordability tax credit that was made available to every person over 18. There was \$100 available to folks out there under the NDP plan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Except the thing about Larissa, Mr. Speaker, is she works. She works and she's still in this situation. And she knows she's not the only one facing this situation. She actually works directly with folks on SIS, and their situation is even worse.

And mayors know it too, Mr. Speaker, and they're speaking out. The City Mayors' Caucus are asking for the Sask Party government to do something. Lloydminster mayor Gerald Aalbers criticized this government's paltry income assistance program: "The cities are involved because people end up at our door. Getting called to clean up, to assist, to house, that's not our job."

[14:15]

He's right. It's the government's job. So to the minister: when is this government going to step up and do it?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of housing we have done a lot in partnering with the private sector. We're continuing to work with landlords to be able to get ahead of somebody who may potentially become evicted, and so we continue to work on that.

I'd note that we have some of the most affordable housing in the Dominion of Canada, some of the highest rates of income assistance, Mr. Speaker. There was an increase in the last budget, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to look at that.

Mr. Speaker, again the affordability tax credit. The education and training incentive will help those make ends meet. The Sask housing benefit is something we've recently had and expanded for those in low-income situations in our province. Income exemptions are also available now under the SIS program. So, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to listen to advocates and understand where there are gaps, and we'll continue to work on that.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to hear that minister commit to meeting with Ms. Sellers today and hear from her perspective.

We've been calling for an end to SIS and for public housing to be used to house people and to keep them alive. We've been calling for that since, and even before, Camp Hope was established here in Regina. Instead two more former residents passed away this past weekend, Mr. Speaker, while living in homelessness, while over 700 vacants were left to fall into disrepair and sit empty in this city alone. People are dying while this government allows that to happen, Mr. Speaker.

And now city mayors have joined us in our calls. They agree that the 3,000 units sitting empty across this province could be part of the solution, but still no political will from this government. Instead of wasting time and money on virtue-signalling, on pet

projects, we call on this government to show leadership on this issue and keep families like Larissa's housed and healthy. Will the minister commit today?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, in terms of meeting with this individual, absolutely I'd be happy to, to learn more about the situation and how social assistance and the Sask Housing Corporation may be able to assist them in finding housing.

In terms of Sask Housing, Mr. Speaker, it's traditionally been prioritized for seniors, families with children, and those fleeing domestic violence. And it appears that the member does agree with that. She said in a letter to me, and I quote, "ensuring the compatibility of community members is a key housing-first principle."

We're continuing to work, and I've asked the ministry to look at ways we can decrease those barriers for different folks to be able to use some of our units, Mr. Speaker. But we'll continue to partner with our CBOs [community-based organization] to be able to fill those units and work with our municipalities to be able to fill those.

We spend \$35 million a year in upkeep, Mr. Speaker, and we continue to work on that. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Sarauer: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — State your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During question period the Minister for Rural and Remote Health called the Leader of the Opposition the "so-called Leader of the Opposition." He knows full well that's not parliamentary language. I'd ask him to withdraw and apologize.

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — I withdraw and apologize, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 110 — *The Wills Amendment Act, 2022* *Loi modificative de 2022 sur les testaments*

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 111, *The Wills Amendment Act, 2022* be introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — Which bill? It should be 110? 110 to 111? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — I move that Bill No. 110, *The Wills*

Amendment Act, 2022 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 110 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 111 — *The Family Maintenance Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur les prestations alimentaires familiales*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 111, *The Family Maintenance Amendment Act, 2022* be introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 111 be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

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

Federal Firearms Legislation

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my comments, I will be moving a motion denouncing the federal government's recent actions to criminalize lawful firearms owners in Saskatchewan and across this country. This motion should attract full support in this House, as it impacts tens of thousands of residents in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to stand in this House today on

behalf of all legal, law-abiding firearms owners in Saskatchewan. Currently legal Saskatchewan firearms owners and, furthermore, Canadian firearms owners, are facing immense ideological pressure from the federal Liberal-NDP coalition government.

I speak of course about Bill C-21 and its recent amendments that will criminalize tens of thousands of Saskatchewan residents overnight while accomplishing nothing to enhance public safety. It will not build on the necessary resources to fight firearms and gang trafficking and illegal firearms use. It will not reduce gang or criminal activity, and it will not take predominantly sawed-off rifles and shotguns along with smuggled handguns from the USA [United States of America] from our Saskatchewan and Canadian communities.

Bill C-21 does nothing to target the illegal use of all firearms. Instead it only targets lawfully licensed firearms owners and their rights to access their legally acquired firearms. The Liberal-NDP coalition are targeting law-abiding Canadian citizens, and it shows the continued disconnect between the federal government and legal firearms owners across Saskatchewan and Canada. These actions by the federal government only compound efforts from the May 2020 order in council that banned thousands of firearms and the most recent and surprising freeze on all handgun sales this past October.

This government will not stand idly by while the federal government brands thousands of law-abiding citizens as criminals. While our government does not support Bill C-21 and its unjust punishment on law-abiding citizens, we fully support initiatives aimed at reducing the criminal and illegal use of firearms, preventing gang violence, and stopping the smuggling and sale of illegal firearms.

That is why our government has implemented and developed several public safety initiatives like creating the Saskatchewan firearms office and appointing a Saskatchewan Chief Firearms Officer; creating and increasing provincially sponsored public safety teams such as the warrant enforcement and suppression team, crime reduction teams, provincial protective services branch, Saskatchewan trafficking response teams, and the Saskatchewan marshals service.

I'd quickly like to take a moment to talk about the government's record of investing in policing and public safety. Since 2018 our government has increased RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and First Nations policing program funding by over \$38 million, or a 20 per cent increase. Since 2018 we have increased allocations to provincially sponsored RCMP teams by 86 positions. That includes an increase of 30 crime reduction team positions, 10 police and crisis team positions, eight warrant enforcement and suppression team positions, and 30 Saskatchewan trafficking response team positions.

This year alone we are spending \$211 million on RCMP resources. That will increase due to our recent Throne Speech announcements to expand the warrant enforcement and suppression team to Prince Albert and place an additional crime reduction team in the Battlefords area. These resources are in conjunction to the 21.8 million in supports for municipalities to fund 158 additional municipal policing positions. This municipal funding represents a \$6 million increase since 2018. It represents an investment of over 212 million to fund front-line municipal

police officers since 2011.

We are working with First Nations to increase public safety on-reserve. Just recently in October we signed a letter of intent with the federal government and the Prince Albert Grand Council to look at options to create a new Indigenous police service.

As announced in this year's Throne Speech, we are introducing a Saskatchewan marshals service to support RCMP, municipal policing services, and First Nations in high-crime areas. The marshals will have the flexibility to quickly deploy officers and resources anywhere in the province where they are needed. Saskatchewan marshals service will build on several other public safety initiatives from our government. The marshals will not replace or detract from any of the other services currently in place.

We're adding RCMP officers, adding municipal police officers. We're adding officers to the crime reduction teams and we are adding officers to the warrant enforcement and suppression team. We are exploring options for Indigenous community-based policing. Saskatchewan marshals service will be in addition to all of that, Mr. Speaker, to ensure everyone in Saskatchewan feels safe in their communities.

Our government is and will continue to fund and increase efforts to increase public safety. This includes creating a Saskatchewan firearms office and appointing our own Chief Firearms Officer. This was done to provide a voice for residents in this province who own and use firearms legally. Since taking over, our Chief Firearms Officer has handled three times the number of revocations and licence refusals related to public safety as compared to his federal predecessor in the same amount of time.

We have created the Saskatchewan firearms advisory committee to provide recommendations on firearms policy and provide input and feedback on education and licensing. We have launched a public awareness campaign to promote firearm safety and to promote safe practices when using and storing firearms.

We are doing good things despite the current federal government's continued attack on legal and law-abiding firearms users. We've witnessed a concerning trend with this federal government surrounding all aspects of Bill C-21. In May of 2020 when this was first introduced through order in council, we were told that this wouldn't affect hunters or sport shooters, rather that the federal government was taking the weapons of war off the street — a purely ideological idea and statement as Canada already has very strict controls on military-style assault weapons.

The federal government then decided, through Bill C-21, that legally owned and used handguns could no longer be imported, purchased, or transferred, and effectively now reducing the value of all of these firearms to zero. This is despite the fact that most, almost all handgun crime is committed using illegally trafficked and acquired handguns.

We have an example of this from just a few weeks ago. In Toronto, York Regional Police traced 83 firearms used in a crime. One hundred per cent of these firearms — 100 per cent — were identified as illegal, illicit firearms coming in from the United States.

[14:30]

That of course did not stop the federal government from doubling down. In October of this year they implemented a handgun freeze, done with zero consultation, zero warning, and actually in the dead of night, immediately destroying businesses and locking out sport-shooting enthusiasts.

In September of this year it was discovered that the federal government planned on utilizing provincially funded RCMP resources to implement their expropriation program. In response to this we sent a letter to the RCMP indicating that no provincially funded resources would be used in the expropriation of firearms in this province.

Our government, in conjunction with Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, condemned this action and as a result refused to sign the federal communiqué from the public safety FPT [federal-provincial-territorial] meeting. We sent a strong message to Ottawa that we do not agree with this legislation and will continue to work toward finding a solution for legal firearms owners in the province.

Perhaps the most egregious part of this entire process are recent amendments to Bill C-21 that ban almost all semi-automatic centrefire rifles and shotguns utilized by hunters, collectors, and sport shooters in Saskatchewan.

Overnight and without consultation or any sort of warning, federal government will penalize and criminalize around 75,000 legal firearms owners in Saskatchewan. To put that into perspective, we currently have approximately 115,000 licensed firearms owners in the province. Around 400 pages' worth of firearms and other restrictions are identified in these recent amendments. These are firearms owned by family, neighbours, friends, and colleagues, and I hope that the members opposite recognize this.

I would hope that they recognize that the federal government is planning on spending billions of dollars to criminalize and take away firearms from law-abiding, legally licensed Saskatchewan residents instead of fighting illegal firearms, gangs, and trafficking. These dollars could be utilized by the Canadian border services to crack down on the illegal smuggling of firearms. It's money that municipalities across this province and Canada would use to be able to fight rising rural crime rates, violent crime, gangs, trafficking, and illegal firearms. Instead we see a purely ideological firearms grab that will do nothing but punish those who legally acquire and use firearms for hunting, collecting, and sporting purposes.

I stand here today in support of the motion put forward by this government to condemn the attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government. This government will continue to look at every option available to address Bill C-21 and provide police services across this province with the necessary resources to tackle rural crime, violent crime, gangs, trafficking, and illegal firearms.

I would encourage the members opposite to be bold and take a stand to support the men and women across this province who are at risk of becoming criminals through no fault of their own, but due to the ineptitude of this Liberal-NDP federal coalition

government.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore move the following motion:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents; and further,

That this House call on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents; and further,

This House calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners.

I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into this very important discussion that we're having today. I want to be very clear off the bat here. We're supportive of the government's motion. We've always been supportive of common-sense solutions when it comes to gun ownership, Mr. Speaker.

This federal government bill and amendment do not strike the right balance for Saskatchewan. These amendments are overbroad and capture rifles that have legitimate uses for both hunters and producers in Saskatchewan. We're supportive of measures that would address concerns over assault-style rifles as well as increased supports for mental health and domestic violence. But, Mr. Speaker, let me be clear again. The federal bill as presented does not strike that balance that's needed for Saskatchewan. We feel that the House of Commons committee needs to go back to the drawing board and fix these amendments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very, very much, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the comments from my friend opposite in opposing the changes that the federal government are making. And I'll make some suggestions on maybe how the NDP opposition can manifest that support for this motion into real action that potentially could actually stop this from happening, Mr. Speaker, by working with their colleagues and fellow party members in Ottawa who have the power to stop this by voting against it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be very, very clear about what the position of the government is. And I want to thank my colleague, the Minister of Policing, for her very, very good speech which laid out the position of the government in significant detail and laid out some of the great work that has been done as well. And I want to thank my colleague, the Minister of Justice, as well for the great work that she has done over many months in working on this file as well.

The government believes that those who use firearms in the commission of crimes need to be punished to the fullest extent of the law, which is contrary to what the federal Liberal government is doing by repealing mandatory minimum sentences that would apply to those who would use firearms in the commission of criminal offences.

On the other side, we believe that lawful firearms owners with legally acquired firearms should be allowed to use their property as they see fit, in compliance with the existing law, for things like hunting and sport shooting and collecting — things that they have been doing safely for many, many decades, Mr. Speaker. And what we are seeing though, what the Liberals and the NDP are doing . . . And be under no illusion. This is a joint endeavour by the federal Liberal government and the NDP Party of Canada because it would not get out of committee unless it was, and there is an agreement between those two parties to move this forward.

This is a full attack on lawful firearms owners, Mr. Speaker, by people who literally know nothing about firearms other than what they have seen in movies. They are at the same time lessening penalties for those who are using guns in the commission of offences. And these amendments that were introduced at committee will literally make 75,000 people in this province criminals. Seventy-five thousand people, literally 10 per cent of the adult population of this province, will be made criminals — and not just jaywalking. I mean, we are talking a very serious criminal offence for possession of a prohibited firearm.

And it's not just . . . It's actually easier to talk about what guns will be allowed than what guns are going to be prohibited. They've even made mistakes in how they've drafted this. Under how they have drafted this, 12-gauge shotguns, Mr. Speaker, will no longer be legal. They will be prohibited firearms, whether they are semi-automatic, whether they are pump-action, 12-gauge shotguns, under how this bill is drafted — the Liberals claim that they aren't covering those, but it shows again that they know absolutely nothing of what they are speaking about — would be criminalized.

Basically all rifles, aside from single-shot, non-detachable-magazine rifles, will be made illegal. Some .22s . . . And the Libs again have claimed that somehow .22s were exempt from this. Meanwhile in the, like, 100-page list of specifically prohibited firearms, there are dozens of .22s that are listed that are going to be made prohibited firearms as well.

So you ask yourself, what is their objective in all of this? They have been on the record very clearly. I mean, Liberal MPs [Member of Parliament], Liberal cabinet ministers, New Democrat MPs, New Democrat leaders — Jack Layton used to be very open about saying this — they believe the only people who should be allowed to have firearms are police and the military. They firmly believe that to be the case.

And I suspect that there are a number of members opposite that privately believe that as well, despite their profession of support for the motion. I suspect there are a number of members opposite who actually believe that as well.

And be under no illusion what their objective is at the end of the day in this, Mr. Speaker. Their objective is to prohibit private firearms ownership. That is where they want to end up. So what is left as a legal firearm today will be an illegal firearm, I'm sure, not too long into the future.

I want to speak to process on this as well. So what happened last week at committee in Ottawa was there was a 400-plus-page amendment to Bill C-21 that was introduced by the government with the support of the New Democratic Party.

So what they actually did was introduce the real bill after it had gone through first reading, second reading in the House of Commons. And after all of the witnesses had testified at committee on Bill C-21, they then introduce a 400-plus-page amendment that . . . I suspect they're going to do something that's called a programming motion, Mr. Speaker. But it's basically a time-allocation mechanism that they can use under the rules of the House of Commons, that they are going to invoke closure on in the House of Commons — I predict they'll do it this week — to move that bill out of committee, time allocate report stage and third reading in the House of Commons to get the bill to the Senate by Christmas, and then try and push it through the Senate as quickly as they can. All without any debates, because they did it secretly at the conclusion of witness testimony at committee stage.

In our House, that would actually not be allowed, and it shouldn't be allowed in the House of Commons either. There was objections raised to the initial bill being imperfectly introduced.

So I know, Mr. Speaker, you understand, the Clerks understand, but for those who are listening, what it means essentially is that you can't introduce a bill that has one line in it, have a debate on that one line of the bill in the House, at second reading, at committee and then after all the debate is done, then introduce the real bill by amending it entirely.

You can't do that for obvious reasons. Like, you don't actually have a fulsome discussion and scrutiny on the bill. So that would be ruled out of order in our Chamber — rightfully so — if that were to occur. An objection was raised in the House of Commons that this was an imperfect bill. Shockingly, the Liberal committee Chair said, no, this all entirely fine, and let it go. So even the process of doing the changes they did in a completely underhanded and dishonest way.

So what will this bill actually accomplish? The reality is it's going to accomplish nothing other than criminalizing hundreds of thousands of otherwise law-abiding, licensed, legal firearms owners who legally acquired property through the appropriate mechanism.

And let's be clear as well about crimes committed with firearms in this country, and the Minister of Policing canvassed some of those. Virtually every single firearms crime committed in this country is done by an unlicensed firearm owner with an illegally obtained firearm. Virtually every single crime committed with a

firearm. So what are the Liberals and NDP accomplishing by going after lawful, licensed firearms owners? The answer is nothing other than disarming the citizenry.

[14:45]

For whatever ideological reason that they have, and this is purely ideologically based, they believe that citizens should not have the right to own firearms. And that is a part of, and a continuing part of, what their plan has been over a number of years. And I would note on the language as well that they use, which is so disingenuous, “weapons of war.” Really.

Virtually every firearm ever designed, Mr. Speaker, was designed for a military purpose. Virtually every single one. Your Lee-Enfield .303? Really, that was designed for the British army and had been deployed with the British army through 100 years of conflict. But somehow that’s fine.

Your Remington 700 hunting rifle, the most popular hunting rifle in the entirety of North America — I’m sure many members in this Chamber have Remington 700s or derivatives thereof — that was an M40 sniper rifle. It is a sniper rifle, which the Liberals also somehow use as a pejorative language to justify expropriating that property, because hunting rifles are made to be accurate to harvest game at long-range or for target-shooting purposes. So, Mr. Speaker, the language that they use is just incredibly disingenuous. I actually believe that they believe, when they say it, that it’s true, which goes to the fact that they have no clue of what they are talking about.

I mean you could have the exact same gun, the exact same firearm that is in — they call it furniture — but tactical furniture so it would look scary. Or you could have it in wooden furniture with a conventional buttstock, and it would look like your conventional hunting rifle. And I guarantee if you put these two firearms, which are identical, in front of these Libs and New Democrats who want to ban them all, I guarantee you they would say, well that one’s a hunting rifle and that one’s an assault rifle. They’re the exact same gun, the exact same gun.

The only criteria that seems to have been used, especially in the order in council banning the 1,500 firearms, was whether it looks scary or not or whether they saw it in a movie where it was used to blow things up because that’s what happens when you use a firearm.

I mean it goes to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that these people are utterly clueless. It’s entirely about politics. It’s entirely about driving a wedge. And that is the only reason that they are doing it, on top of their ideological determination that no one, no private citizen should have access to a gun.

So as I’ve said, the penalties for this are substantial. This isn’t, you know, like you’re jaywalking and you might get a ticket under the summary offences Act or something of that nature, a municipal bylaw infraction. This is a criminal offence. This is a serious criminal offence for which the primary remedy is jail time. And this is being supported, driven by the Liberal government with the support of the NDP.

And let’s be very clear about the only people that have the power to stop this from happening are members of parliament who

could vote against this. And I know there are 14 members of parliament for Saskatchewan. I know unanimously they’re going to oppose this.

But there are a group of NDP MPs who have the power to actually stop this. They don’t have the power to do much. They have the power to actually stop this. And those members opposite need to stand up and talk to those members and explain to them how wrong and ridiculous this is and have them vote the appropriate way. Will they do that? I don’t know. I hope they do. I’m looking forward to another speech from some of the members opposite, and I hope they actually address some of those issues.

So you know, on kind of the what are they trying to do, I mean it makes no sense. How are they actually operationally going to implement this? Because again that makes even probably less sense than the fact that they’re trying to make these illegal. Are they going to have the RCMP literally knocking people’s doors down to confiscate these firearms? Because I’m fairly certain, I mean, hearing from the chiefs of police, that that’s not something that’s going to be on, from law enforcement who have a lot better things to be doing than arresting 75,000 Saskatchewan residents who, until a week ago, were completely law-abiding but now who Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh have determined to be very dangerous criminals. How are they actually going to do that?

And on the other hand, they say, well you know, we’re going to have a compensation process in place. I do not believe that for a second because, if they were to actually compensate for firearms at their market value, we’re not talking hundreds of millions of dollars. We’re not talking billions in the single. We are talking tens of billions of dollars, because these firearms that they will be confiscating, these aren’t \$100 things that you get off the rack somewhere. These are thousands of dollars these firearms cost, that are being prohibited.

And will they provide fair market value? I guarantee you they won’t. I actually predict that they will get to the point where they just stop even with the pretense of compensation and just say, we’re seizing it all and we are intent on destroying them.

So we are left with a situation asking, well what is there to be done when we have a federal government supported by the NDP intent on what is really an extremist course of action? I don’t think anybody actually saw how far they were prepared to go and how genuinely extreme the position that they have adopted is.

You know, there’s several measures that are going to be rolled out here in the coming days. I’m not going to speak to those right now, but I can assure the people of the province that we have worked very hard on solutions that, you know, can do at least something. But the reality is, is that we as a provincial government can’t stop this. The only people that can stop this are members of parliament.

And we’re going to have votes on the amendments at committee, actually. I suspect that’s going to happen very shortly. Those votes are going to happen at committee. You’re going to have a report-stage debate in the House, and you’re going to have a closure debate around the programming motion and all of these things.

MPs can stop this. And they should stop this because what is being contemplated, what is being proposed, what is being pursued is going to be catastrophic for hundreds of thousands of Canadians. Not just 75,000 in Saskatchewan, hundreds of thousands of Canadians are going to be made criminals because of this extremist course of action.

So you know, we've appointed a provincial Chief Firearms Officer who has done some very, very good work. And we've, through Bob Freberg, taken over control of the Saskatchewan firearms program. But I mean, the direction is still given by Ottawa. And I would note as well, the members opposite voted against having a provincial Chief Firearms Officer as well, Mr. Speaker.

As far as, you know, further measures, we appointed a firearms advisory committee with some of the best minds in this space in the province who have been advising through this process. But you know, what we can say is that we have been working through many different options and you are going to see some of those coming forward in the coming days.

I just make one further note. You know, there were a number of lawsuits that were initiated against the Liberal order in council from May 2020 which the Minister of Policing referenced. And that was the order in council that arbitrarily — and it was completely arbitrary — banned 1,500 different versions of what they called assault rifles. And I can tell you, anybody who uses the phrase “assault rifle” doesn't actually know anything about firearms as well. What they actually mean is that it looks scary or it looks like something they saw in a movie. That's what they actually mean because it functionally is no different than any other rifle. It's just that it looks a certain way.

So what the Liberals did when they arbitrarily banned 1,500 different firearms — apparently by using a dartboard method, I think is how they came up with that in addition to the optical part of that — a number of lawsuits were initiated. And they would have likely been successful because what the Liberals did was under a statutory authority having to do with firearms that were not target shooting or hunting related, that was the authority under which they used their regulatory, regulation-making authority under the *Firearms Act*. They implicitly admitted in the statute that what they had done was illegal. By then including all of those guns in the statutory instrument, really admitting that, yeah, what we did before was completely illegal.

I'd note as well in the handgun ban, they passed regulations, implemented, and announced regulations before the bill had passed the House. I think everybody sitting here in this room understands, wow, jeez, that's probably isn't how things not only should work, it's actually against the law as well.

Well they did it anyway, and you know, it seemed that nobody in the national media seemed to care because they agree with taking guns away from everybody, and there were very few objections that were raised outside of the official opposition in the House of Commons. It was supported by the New Democrats as well, that you should be able to pass a regulation under a statutory authority for a bill that was still in the House. But that's what they did.

So I would submit as well another example of the fact that the Liberal-NDP coalition could care less about the actual facts,

could care less about the actual law, could care less about the actual rules. These members opposite have a chance, have a chance right now. They can stand up and talk to their federal MPs who are the only people that can actually stop this lunacy from going forward. They need to stand up. They need to do that.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House as government, we're going to do what is within our authority, lawful authority as a province to move forward. Those are going to be laid out in the future. But those members opposite need to stand up and be counted. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter in, be fairly brief here today, but real clear, Mr. Speaker, as was our Justice critic who was clear that we'd be supporting the motion today, that we recognize overreach by the feds on this front, Mr. Speaker.

And just to some of the comments that I heard from the House Leader opposite, Mr. Speaker, we've been clear with the federal NDP on this matter with respect to the overreach and our concerns on this matter, Mr. Speaker. And of course we're being clear publicly here today for all as well, Mr. Speaker.

I mean, the Saskatchewan NDP have always really taken a common-sense and respectful approach to firearms ownership, Mr. Speaker, recognizing how important they are as a tool for many on the farm, Mr. Speaker, or on the ranch for many producers, Mr. Speaker, recognizing their relationship to hunters and to trappers and part of our heritage. Mr. Speaker, I'm a proud hunter and fisher myself, Mr. Speaker, a proud member of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, grew up at the knee of my dad and my grandpa in the field, Mr. Speaker, learning about safe use of firearms and growing the love of the outdoors and of hunting, Mr. Speaker.

I know as well that, you know, going back, we've always taken a common-sense approach on this front and have always been willing to stand up to Ottawa. I would reference former Premier Roy Romanow and the then Saskatchewan NDP government who stood up and were opposed to the federal gun registry from Ottawa at that time, Mr. Speaker. And that's the kind of common-sense approach that we've always taken in this province, Mr. Speaker, rooted in the realities of our province, Mr. Speaker.

We see the amendments that have been brought about, the changes that are being brought about, the measures as being far too broad. They capture many rifles, many firearms that are used by hunters and by producers, Mr. Speaker.

And of course we will never stop using our voice in the call for action around the need for action from this Assembly and from every level of government around things like mental health, Mr. Speaker; around domestic violence and the serious concerns that we have in this province, Mr. Speaker, by being twice the national average on these fronts, Mr. Speaker; about the needs to fix the addictions crisis and to combat gangs in this province that are all too prevalent, Mr. Speaker, and that are exacting all too much damage on far too many in this province.

And of course the support, not just for those community investments and those fixes that are needed to those broken systems, but the support as well for policing, for law enforcement in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in a solid, common-sense way, something we don't see, frankly, from this current government that is spending \$20 million on their provincial vanity project, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to deploying those dollars now in a timely way where they could make a difference in the lives of Saskatchewan people to improve the supports for policing in Saskatchewan, both through the RCMP and through municipal police forces, Mr. Speaker. And then of course addressing those, making those community investments that are so connected as well, Mr. Speaker.

If you look at some of the concerns on these fronts as well, you know, we need to look to a story in Regina recently where an individual had made hundreds of illegal firearms with a 3-D [three-dimensional] printer, Mr. Speaker. These are the kinds of situations that we need to be supporting law enforcement to address, Mr. Speaker.

So we support the motion that's been brought forward here today. We'll support that motion. We respect the relationship that Saskatchewan and that hunters and trappers and farmers and producers and ranchers and shooters have with firearms, Mr. Speaker. And we've communicated that very clearly with the federal NDP, our concerns, Mr. Speaker, our concern, and we communicate that for all here, through this Assembly, publicly as well. That's all I have to say at this point, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

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

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I fully support the motion from the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. The Trudeau Liberal minority government, fully supported and signed on to by the NDP, have continued to harass and punish the law-abiding gun owners of this country. Legal gun owners are not the issue.

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

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

After a comment like this, why would it be necessary to further punish law-abiding firearm owners? The minister clearly knows they are not the problem.

Obviously the Liberal-NDP federal government is unable to control the illegal smuggling of firearms into the country. They prefer to kick the rears of ordinary gun owners in this country, like blaming and punishing the family dog for plundering the henhouse while it was actually the fox. They need to address the problem directly and not play politics with such critical issues

such as gang violence and smuggling.

Toronto deputy chief of police and future Toronto chief of police Myron Demkiw was quoted as saying:

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while the minority federal Liberal government wants to be seen as doing something to control gun violence, they are actually making it easier for the criminals. Last year the federal government introduced Bill C-5. C-5 seeks to repeal mandatory minimum penalties on 14 offences. Most of these 14 offences are related to the illegal use of firearms.

Canada already has some of the most stringent gun laws in the world. Law enforcement and our justice system need only enforce and prosecute to the full extent of the law. It would be interesting to know how much incarceration time a gang member receives after committing a firearm offence — most likely a catch-and-release with a promise to behave better in the future. Pathetic response from a federal minority Liberal government, propped up by the New Democratic Party of Canada. Mr. Deputy Speaker, law enforcement know where the issue of gun violence lies. It's unacceptable that the federal government chooses to ignore the problem while punishing law-abiding gun owners.

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while on the topic of the Trudeau government being honest and open with the public, I need to point out the backdoor firearm registry, a registry they campaigned against and vowed they would never implement. This new plan is to have all sales and transactions of firearms recorded in the database of the RCMP, a complete disregard for the rights of firearm owners. Law enforcement officers do not have the time to participate in gun confiscation. As we have seen with past firearm registries, they were ineffective and very, very costly.

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, further to the backdoor gun registry, 11th-hour amendments are promising even further restrictions and

firearm prohibition. Mr. Deputy Speaker, again why are we targeting law-abiding firearm owners? Why are they punishing these folks that are following some of the most stringent gun laws? Why are they letting gang criminals away with such light sentences when the federal government's laws seek to do away with mandatory minimum sentences?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a rancher and other ranchers know, individual cows will crawl through the fence from time to time and cause a hazard on the roads and roadways. I do not tolerate this behaviour from any cow. I will run her into a corral at home, and that's where she will stay until the next trip to the butcher or auction mart. My next time through the drive-through and ordering my favourite burger, I will definitely be thinking of her.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I have trouble with one cow getting through the fence, I do not corral the entire herd; I only corral her. The cost of corralling the entire herd is too much to bear. Rather than out grazing lush, green grass and spreading their own manure, I will have to feed them daily with expensive and sometimes scarce hay or silage and haul out the manure from said corrals — just to note, some of this will be bull manure — costs we as ranchers cannot afford. Punish the offenders and the offenders only, not the law-abiding.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bill C-21 with amendments seeks to make hundreds and thousands of firearms prohibitive to own. Manufacturers such as . . . And I'll read from the list, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It includes Mossbergs of various models, Remingtons of various models, Savage rifles of various models, Springfields of various models, Rugers of various models, Weatherbys of various models, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I can go on. There's quite an extensive list, fairly heavy, and other various models too numerous to mention — utter arrogance on the part of the Trudeau-Singh coalition government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a young lad growing up in the province, I relished my time hunting gophers, hunting upland game birds, migratory game, big game. It is truly a rite of passage for many Saskatchewan people . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . My new haircut makes me look like a young lad. I like that.

I would encourage and ask people, whether they plan to hunt or not, take the course. Learn the responsibility of being a firearm owner and shooting a firearm. There is so much to be learned by understanding that the firearm is not a weapon that is used in criminal activity but is a tool for target shooting, hunting, and protecting your livestock from predators, euthanizing animals when they become ill or injured. It's a very, very important tool to have on the ranch.

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I fully support the motion as follows:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000

Saskatchewan residents; and further,

That this House calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to start with that I'm going to be supporting the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

Mr. Speaker, it's great to stand in here. I'm a firearms owner, Mr. Speaker. I also have not just my regular firearms licence, but I also have a restricted licence which allows me to be able to own and use handguns.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start out with my telling a little story. A couple of years ago . . . Our farm is right across from Pasquia Park. It's only about a quarter of a mile away from Pasquia Park. Pasquia Park is a very beautiful park, along with most of the things in Carrot River Valley constituency, Mr. Speaker. And like I said, it's only about a quarter of a mile away.

One day I happened to be out there, and all of a sudden two of the employees of the regional park came running over. Well they drove over to the yard in a great big hurry. And I said, what do you need? And they said, we have a wild boar running through the camp area over at the park. Do you have a gun here? And you know, stupid as it sounds, I can still remember my exact words. I said, yes, Trudeau hasn't taken them away yet. But I said yes.

So I went in. Of course I have a gun safe. I've actually got two gun safes: one in town, one at the farm. So I went in, grabbed a rifle, and legally went to my ammunition chamber, which is separate from the gun safe, got it out, jammed a clip into the rifle, came out the door. I was standing on the pad out in front of our shop, along with the two employees from the park. And here came the boar, and it came running straight at us. So I just lifted the rifle up and I . . . You know, these wild boars are a little tough to get down. I plugged him and I got him. Three shots and I hit him three times, you know. It's a good thing it was a semi-automatic. It was nice and quick.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just think. What would have happened? What would have happened if those two people that came over were Jagmeet and Justin? Would they have said, oh, that's a semi-automatic; you can't use that. Well, Mr. Speaker, in that case, maybe I wouldn't have. I would've just held onto it because I got protection.

But, Mr. Speaker, this whole law that they are putting through is absolutely ridiculous. It's been said before that our Chief Firearms Officer estimates that we'll have 75,000 firearms owners are going to be criminals because of this new law, Mr. Speaker. This is absolutely ridiculous. And as we know, the vast majority of these crimes, where the guns are involved, are done by illegal guns being brought in and they're gang members.

Now here's the catch. A lot of times it's the innocent victims

around the people who get shot. They're the ones that get shot because — I'll tell you why — gang members don't know how to shoot. They're running around with illegal firearms. They can't go to a shooting range like I can because in our town, where we've got our shooting range where I go to all the time, you have to be a member of the club first to be able to go there. Secondly, you have to be licensed, which I am. And all of my handguns are all registered, Mr. Speaker. And so I'm doing the legal thing. I know how to shoot. That's how come when I shot at that boar three times and hit it three times, I hit it. It didn't go willy-skilly all over the place, Mr. Speaker.

You know, that takes us back to the handguns. That takes us back to the handguns. Now I have a half a dozen handguns. Here's the catch, Mr. Speaker. My daughter likes shooting. She also has her restricted licence, and any time she comes home, we like to go out to the range. And I always said, you know, if something . . . Like, I'm getting a little long in the tooth. Let's face it. But, Mr. Speaker, if something were to happen to me, I always told my daughter, you know, she can have all of my handguns.

[15:15]

So someday if I kick the bucket, Mr. Speaker, now she can't have those handguns because it's not allowed. I'm not allowed to be able to transfer those handguns to her. I'm not allowed to be able to sell those handguns. I've got quite a few thousand dollars' worth of handguns that basically are worth, as it was said, zero because of this law that the Liberal-NDP coalition is putting in, Mr. Speaker. And I sincerely want our NDP opposition to really go after all of the MPs on the NDP side and start telling them that this law is going to be a disaster for all of us legal people here within Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there's been so many different things that have happened over the years, and they expect the RCMP to go out and take a look at all this? The RCMP have a lot better things to do. It's gotten so bad, Mr. Speaker, that in order to take my handgun to Eagle Firearms, who I deal with all the time in Tisdale, I have to go down . . . Even though I am all licensed, everything is hunky-dory, I have to go down to the RCMP and get a permit just to transfer it there. Because legally I'm only allowed to take that handgun from my house, from my safe at my house out to the range.

Mr. Speaker, the RCMP have far, far better things to do than going out there and making a permit for me to go out there and do that, or giving me a permit to do that. And not only that, with all these new laws, is that gun shop even going to be there? That gun shop employs about five people, Mr. Speaker. It's a good private business. It's a great gun shop. Are they still going to be in business? I doubt it, not with all these rules that they have.

Also coming from northeastern Saskatchewan, we have our outfitting businesses. Mr. Speaker, a lot of those outfitting businesses, their clientele are strictly, strictly Americans. Now those Americans, they always bring their own guns in to go and do their own hunting. Guess what? The way I see it, they won't be able to bring in their guns because their guns, according to the Liberal-NDP coalition, will now be illegal.

Mr. Speaker, I'm all for safe firearms ownership. Like I said, I have two safes. I'm licensed. My daughter is licensed. We're

trying to do everything properly, and the Liberals have just gone — the Liberal and the NDP, with the support of the NDP — have gone way, way overboard on what they plan on doing with all of our firearms.

I totally agree with our House Leader when he said what their idea is, is they just don't want anybody, anybody to have any firearms, Mr. Speaker. And as I explained at the beginning about that wild boar coming in — or I had a raccoon right in my shop, you know — we have to have these firearms. We need to have the firearms.

And then we have all the people that actually hunt for substance, Mr. Speaker, but they want to go out there and hunt. But I'm not much of a hunter, I will admit. And you know, I don't think the member from Rosemont is either. I think his son actually does all the shooting for him. But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see that member give his buddies down in Ottawa that are under the NDP, give their MPs calls and say, look, don't do this. Don't do this. Go against the Liberals on this because we do not need these . . . [inaudible] . . . laws in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I could speak on this for hours, but I actually have a committee meeting right away and I'm going to have to get rolling here. So I am going to say that I do support the motion that's moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. And, Mr. Speaker, I really, really hope that this bill dies out there somewhere, and I ask our NDP opposition to please, please talk to all your MPs and get them, get them to not . . . to go against what this is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Grewal: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to speak in favour of the motion for condemnation and denouncement of the most recent attack on lawful firearm owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents, and further calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearm owners.

This bill would constitute the largest gun prohibition in Canadian legislative history. Most of these now-restricted firearms were purchased legally, used and stored safely, and have never posed a risk to public safety. If this bill is passed, lawful firearm owners in Saskatchewan will be prohibited from the import, sale, purchase, or transfer of handguns, rendering the financial value of their legally owned property to zero as it can no longer be sold or transferred.

Another fundamental problem with this legislation is that it is a distraction and gross misdirection of policing and other justice sector resources, resources which are in short supply and are desperately needed to address the core causes of crime.

With this bill we are telling our law enforcement resources to catch lawful gun owners instead of directing them to catch the real criminals. Legally obtained handguns in the possession of law-abiding citizens are not, and have never been, a public safety problem. Therefore, our government, along with Alberta,

Manitoba, and New Brunswick, have called on the federal government to halt plans to use our already limited RCMP and municipal police resources to confiscate these legally acquired firearms from our residents. Our prairie provinces have already instructed their RCMP divisions to not use provincial funding for that purpose.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in response to the proposed federal government buy-back program, our Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety sent a letter to the Saskatchewan RCMP in October 2022 stating the province's opposition to the use of provincially funded resources for any process that is connected to the federal government's proposed buy-back of firearms.

We have also called on the federal government to ensure that no funding for the Gun and Gang Violence Action Fund or other public safety initiatives be diverted to the federal firearms confiscation program. We want that funding to remain being used to fight the actual criminal misuse of firearms through tackling border integrity, smuggling, and trafficking. Our four provinces have also called on the federal government to direct all communications related to the federal firearms confiscation program through appropriate channels, the PT [provincial-territorial] ministers responsible for justice and public safety.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the introduced amendments to the federal Bill C-21 would ban almost all rifles and shotguns commonly used by Saskatchewan residents to hunt or protect their livestock from predators. These amendments create a blanket ban on almost all types of Canadian semi-automatic firearms, which is any gun designed to load a new round after each pull of the trigger.

This bill will do nothing to stop actual illegal firearm use. It is in fact that the majority of firearms used in crimes are obtained illegally, including being smuggled from south of the border. This lack of border control has led to the increase in gun violence that is largely related to gangs and more sophisticated organized crime groups.

Our federal government should be supporting law enforcement initiatives that focus on stopping gangs and violent offenders instead of targeting law-abiding firearm owners.

Our government fully supports initiatives that target the criminals and illegal use of firearms, including stronger enforcement and stronger penalties for illegal purchasing, trafficking, and illegal activities. Instead of focusing on criminal and illegal firearm use or on border controls, this bill is stripping away the rights of lawfully licensed firearm owners. Firearm violence is a much more complex issue that requires looking at the whole picture requiring a better, complete government approach.

Many other aspects such as community and social programs, criminal justice system improvements, and health care . . . [inaudible] . . . should be considered. This should not be treated as a firearm violence issue only. This is a socio-economic and broader law enforcement matter. Hence, they should also be allocating greater funds towards the RCMP and CBSA [Canada Border Services Agency] to address the flow of guns at the border including by rail and stricter rules on repeat firearm

offenders.

Also Bill C-21 only focuses on the instrument and not the operator. Since 2003 the number of restricted and prohibited firearms has doubled from just over 550,000 to almost 1.2 million firearms, while the rate of homicides by handguns has remained constant. This analysis shows that there is no associated increase in handguns or homicides with the increase in the number of registered, restricted, and prohibited firearms, nor is there an increase in overall firearm homicide.

This is important because with such an increase if the prevalence of handguns was associated with an increase in homicides, one would expect homicide rates to also increase. But they have not. This is proof that legally owned firearms are not linked with homicide rates. Firearms are simply one tool of crime. By only addressing the tool, you are failing to address the root problems. If guns are eliminated, a criminal will simply continue to offend and victimize using other tools.

Some have also argued that the proposed bill is a useful suicide prevention tool. But mental health professionals have stated that by forcefully removing the gun from a person suffering from mental illness and by doing so, subjecting them to a high-stress situation with possible criminal consequences, is not a suitable means of handling this issue. In fact it poses the very real risk that mentally ill individuals will not seek help and instead conceal issues, fearing that their doctor, psychiatrist, or any other person might seek heavy sanctions against them.

Another concern is that according to section 70.3 of Bill C-21, a Chief Firearms Officer may issue a conditional licence despite a person having engaged in domestic violence if "the revocation constitutes a virtual prohibition against employment in the only vocation open to the individual." Instead of allowing the person to keep the gun because of their job, that person can always be redirected to administrative duties or a position that does not require a firearm.

Here in Saskatchewan many of our veterans actively participate in period outfits as re-enactors to demonstrate the workings of the artillery at formal salutes, displays, re-enactments, etc. While the guns used have been decommissioned and are no longer safe to fire live projectiles, many are used to provide black-powder simulations for the audience. Under Bill C-21, these historical artillery pieces would be banned. If this were to happen, the public would be deprived of learning about a portion of the history of our country. We want our next generation to know this history.

There is one type of gun that this bill does not restrict. That is ghost guns. A ghost gun is a firearm that has no serial number. This makes them difficult to trace and they can be harder to detect.

[15:30]

Parts of a ghost gun are usually individually manufactured. One part might be produced by a 3-D printer and other parts might be manufactured through a machine shop or illegally ordered into the country. Bill C-21 does not make creating or acquiring the components of gun illegal.

There is nothing in the *Firearms Act* or associated regulations that prohibits a person from possessing a digital blueprint of a 3-D firearm. Therefore, you could use a 3-D printer to make a gun. Or if you do not have access to a 3-D printer, a firearms licence is also not required to legally obtain gun components online, including the barrel, slide, and the magazine. You can even purchase them in convenient kits containing all the parts required.

It is only after the gun has been assembled that it becomes illegal. This is because it then makes the builder a firearm manufacturer and owner which does require a licence and a registration certificate. But realistically, how could anyone know when this is done unless the builder chooses to inform the authorities? Yet another example of how this legislation targets legal firearm owners who have followed the regulations, as opposed to addressing the root causes of firearm violence and violent crime in general.

My government does not support the federal government's efforts to eliminate licensed firearm owners' right to access and use legally acquired firearms. Reducing firearm violence is a key issue and should absolutely remain a priority for the federal government. Our country already has a strict licensing regime for firearms purchases. The changes proposed in this legislation unfortunately do not address issues of organized crime and gang violence, illegal weapon smuggling, systemic causes of crime, or emerging threats such as 3-D printed and ghost guns.

It's time for our federal government to focus on the right things — criminals, not the hunters. Our government fully supports initiatives aimed at reducing the criminal use of illegal firearms, preventing gang violence, and stopping the smuggling and sale of illegal guns. We do not support laws that negatively impact law-abiding hunters, sport shooters, ranchers, farmers, and Indigenous people who use firearms for lawful and good reasons.

Our government will continue to stand up for the citizens of Saskatchewan, including our law-abiding firearm owners. I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Domotor: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the Legislative Assembly today to support the motion by my colleague, the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. First of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's read the motion in its entirety so we have a full understanding of its meaning:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearm owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments in Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents; and further,

That this House calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearm owners.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Trudeau-NDP coalition have

done it again, punishing the law-abiding and responsible Saskatchewan firearm owners along with others throughout the country. Approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan gun owners who are presently legal, law-abiding farmers, ranchers, hunters, and sport shooters will be illegal gun owners if the recently proposed amendments to Bill C-21 are passed. In theory, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this would criminalize millions of hunting rifles.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this was an amendment to legislation that was quietly introduced as a surprise at the eleventh hour. This amendment will constitute the largest gun prohibition in Canadian legislative history. This ban is sneaky and underhanded. The federal Liberals did not even allow a democratic debate or experts to weigh in on the ban put forth.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendment proposes to ban a firearm that is a rifle or shotgun that is capable of discharging centrefire ammunition in a semi-automatic manner and that it is designed to accept a detachable-cartridge magazine with a capacity greater than five cartridges of the type for which the firearm was originally designed. So basically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, any gun configured to load a new round after each pull of the trigger will be illegal.

In 2020 approximately 85 per cent of all handguns seized by the Toronto police were smuggled in from the US [United States]. The vast majority of gun crimes are committed with illegally obtained weapons. With this being said, how do these new proposed amendments make any sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

This is also a massive expansion to a gun control bill that was initially pitched mostly as a way of preventing the sale of Canadian handguns. Information provided with Bill C-21 made no mention of plans to target legally owned long guns, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This ban would likely apply to millions of guns, including the semi-automatic rifles and shotguns that are currently in active use with Canadian hunters and sport shooters.

One of the only semi-automatic firearms spared by the ban is shotguns that employ two magazines, a firearm most commonly used for duck hunting. Since the tube isn't a detachable magazine, it dodges the ban.

Currently, Mr. Deputy Speaker, most semi-automatic rifles and shotguns are classified as non-restricted firearms, meaning that licensed owners can carry them inside a vehicle or in the bush provided they follow certain parameters. This in turn would mean that semi-automatic guns become prohibited firearms, meaning that they would be need to kept locked up at all times at a home address registered with the RCMP, they could not be fired, and possibly subject to confiscation via a federal buy-back program. Wow.

Will the guns confiscated through a federal buy-back program be reimbursing the gun owner for the actual value of the gun, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Will they be providing the gun owner the purchase value, or will it be a value that the federal government deems as fair?

Further, how much will this cost taxpayers — which happens to be each and every one of us who pays taxes in this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker — to buy the guns back under the false pretense that somehow this will help prevent crime? And will my personal

or corporate income tax have to increase to cover these costs? All at a time when we are already paying a heavy price for inflationary costs, of which some are attributed to an ever-increasing carbon tax, just so I can travel to work and heat my home, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In the meantime, any transportation of the gun, even with a residence move, would require the owner to first seek an authorization to transport with the RCMP. Failure to do so could result in the owner being stripped of their licence and any firearms in their possession, including those not even covered by the ban.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today every legal gun owner in Canada is required to report changes of address, which is more than a sufficient way to track firearms. However those with firearm prohibition orders are not required to report. So is it any surprise that they account for a high percentage of those involved in repeat firearm offences? No one tracks these dangerous individuals, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again why fix the laws that aren't broken? The firearm laws in Canada are very strict. There are law-abiding citizens in our own province who possess guns for very legitimate reasons. When you look at the rigorous steps you have to go through to possess a firearm in Canada, it is quite remarkable. Once you get a licence, the actual purchasing, transportation, and storage all have very strict laws in Canada. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, right now we have some of the most stringent gun laws and gun regulations in the civilized world.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, part of Saskatchewan's heritage is responsible firearm ownership. From the days of early settlers to today, firearms are a part of food gathering for their families, to today where hunting and sport shooting has become a hobby for families to also enjoy. Likely, Mr. Deputy Speaker, anyone with rural roots can probably attest to having a background that involves either sport shooting, hunting, trapping, or in many cases ownership of guns as a means of predator management and sometimes even protection.

Saskatchewan people that take or have taken the firearm safety course learn a deep understanding of what it means to be a responsible firearm owner. This includes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only the shooting of a firearm but the proper and safe storage of a firearm as well.

These amendments are a complete insult to Canadian hunters. Instead of going after illegally obtained firearms in the streets of large cities like Toronto, the federal government-NDP coalition is going after Grandpa John's hunting rifle that's been passed down for generations.

Banning and buying back rifles that are used for hunting and sport shooting by licensed firearm owners will certainly have no impact on crime numbers at all, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What the federal government should be focused on is the roots of the gun crime — gang violence and smugglers, neither of whom will be affected by these changes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh are literally targeting law-abiding hunters and farmers not only in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but basically all of Western

Canada. I don't think that the removal of more firearms from being legal is the way to address the violent crimes that we are seeing with the use of guns. It should be abundantly clear that more enforcement and stronger penalties for offenders should be the avenue that we as government should be leaning towards.

I truly believe the federal government is illogical in its thinking, with their plans to actually lower sentences for repeat offenders using guns in a crime and doing away with minimum sentences, Mr. Deputy Speaker. One would think that the thought of having stricter punishments for those that commit the crimes would be more of a deterrent to criminals that are caught than reducing prison times.

Furthermore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the federal government has already included amendments to protect people which enables them to make an application to a court for an emergency weapons prohibition order. This can be applied for in circumstances where one is worried about a loved one that might be going through a tragic time in their life or possibly depressed and may hurt themselves with a gun.

This also applies to any individual who is fearful of a gun owner that may use it to cause harm to them, such as in a domestic abuse situation or whereby the gun owner is suspected of illegally reselling firearms. These avenues are available under the federal government's own red-flag law and yellow-flag law, which they have put in place as part of Bill C-21, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Trudeau's constant focus on limiting and reducing the amount of legal guns owned by people who have completed a safety course, undergone a significant RCMP background check, and have had loved ones sign off on them being allowed by the government to own guns is totally ridiculous.

And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the federal government to have the audacity to plan on using already scarce RCMP resources and municipal police resources to confiscate over 100,000 estimated guns that fell into Bill C-21's category of being illegal is another miscarriage of our valuable resources needed to deal with actual crimes. Using these resources to take guns away from our law-abiding gun owners and citizens seems to be a total misfit of justice. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this amendment is just one more move being made by the Trudeau-Singh government that shows just how out of touch the federal Liberal government is with the firearm owners here in Saskatchewan and right across Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all these amendments are doing is continuing to create a distrust of the federal government, as they seemingly say one thing and do absolutely another. As in the other decisions recently made by this government, the goalposts are always moving. This is just another big display that will have little to no impact on crime rates in our country nor in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The real tragedy here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, continues to be Trudeau's failed approaches. It wastes time and money that could be spent on making our province and the people of Saskatchewan and Canada actually safer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing I want the record to show that I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety that shows our continuing support for

our Saskatchewan legal, law-abiding gun owners. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Happy to be on my feet and speak to the motion brought forward by my colleague, the Minister of Policing and Corrections.

This spring, the coalition NDP-Liberal government brought forward Bill C-21 which prohibited the sale of handguns and so-called assault rifles which, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are not real things as there is no true definition of them. Many of the constituents of Last Mountain-Touchwood were incredibly angry at this legislation but not surprised at this federal coalition government's incessant use of wedge politics to further their own agenda.

[15:45]

Firearms owners in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are literally the most scrutinized segment of society. They undergo daily checks through the Canadian Police Information Centre or CPIC, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we are not the problem.

I want to read a quote into the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker. "Restricting lawful handgun ownership will not meaningfully address the real issue, which is illegal firearms, illegal handguns obtained from United States." Now this quote is from the head of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, Regina's chief of police, Evan Bray, testifying before a House of Commons committee.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all want safer communities and less crime, but this legislation will do nothing to improve anyone's safety. At the end of May when this legislation was first tabled, I went into many sporting goods small businesses in the province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to see how businesses were dealing with this latest legislative change. And every store I went into was absolutely packed. People were purchasing certain firearms before they were banned, and many of the owners I talked to, they informed me they sold a whole year's worth of inventory in a few days. Like it was literally panic buying at its finest moment, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know, it was a really different feeling just visiting with random people. They were very disappointed in the federal government and were really looking for the provincial government to take a stand. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government will always stand with our hunters, our farmers, and all of our law-abiding firearms owners.

Now this federal government, fully supported by the members opposite, brings forward this amendment to Bill C-21, which will ban thousands of regular hunting rifles that have been used for decades, you know. And the use of an amendment is not a very transparent way of bringing forward legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So yesterday my daughter and her friend were out hunting, and they shot a little four-point buck, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But my daughter, with this amendment, with her favourite .243 would have her . . . This firearm would be banned with this legislation,

Mr. Deputy Speaker. And my daughter is not a criminal. She's a nursing student. She enjoys the outdoors. She enjoys hunting. You know, she's not a bad person. She's a great person. But this legislation, these laws would make her a potential criminal if she used her favourite rifle that is . . . I mean, it's not as old as the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford but it's very close. And you know, she loves the outdoors, and she really enjoys providing food for herself and all of her family.

Now my wife, Mr. Deputy Speaker, she does not like firearms, but she understands just because you don't like something that's not an acceptable reason to ban something. She enjoys eating the food that my daughter harvests, and you know, she's getting very talented at preparing wild game. But she also understands that this is a tool that we need living on the farm, and she's very, very happy to see it when you need it.

You know, this amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is just another example of the federal government slowly stripping us of the privilege to own firearms. And to what end? These changes will do nothing for public safety, and they will do absolutely nothing to lower crime rates.

Now I was very happy to see the member from Regina Rosemont and Regina Douglas Park speak in favour of this motion. It's very critical that we all know how each of us stand on the issues. You know, I'm looking forward to hearing more members opposite speak on this. And you know, the Leader of the Opposition's own father owns a guiding business, and this . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . yeah, that's humorous.

You know, this legislation is going to affect all of these small businesses across the province. These American hunters come up, and they're great people. And they always bring their own firearms with them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this legislation would ban them from bringing those firearms. Like at this time after COVID, when the tourism sector is hurting as badly as it is, why do we want to do anything else to hurt those small businesses? It makes absolutely no sense.

You know, I joined the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford and we toured Buck Paradise, a great outfitting business in northwestern Saskatchewan. And you know, they were really safety conscious, and this thing is really going to hurt their business.

You know, the other evening, Mr. Deputy Speaker, firefighters had an opportunity for all of the elected officials to meet and greet and discuss issues and everything else. It was very well attended by my colleagues. It was very well attended by the members opposite. And it was a great evening. And as much as we like to talk about policy and everything else, you know, most people really honestly don't. We began talking about hunting, and it's hunting season, and that was the number one topic of conversation. So everyone began talking about, you know, what they got, what they got last year, what they're hoping to get, the ones that got away. It was a very good evening of visiting and information gathering.

So I just want to end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, you know, we support all of our licensed firearm owners across this province. We support our farmers. We support our ranchers. And I'm really looking forward to listening more from the members opposite.

And I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — The light bulb's on and nobody's home, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Story of my life.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to speak towards supporting the motion put forward by the Minister for Corrections and Policing and really condemning the most recent amendments that we're seeing by the federal Liberal-NDP coalition on Bill C-21.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the motion really speaks volumes for condemning the fact that Bill C-21 and its amendments really are going to criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents. You know, and it's typical with this federal government, that it's done once again by making arbitrary decisions in an uninformed basis without consultation and no financial assessment of how this will ultimately affect law-abiding citizens, business owners of not just this province but also of this country, well really the cost of implementing and enforcing this law.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I understand the want and the need to protect our citizens from the actions of illegal gun use. Gang activity, illegal drug peddling, violent crimes — they're really flashpoints for making the legislators wanting to do more to significantly reduce these illegal activities, and we will support and promote that. However, what we cannot support is the move to criminalize hunters, farmers, and target shooters who collectively own hundreds of thousands of legally acquired firearms and are using them in a very responsible manner.

If these amendments are allowed to move forward, then we're going to experience the most sweeping and arbitrary ban of firearms in Canadian history. And apart from the turmoil that this is going to cause, I can only imagine the incredible waste of scarce resources attempting to implement and enforce this new legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government, along with many other provincial and territorial governments, have indicated that they will not be sitting idly by and let this federal government attack more innocent citizens. And we're going to get the federal government to focus its energies on reducing criminal use of firearms, preventing gang violence, and the illegal importation of handguns and weapons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one very large, legal, and once-thriving business in this province, as well as Canada, is a professional outfitting business. In our province, really remains a choice and a year-round destination for those wanting to spend time enjoying our outdoors. The outfitting industry is really comprised of Indigenous, non-Indigenous businesses that operate hunting and fishing camps. Apart from the actual hunting experience, they also provide a range of services such as camps, housekeeping, cabins, meals, and guiding. Many include the transportation, selling food, beverages, and hunting and fishing supplies.

In the 2017 calendar year it was estimated the outfitting industry added \$126.4 million to the provincial economy. That's to Saskatchewan's economy. This industry created 5,144 jobs provincially, 4,041 jobs in northern Saskatchewan. Government revenues are estimated, just through the taxation part, to be at 26.4 million at the federal level and \$16.8 million provincially.

So, now back to the jobs influence. Professional outfitting has been determined to affect roughly 1 in every 111 jobs directly or indirectly, and 1 in every 17 jobs directly or indirectly in northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the majority of this revenue and economic stimulus comes from outside the province and the country. And really this is revenue that has the potential to disappear or certainly be greatly diminished by this ill-thought-out amendment. Once a customer is lost, they're not coming back. They will simply move to a less restrictive environment. And with that loss comes future revenue loss for tourism, future development loss with our outfitters who are either going to just simply exit the business, abandon the site, or they are going to severely scale back operations. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really hope our Leader of the Opposition has heard from her family members how this amendment will significantly affect their business.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the largest assault on hunters and related business owners in the history of Canada. As our Premier indicated in a recent article in the *National Post*, "These amendments do nothing to target illegal firearms use, and just further show the disconnect between the federal Liberal government and legal firearms owners in Saskatchewan and across Canada."

Again, we will fully support initiatives that are going to reduce criminal use of firearms, preventing gang violence, and stopping the smuggling and sale of illegal guns. But what we're not going to do is really support a federal bill that will severely hurt if not eliminate an important part of our provincial economy, let alone criminalize legal firearms owners and eliminating really their right to access and use their legally acquired firearms.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe very few residents really understand that if you're in contravention of this new law, the penalty is jail time. Not just a fine, but time spent in the King's hotel. We're going to be imprisoning farmers, doctors, local hardware store owners, teachers — really anyone of the previous 75,000 legal gun owners found here in this province. They're going to end up with a serious criminal record if they're in contravention of this Bill C-21 and its amendments.

There's one way to stop that, and that's to motivate our members across the way really to reach out to their federal leader, Jagmeet Singh, and stop these amendments. Really have him support putting more effort maybe into reducing gang activity. How about let's put more financial resources into reducing the illegal movement of guns across the border, but how about not hurting our legal gun owners here in Saskatchewan and across the country?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we already have some of the most strict firearms laws in the Commonwealth. This federal government is purposely misleading people to believe that our existing laws are really responsible for the public safety issues that they're trying

to solve.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another unintended consequence is the potential to really eliminate Canadian participation in Olympic and world championship shooting sports. Full disclosure: I'm a member of the local trap shooting club. I will not be entering any Olympic sports. They barely let me shoot on the first level. But anyway, you know, many of our gun club members really have significant investments in their collections. As I know our member from Meadow Lake had indicated, some of these are extremely valuable guns.

You know, we've got a lot of legislators here, both sides, that maybe collect cars. Maybe they have highly coveted Scotch collections in their closets, or maybe they're a member of a sport or a gun club and they have valuable firearms. And that's what our gun club members do. Members that pay tens of thousands of dollars for some of these items are definitely not going to be adequately compensated for any federal government buy-back program. They were acquired legally. They were stored legally. They're fully permitted and catalogued. Yet one sweeping amendment makes them illegal, worthless, and potentially a criminal to have them in their possession.

[16:00]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, sport shooters and competitive firearms users are going to be disappearing from the Canadian sports world. And although provisions were initially provided to allow the sale or transfer to authorize high-performance sport-shooting athletes and coaches, there's going to be zero incentive for gun retailers and suppliers to keep or import stock for a greatly reduced number of enthusiasts. We have up-and-coming athletes in this province now who may not be on Team Canada yet, but that dream will be quickly dying. Their future is now over for them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's interesting, when Bill C-21 was first introduced I had a very successful entrepreneur in my constituency. He owned an airsoft and a paintball park. Both operations are going to be shut down now because of the inability of the federal government really to bring a practical aspect to their legislation.

Here is a business owner, you know, who attracted customers from all genres, from all demographics, interested in having fun, you know, getting some intense exercise and probably getting some competitive juices flowing. He made significant investments in putting a business plan together, building infrastructure, and spending a lot on promotions and advertising. And with one stroke of the pen, lost it all overnight without consultation, making his investment worthless.

Thankfully, with the work of our Chief Firearms Officer here in the province, it's our constituents like this that are being represented at the federal level. You know, our Chief Firearms Officer's also advocating and promoting safe firearms training and use and has been engaged at all levels of government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also must advocate on behalf of the agriculture producers of my constituency in the province. This federal bill, supported by the federal NDP, is going to make it illegal and make criminals out of the majority of our ag

producers. You know, apart from those producers who are active hunters and outdoorsmen, there's also the practical aspect of owning a firearm. You know, every livestock producer has had to practise euthanasia on a valued animal due to injury or sickness. They may have felt compelled even to put down an injured or severely sick wild animal that they may have come across.

They've also been forced to protect their herds, their pets, and possibly even their family members from wild animals. I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I lived that same scenario — didn't quite have the same success as the member from Carrot River — but I attempted to shoot a wild boar in our yard. It was ravaging our family pets and our garden. My semi-auto .22 bore rifle didn't even act as a deterrent, let alone attempting to drop the wild boar in our yard. You know, I'm afraid that farmers are not going to find a more practical solution. You know, maybe if lethal injection is something that's now preferred by our federal government, I just don't see that being accepted by our livestock industry.

You know, we just need to bring back practical back into decision making. You know, laws affect the lawful. It's that simple. We're going to be making criminals out of those that are using a long gun for safety and protection. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this harmful bill and its amendments can be stopped. Opposition members across the way can get their leader, Jagmeet Singh, and the federal colleagues to put a stop to these amendments. Reach out today. Make a call.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. It's a humble day that I stand in this Chamber today. And I find this Bill C-21 to be — offensive I guess would be the appropriate word — offensive to the people of Saskatchewan, offensive to the people of Alberta, Manitoba, certainly I'm sure northern Ontario, northern Quebec, obviously the Atlantic provinces. We should all be a little bit offended by this because it brings to mind . . . Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, it brings to mind the 120-some years that the federal Liberal government has tried to manipulate law to control certainly Saskatchewan and Alberta.

And I bring to mind for my colleagues Sir Frederick Haultain who was the first, the premier of the North-West Territories. You will recall that the formation of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905, Haultain fought long and hard to have the provinces recognized collectively as the province called Buffalo. And the rationale for that obviously was the economic strength of the territory, of the region. And he argued vociferously for that economy to be recognized accordingly.

And you'll recall . . . Well perhaps there's one member in the House that might recall this, but at that time, the federal Liberal leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, insisted that the two provinces be divided for that specific reason, that they would have too much economic power, economic strength, and would therefore compete with Ontario and Quebec. And the then . . . the first

premier of Saskatchewan who we all know and recognize, Walter Scott, was of course a Liberal, and so there's a history of supportive engagement even back in 1905.

And we'll recall too, then, that Sir Frederick Haultain, who was prior to that premier of North-West Territories, then went on to lead the official opposition in Saskatchewan from 1905 to 1912 with what was called at that time the Provincial Rights Party, which is very interesting, and fought long and hard against the Liberals of the day. So this is not something new. This is something that we've been struggling with and dealing with for well over a hundred years.

And I do want to talk a little bit about . . . My colleagues have sort of canvassed obviously the impact of this legislation on lawful gun owners, certainly on the outfitting industry, which is extremely important up in my area and across, sort of, what we call the forest fringe, the northern part of the province. And I'm particularly struck by the impact that this is going to have on that industry. My colleague from Melville-Saltcoats just spoke eloquently about that and, you know, the \$100-plus million in lost revenue for the industry.

But more importantly, these are families that have developed businesses. These are families that have probably second-, third-, fourth-generation of folks that have been in the industry and have built the industry, have invested in the industry. And that industry will likely be wiped out by this bill. Certainly our target audience, the American hunters and folks that come up here to enjoy our Saskatchewan hospitality, will see us very differently in the future, and I think we should all be very, very concerned about that.

Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, I also want to talk a little bit about — and it's been canvassed by some of my colleagues as well — that guns have been a part of our culture, literally, the history of Saskatchewan, but not as weapons. Not ever as weapons, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but part of our culture in the sense that . . . And it's been raised before, but predator control is an extremely important piece up in certainly my constituency, in my country — wolves, coyotes, predator game.

You know, these are important things. I mean I've got many, many constituents that lose animals to predators every year, and what's going to become of that? What's going to become of them? Pest control has long been part of a factor in having a gun of some sort, whether it's skunks or raccoons or rats or whatever. I mean we've had to deal with that in our rural Saskatchewan forever, and these are important tools to help us deal with that.

Obviously folks from all cultures in Saskatchewan, you know, we recognize ourselves as being hunter-gatherers. I think if we go back through our history, all cultures in Saskatchewan have equally been hunter-gatherers. And you know, to that point, guns have been used for sustenance. Guns have been used as long as I can remember, and I'm sure well, well before that, for folks to put food on the table. Simple as that — put food on the table. And I know for an absolute fact that even today guns are used to hunt game that is then put forward to Indigenous groups and to food banks and so on. It's part of the sustenance of all peoples in Saskatchewan, and I think that we need to keep that in mind as we address this particular bill and this particular issue.

Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, the minister in her pronouncement of the bill outlined the spending initiatives that we've had in law enforcement over the last number of years. And I think it goes without saying that our government has tried very, very hard in so many different areas to look at the criminal aspect of utilizing weapons in so many different ways. We've advanced monies for a number of policing initiatives, but equally importantly a number of community initiatives that help to reduce crime across the province.

And I think we need to acknowledge and appreciate that those initiatives are important, because not one of us in this House would support the illegal use of weapons. I can't imagine anybody will stand up and say, yeah, I believe in that. We are a law-abiding province. We are a law-abiding citizenry by and large. And if someone commits a crime with a gun of any kind, they should be dealt with appropriately, without question.

And unfortunately the federal government is not distinguishing what that actually looks like. And this concept of reducing mandatory minimums and changing sort of guidelines around utilization of guns as weapons, I think the long-term consequence is going to be quite frightening, quite frightening frankly.

I want to go back just for a second to the predator issue, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. Imagine if this goes through. Imagine us going forward 10, 15, 20 years into the future. What's this land going to look like when we have lost the ability to deal with predators? What does it look like when we've lost that ability to deal with wolves in our farming communities, to deal with coyotes in our . . . the small farmers who have hog operations or chickens or cattle, or any number of domesticated animals, and they can no longer deal with the predator issue in the way that they have been doing for the last number of generations?

Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, I doubt . . . And it's pretty clear that the federal government has not considered that at all. It's pretty clear that they have no idea what that looks like in rural Saskatchewan, rural Alberta, anywhere in a rural environment. And the consequences of that are about food security again.

Let's not lose sight of the big picture on this. This is about food security. This is about retaining a way of life where we grow domesticated animals for food, and we have to control predators as part of that. And clearly no one at the federal level has taken that into consideration. And that too is somewhat shocking, I think, that they have no idea what this looks like.

[16:15]

My colleague from Last Mountain-Touchwood printed off the list of weapons that are being considered under this bill. And literally it's like, it's fine print, I don't know, a hundred pages or whatever. I am not a gun expert, not by any stretch of the imagination.

I grew up in an environment where everyone, every farm . . . I grew up on a farm. Every farmer had a gun, usually two or three, probably had a rifle, probably had a .22, probably had a shotgun of some sort.

We never had a shotgun in my home that I recall, but we certainly

had a rifle and a .22 and one of them was what was referred to as a Norwegian army rifle. I can't even remember what it was but we referred to it as a Norwegian army rifle. And I actually kind of inherited that. I mean that was my gun for a while. It'd knock your shoulder off, but it was a pretty interesting and pretty good weapon. I personally shot a bear when I was quite a young fellow in our yard . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Shot a bear. Yes, I did.

And I was a big-game hunter at one time. I haven't for many, many decades, but I was at one time. We had a .303 as well, which was a very common gun, and .22s. I mean obviously I grew up with a .22 literally almost all the time. My brother and I, we had a trap line. So we were trappers back when we were young folks, and obviously we carried a gun with us from time to time in case we needed to use it. So, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, I grew up in that environment. I grew up around guns. And of course at age, I think, probably 13 we took gun-licensing courses and got our certificates like most Saskatchewan kids did.

Beyond that, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, I also want to say, you know, it's 16 days ago today — 16 days ago today — on the 11th hour of the 11th day, we stood in this building with our veterans. We honoured our veterans. What would they think? What would they think about this?

My mother's husband died last year at 102. They were married for, I don't know, 50-some years I guess. He was a veteran, served in North Africa, Sicily, Europe, England. He and his brothers went to war, three of them — all four. They were farmers. They went to war because it was the thing to do. They had grown up. They had a trucking business as young people. And so they went, and George was a trucker in the army. And he had stories. He rarely talked about his war experiences. But when the last Liberal government introduced the firearms registry, he wrote a letter to the federal government. I think there was tears in his eyes. He wrote how this hurt him to be dealing with this, this attack on what they had fought for in the wars.

Why are we putting up with this? It's just not right. This federal government, time after time after time, attacks the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Alberta, the people of Manitoba, the lawful gun owners, the people who are survivors of those who went off to war to fight for liberty, freedom, freedom of the person. It's just not right, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees.

It's very easy — and I'm going to wrap up — it's very easy for the members opposite to say yeah, we support, we support, we support. I would just ask them, please, put something on paper. Let's see the letter that says, to the NDP leader in Ottawa, we, the people of Saskatchewan, vehemently oppose this legislation. Let's see that. Take it to the media. We don't need to see it in the House. Take it to the media. Let's just see that in writing. And then we will know that we stand together, that we stand together in opposition to this on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees, I will certainly be supporting this motion put forward by the minister and I appreciate the work that's gone into this motion. And I thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Meyers: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to thank the member from Kelvington-Wadena for his heartfelt comments on this piece of legislation from the federal government. I also want to thank the members opposite for their comments as well. It's becoming a bit of a theme I think, this session, that they continue to agree with what we're doing over here as a government. So we definitely appreciate that.

You know, this, make no mistake, is a full attack on the people in the Prairies, specifically here in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba. You know, our province and much of this country, let's be fair, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was built by the fur trade. Going back as long as, you know, Europeans came here and started to do business with First Nations that were, you know, as good as it gets around the world at hunting for survival, using the buffalo, using the deer, using any sort of animal that was out there as resources for food, for clothing, for housing. They taught the European settlers that came here these ways. And going back as far as the history of this province, of course the settlers brought guns and that advanced the ability to be able to go out and gather and to hunt and to provide for families and for communities. So firearms have had a very long history in our province, as I mentioned, and it's had a long history in my life as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, some may say, what's a guy from the north side of Regina, representing the north side of Regina, doing talking about firearms? Well I'm quite proud to represent a number of firearms owners, legal, law-abiding firearms owners in this province. In fact, Gil White is the chairperson for the recreational firearms community here in Saskatchewan and is a proud resident of Walsh Acres. And I'll have some comments that he's weighed in on what this federal legislation does.

But I do want to go back to my upbringing in Midale, on the north side of Midale, the northwest quarter of 12-6-11, west of the second meridian, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I never did get my firearms safety course. I have never owned a gun in my entire life. But I feel it's incumbent on myself and the people of this House to stand up for the people of Saskatchewan. You see, growing up on a farm, we did handle firearms from time to time and we were taught to respect, to be responsible, and to do it in a very safe way, and only a way that was not wasteful. You know, we would shoot pizza boxes off the back deck or, you know, goodness forbid that you should have a bit of a gopher problem going on.

I remember my brother, now my brother Darcy and I . . . Got to tell a couple stories about Darcy. So when we grew up, I recall my dad was a very avid firearms owner. He was a member of the Macoun Gun Club back in the day. They had an indoor range there and he had a couple of handguns. He had a couple of replica rifles. He did have some hunting rifles as well. So he taught us all these things. I recall one time . . . We would go down to Minot because it was only a couple of hours away, and that's where we'd go on family vacations. And one time we went to a sporting goods store, Scheels. I'm sure many of us know Scheels down . . . Like, unbelievable. I don't know if this was pre-Dick's Sporting Goods but this was, back in the day, this was the coolest place to go. And we got these replica .22 rifles, and they actually had in the chamber, it was like a wooden . . . It was put in there. It was made to look like a single round in there.

My brother and I got those and we played for hours and hours and hours in the trees. And we'd build forts and we'd have camouflage fatigues on. But all the while, you know, we were also learning with these. You didn't fire anything. They were just wooden replicas. And I still have it today. My six-year-old son wants me to take it out of the closet so he can play with this. And yeah, it's getting a little . . . We've had to put a little WD-40 on the bolt action there to make it work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I guess the important thing that I'm trying to raise is we learned, even as kids of six and eight years old with these replica rifles, how you carried it. I remember Dad teaching us. You know, we'd be running around in the yard and say, no, you don't carry it like that. You never point it at somebody. Well, Dad, it's just a pretend . . . It doesn't matter what it is. That was absolutely ingrained in us from the time we were basically walking and playing, how to be responsible, how to be safe, how to carry this firearm.

And so I never did go on to . . . I don't know, just lazy or why not . . . from playing hockey. I'm not sure why I never got around to getting my firearms safety course. But my brother did, Darcy did. And I can tell you, it's amazing this guy did not end up in the Canadian Armed Forces as a special forces sniper. This guy would lay in our farmyard for hours and hours, waiting for that gopher to pop his head out of the hole. You want to talk about pest control, Mr. Speaker. This guy would just sit with his .22 and wait and wait and wait and wait. Well it wasn't long after, you know, he was probably 12, 13 years old. I think you had to be 12 at the time to take your firearms safety.

You know, in his early teen years we didn't have a gopher problem at the farm anymore. He had to move out in the pasture now to start taking care of the gophers out there because we ran out of them in the yard. That's what Darcy was all about. But again, it was the respect. It was the safety. It was the responsibility.

Years later when Darcy and I were living together, we had a barn swallow problem at the cabin. And they had built a nest above the door. And I kid you not, you could not come home from work for the day and try and get in the front door of the cabin without getting swooped at by the mama and a couple of these other birds. Like, they were coming for you. So I come home one day. And Darcy worked at the golf course. He would work really, really early mornings and then he'd be off in the afternoon. So I came home from the oil field one day and there was no birds swooping at me, and I kind of thought that was odd. I walked in. I looked down. He had his old pellet gun, his old pellet gun sitting beside him. He's sitting there playing video games. And I said, what happened to the birds? He said, not a problem anymore.

But again, this is a guy, he knew not to take his .22 rifle, you know, where there's cabin owners and people around. No. He understood what being responsible, safe, and a reliable, legal gun owner in this province meant. And I'm just, you know . . . That's one example of many, many, many people across our province — in the neighbourhood of 70,000 legal law-abiding gun owners in our province.

And you know, it was good to hear the member from Regina Rosemont get up. You know, you follow him on Instagram. He is the Saskatchewan wanderer, part 2. But he's out there doing a lot of hunting with his young son. Again, and I'm confident that that

member is teaching his son how to be responsible, how to understand how to use firearms in a safe and responsible manner.

So growing up north of Midale, no question my dad, as I mentioned, had a number of guns. And I can think back in the day he was a bit of a collector, but he also did hunt. My dad was a hunter-trapper, so in the winters — he was a farmer so of course he would farm all summer long — but in the winter, and I can remember, you know, many times he would hunt fox and coyote for the furs back when it was still okay to wear a fur coat, and my mom did have a number of them. But Dad would go out there. And of course you would have livestock producers in the area. We didn't have cattle. We had livestock producers in the area that, if they were having some issues with predators they would let my dad know, and he would be more than happy to come by and to wait out these coyotes or these foxes.

[16:30]

And I can remember going along with him on several occasions. And you know, just to speak to the bonding experience that we had as a father and a son, and again the conversations that would happen, the conversations that maybe don't happen at the dinner table or on a trip to a hockey game. But you'd be out there for a long time waiting for these animals. And you know, talk about respect. We'd talk about girls. We would talk about just anything that was out there, Mr. Speaker. And I vividly remember those moments. And that doesn't happen unless, you know, my dad had an active interest I guess in hunting and trapping.

So I go back to the days where, and this gets a little, maybe a little bit graphic, but he would also, after he killed the animal he would skin them. You know, that's what my dad would do. He would skin the furs and send them off. I think it was somewhere in Winnipeg. And he would get so many dollars or so much for size and that. We'd have — just terrible — under the fuel tanks there would be, you know, a few carcasses laying around and stuff, and I don't think my mom enjoyed that much. But it was also a way of living.

Now I'm not that old, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, that doesn't go back that far where it was a part of our commerce. And as I mentioned, it's been a part of our history in this province, the fur trade, dating back hundreds and hundreds of years. And it still existed even when I was a young man.

And of course he had all this, you know, once the Liberals brought in the registry he had them all registered and he had them all in a locked case with trigger locks on them and the ammunition in a separate lockbox. He didn't like it. In fact he hated it actually. He thought nothing of it because back in the day he said, this is where we're going; right now they're just registering these things but eventually they're just getting you on a list so that they could come take these away. And that's dating back a number of years. And it's been well canvassed in the House here.

But he had a Kalashnikov. He had an AK-47, semi-automatic, 14 or 15 rounds in the clip. I think we only ever fired it once. It basically just sat in a room and collected dust in a locked cabinet with its trigger lock on it. But he was a collector, and he was an avid collector. He would go to gun shows and he just always had an interest in that. He had a grade 12-gauge shotgun which again,

when he started to run into bird issues on the farm, he would look after them with his 12-gauge shotgun.

But he also had a Mini-14 with a folding stock on it and this — no kidding, Mr. Speaker — was the coolest gun alive because it was the gun that they used in *The A-Team*. For some of us in here that may be a little younger, we may not remember that show. Come on. I mean, Mr. T was in that. And that was the coolest gun going back in the day. The guy they called Face.

That Mini-14 — and again, I think I only was allowed to shoot it once or twice because it wasn't something he liked to take out — he actually redid his own bullets. He didn't buy bullets. He would, you know, save the cartridges and reload them, but you know, that took time and of course there was an expense involved. But that Mini-14, when I was a kid it was the coolest gun out there. And again, locked cabinet, trigger locks.

But I just want to read, Mr. Speaker, from the amendment that came out the other day, the federal Liberals moved:

88 The firearm of the design commonly known as the Ruger Mini-14 rifle, and any variant or modified version of it, including the

- (a) Clark Custom Guns Ruger Mini-14;
- (b) Ruger Mini-14 GB;
- (c) Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle;
- (d) Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle Deluxe;
- (e) Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle LE;
- (f) Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle LET;
- (g) Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle NRA Edition;
- (h) Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Target Rifle; and
- (i) Ruger Mini Thirty.

Mousqueton A.M.D. 5.56, and a Ruger XJI are all going to be on this list.

Well my father's Ruger Mini-14 will now be confiscated, seized. I actually don't even know if he still has it, to tell you the honest truth, Mr. Speaker. I moved out of the house a number of years ago so I don't know what he has in his gun safe, but you know, it's been . . . not worth it to him.

But the point is, he was an avid collector. This gun was a danger to nobody. In fact, you know, we rarely ever shot this. But again it goes back to my childhood memories. And to think that bringing in this law, bringing in this confiscation list is going to make anybody safer because of that, basically saying that my father is a criminal because he owns this gun that is behind locked cabinets with locked trigger locks on it, with ammunition stored somewhere else.

It's loony-tunes. Like this is basically the episode where Daffy Duck and Bugs Bunny keep getting shot by Elmer Fudd. The problem is we have a Mickey Mouse government that's implementing this. It is absolutely ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.

So back when the first round of gun registries and all the firearms regulations were brought in by the Liberal government, I recall one other time, Wild bison issue in rural Saskatchewan. And I know, you know the commute from Walsh Acres to the legislature I don't have to watch for deer very much or moose,

God forbid. But this is an issue in rural Saskatchewan and I myself have hit several deer over the course of my career as a driver. Unfortunately sometimes the car doesn't survive. I've been lucky enough. But the wildlife, you know, generally they bear the brunt of that.

Well I recall one time when it was — you know, illegal — when it became illegal to carry your rifle in the back of the vehicle unless you're going to or from a gun range or that. So Dad was headed in one night taking, I think, my brother to hockey practice in Midale. And we lived six miles north of town, and unfortunately he hit a deer. And he's in his pickup truck, and he looked in the rear-view mirror. And unfortunately the animal was still alive, but it was in distress. And he thought to himself, I should just shoot it and put it out of its misery. That would be the correct thing to do. You know, this animal is obviously not going to survive, but was in pain. He wasn't able to be carrying his firearm at that time because of the laws. Now this is going to go even farther. He wouldn't even be allowed to have it. He wouldn't even be able to drive home and get his gun to put the deer out.

So what did he do, Mr. Deputy Speaker? He had to back up and backed over that deer, trying to put it out of its misery. But that didn't work. My dad went in his tool box and got a ball-peen hammer and had to euthanize this deer with a hammer. Now is that looking after wildlife in the best way? Is that looking after what we should . . . If he had been allowed to have his rifle, that would have been about five-second issue. He would have done the humane thing and put that animal out its misery. But no, because of the federal Liberal government, past and present, these are the sort of things that we have to deal with.

Now in rural Saskatchewan, it's not always you're hitting wildlife but sometimes you're hunting wildlife. And I think many of us know in here if you have any roots at all, people that every year get excited to get their deer tags or their mule deer tags or elk tags or, you know, even bear. I've got a friend in town here who hunts bear, literally for the meat. I mean he keeps the skin, but they eat their heart. And it's not my cup of tea, but this is what they do. In rural Saskatchewan, it's a way of life. It's not only, you know, just out there for trophy hunting.

But some of the great times that I've been able to have is making sausage. And I think we all can agree that good deer sausage is unbelievable, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think back to our neighbours across the way. They had a little sausage shack in the way, Robert and Linda Winter. And every year, Robert would go hunting and get a deer and, you know, it was kind of neat to be a young guy and you'd kind of . . . It's almost being invited in behind the curtain, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to watch the sausage being made. And quite often, you know, it's a comment we hear in here. You know, I don't want to know how the sausage is made. I just want to be able to eat. Well I did enjoy how the sausage was made, Mr. Speaker.

I think back to, you know, the park. Kelly Orsted. Man, some of those days back at Mainprize. And Mainprize is a great area for hunting. It's, you know, the old Souris River valley there and there's a lot of game, you know, south of there down that Oungre, Torquay region. You hunt birds and it's an avid area. But those were days when Kelly and the guys would get together and they'd be doing two or three animals because they'd all wait and

do it, and it was a whole day process. You'd probably want to book the next day off too because, you know, there was a lot of extracurricular that would go on around making that sausage.

But it's part of who we are. It's part of the fabric of our province. And you know, to come in and drop 300 pages of firearms, to basically criminalize 75,000 people in this province alone? Legal, law-abiding, responsible, safe, firearms owners? As I mentioned before, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a bit loony-tunes.

Recently some comments were made around this, and I just want to read from an article from cjme.com:

Gun retailers across Canada are frustrated and angry over potential changes to Bill C-21 that would ban more legally owned firearms and shotguns.

The amendment could result in a ban on millions of semi-automatic rifles and shotguns used for hunting across the country.

Darryl Schemenauer, the owner of TnT Gunworks in Regina, said if this ban goes through, it will have a domino effect on gun businesses.

"This is the worst kick we've had being in business for 30 years. This is going to put probably us out of business and many other people in the trade . . ."

Schemenauer added Bill C-21 has had an effect on business since it was proposed in October.

But with that being said, TnT Gunworks is seeing a surge in sales on firearms that are intended to be banned under Bill C-21.

"So many people have these firearms, the phone doesn't stop. Everybody's asking what to do with them (and) what's going to happen."

Schemenauer said he hasn't heard anything about compensation for these guns and believes there never was compensation . . . planned.

"(Prime Minister . . . Trudeau) [he said he, but Prime Minister Trudeau] is turning honest people into criminals. He's making everybody with these firearms prohibited so that means you become a criminal."

According to Schemenauer, he has heard from customers who are unsure . . . what to do with their firearms . . .

He feels people are going to . . . [take] a stand . . .

The Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation has also expressed some frustration and even confusion about the proposed amendment.

The federation's Gil White said as far as he can tell, this is the biggest attack on legal firearm owners in Canada.

"I think it's an unmanageable. I think it's going to be an unsuccessful attempt at seizing more firearms from legal

gun owners . . ."

White also believes the proposed amendment has nothing to do with public safety. He said it's about taking guns from Canadians.

"I think this particular government will keep going until they've managed to disarm all legal firearm owners in Canada."

[He also] . . . added if that's the case, the only ones left with firearms will be police and criminals."

"They need to address gangs, poverty (and) border security. They do come across some firearms, but there are some that they don't get."

"We do believe this will affect the hunting community, which is something that the Liberals said they would never do. They'd never come after hunters."

And that's from a CJME article quoting local businesses and local responsible firearm owners right here in Regina and in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Cops and criminals — is that the endgame? Is that the only people that we want in our country to be able to own firearms, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's another overreach. It's another attack of Western Canada. It's another deliberate attack of the people of Saskatchewan from this federal Liberal-NDP coalition government.

Make no mistake. This is a bill that affects all Canadians. But do you really think that this affects Canadians in downtown Montreal, downtown Vancouver, downtown Toronto? Is this really going to do anything to curb the non-stop transportation of illegal firearms coming across our border from the United States, from Mexico — firearms that are in the hands of criminals?

Is this going to do anything to take guns off the streets from gang members? Do those gang members have their firearm safety? Do they go to a store to buy their gun? Where do they saw off . . . I mean, if you talk to police chiefs across our province, it's sawed-off rifles, illegal rifles with the stocks cut off, the barrels cut off. These are not things that are registered. They might be on this list, but the Liberal government has no idea and they have no way of working to prevent the real danger out there. This bill, this Liberal-NDP bill does nothing to protect the people of this province.

[16:45]

And as I mentioned, it is good to hear a couple of the members opposite stand up and speak on behalf, in support of this motion. I look forward to the vote later, where they will all stand up for their support for this motion.

But as we've mentioned, it is time to do more than just that here in this House. It is time to send a message to Jagmeet Singh. It's time to send a message to the committee — I believe it's Alistair MacGregor, the federal NDP member who's on the committee — to tell them they have the power to strike this down.

Make no mistake. The NDP has the power to change what is a gross overreach by this federal Liberal-NDP coalition. I heard

earlier the member from Regina Rosemont mention that they do, they recognize overreach. And I do appreciate that and I hope that goes even further than supporting this motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I hope that goes further in this House and right here in Saskatchewan at recognizing overreach when it comes to the federal government. I hope it goes to them taking a long, hard look at Bill 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act*, and recognizing the overreach of the federal government.

It's a constant misunderstanding. It's a constant disregard. It's a constant intrusion by Ottawa into the lives of the people of our province. And it needs to be defended, and we do need to draw a line. So whether it be Bill C-21 or these ridiculous amendments, whether it be the carbon tax, whether it be the economic autonomy of our natural resources, whether it be defending our agriculture sector against new standards when it comes to fertilizer. When it comes to things as simple as, we've just watched six weeks of testimony for the first time ever that the *Emergencies Act* was put into force in this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Time after time after time after time, this Liberal-NDP coalition in Ottawa continues to overreach, to insert themselves into provincial jurisdiction, and to not have the best interests of people of our province, of Saskatchewan, in their minds. They think this is going to make a nice headline in Montreal, in the *Toronto Star*. And that'll be all wonderful, and then they hope that that'll garnish some votes. And they'll tell people that this is going to be, you know, getting tough on crime, all the while reducing mandatory minimum sentences for the criminals that are out there committing crimes with illegal firearms.

But they're going to come to the farm, to people like my dad who spent a lifetime as a hunter, as a fur trader, as a responsible and safe and reliable firearms owner. That's who they're turning into criminals, the people who just are trying to make a way of life, who are going out and maybe hunting to have some food in their freezer.

We hear, you know, the members opposite every day talk about some challenges in affordability clear across the country. There is a way that they can support that, you know. Meat prices have gone up. The price of a deer costs the same when you shoot it and skin it and make sausage and put it in your freezer, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when I continue to look at time and time again the overreach of this federal Liberal-NDP coalition, it does bring me back to where we are today on so many of these issues. And as I mentioned, I do hope the members opposite really take a look at Bill 88 because it is time for us to really stand up for the people of this province. It is time for us to push back.

I'm a dad. I got three young ones. And I often think, you know, the phrase is "leave it better than you found it." And how am I going to be able to do that, you know, just as a father, for one, but also as a legislator here representing the people of this province? And how can I leave it better than I found it for them and for the people of this province when I continually see a federal government who doesn't have their best interests at heart, who doesn't have their best interests at the front of their minds?

So this is one way. And as I mentioned, you know, I look at Dayn; I look at Sebastian. Eisley is only two, so we don't have a lot of conversations unless it's about "Baby Shark." But the boys, you

know, we started having those conversations on what does this look like and what does your future look like. And they already have questions. They already have a bit of an understanding on where we're going.

And as I mentioned, Sebastian — and I'm going to take a chance here and guess that Sebastian doesn't watch the legislative proceedings on TV because it's not on Netflix — but he's been after me for a couple of months now. We were again at my brother's house, and his oldest boy, Lincoln, is eight, and he's got a sniper rifle, a Nerf dart gun sniper rifle. And Sebastian played with that thing for hours and hours the last time we were down there for Thanksgiving.

But we made sure, constantly — we built a target, and they were upstairs and looking through this thing, and we hung it on a closet — we made sure, you don't point that at anybody. It's a toy. It's a Nerf gun. That's fine. Your responsibility — teaching this to a six-year-old — your responsibility is to be safe, is to understand why you need to be safe.

And that carries over, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that responsibility. Putting that on a young man's shoulders at six years old that he needs to carry forward for the rest of his life. It's an important lesson to learn. The lesson that I don't want him to learn is that he's a criminal for wanting to shoot at a target, that he's going to become a criminal simply by owning some property. Those aren't the lessons that we should be teaching our kids. Those aren't the lessons that a federal Liberal-NDP coalition should be trying to teach safe, reliable firearms owners in our province. And so, as I look to the future, I want my kids to be able to understand that.

And I'll take you right back to the beginning, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I've never owned a firearm. I've shot firearms. I've enjoyed it quite a bit to tell you the honest truth. And there's part of me that, you know, that ship has sailed maybe a little bit over the years, but you know, I've always enjoyed target shooting and I think it's one of the great sports out there.

In fact, I think back to, I want to say it's Terry Puhl from up in the Fillmore area was an accomplished . . . and I believe he's in the Saskatchewan Sport Hall of Fame. You know, Terry would've never had that opportunity to be a world-class shooter, to have the opportunity to go to the Olympics if he hadn't had the ability to own a firearm, to use it at a range in a safe way.

Think about all our skeet shooters and the world-class shooters we have. Biathlon athletes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They are not going to be allowed to practise their craft.

So you may as well say, you know what, growing up in Canada now you can still play hockey, Mr. Deputy Speaker; we have no problem with you playing hockey, but you can't use a stick anymore. All sticks are illegal. So you can go ahead and play hockey. That's not a problem. Absolutely not a problem. Again here's the problem: you can use your stick until it breaks or until we come and confiscate it. We'll tell you we're going to give you some money for your \$250 carbon-graphite-super-Sidney Crosby-Connor McDavid stick, but they're not. I think we're all aware of that. So how does that change the face of hockey in our country?

How does it change the face with this 300-page amendment sneakily just dropped in at the committee stage? Make no mistake. They knew exactly what they were doing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To take away that opportunity, to take away that opportunity from that young kid from Fillmore who has dreams of going to the Olympics at the biathlon, who has dreams of being a world-class skeet shooter.

Now I know the member from Kelvington-Wadena touched on our veterans. And you know, you think back and one of the great stories that's out there, and it's told all the time and I did hear it again the other day. I was at the Armistice dinner. It was the Farmer Johns, the Farmer Johns from here in Saskatchewan. Proud. Made us proud during the war.

I'm going to go ahead and assume a number of those guys learned to shoot on a farm, shooting gophers, shooting targets, putting soup cans on top of a fence post. Didn't do anybody any harm. They weren't criminals. Nobody was coming to put them in jail.

We need to take a hard look. And I think it's been said here before, this government supports initiatives that are targeted towards the real criminals, illegal handguns being carried on by people who are not registered, reliable, safe, have a safe, a trigger lock, ammunition somewhere else. You know, the federal government recently eliminated those mandatory minimum sentences, yet now they're introducing basically new sentences for 75,000 legal gun owners, firearm owners in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know, I just . . . What's next? What's next for this federal government as they continue their assault on our province and the people in our province? And as I mentioned, I am very happy to hear a couple of the members across in support of the motion. I look forward to all the members standing up and voting in favour of it, and I'm also looking forward to them reaching out to their federal counterparts. Because the NDP have an opportunity to stop this thing in its tracks. Pardon the analogy — they have the opportunity to put a bullet into this legislation. If they don't, they clearly don't support Saskatchewan and its people. They don't support putting the people of this province first. All they care about is some headlines in Toronto, downtown Montreal, and in Vancouver.

Well clear across this country and clear across this province, we do care about the people here. We do care about standing up against the federal intrusions time and time and time again, whether it be this, whether it be a carbon tax, whether it be the autonomy of our economic sovereignty when it's with respect to our natural resources, to our agriculture sector.

You just have to drive over to the REAL District right now and talk to the farmers and the producers that are there and ask them what they think of this legislation, and ask them what they think we should be doing about this legislation. And I know there's more to come on that front in the future, but it is time and time again.

So we are looking for the support of all the members across the aisle, and we're also looking for them to take a look and support and pass Bill 88 through all stages. This important piece of legislation needs to be looked at because we do need to draw this line. We do need to defend it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not just for

us, for our kids and for the next generations. Because what this province has been built on is being eroded at this very time. From the time of the fur trade to the future is being thrown out the window.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to support the motion:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents; and further,

That this House calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners.

And I will plead with those members to once again . . . We may have many differences. We see things through many different lights. But the one thing that we should absolutely stand behind is the 1.2 million people in this province, to defend them against federal intrusion, to stand up for them so that they can raise their kids in what I believe, and I didn't always believe this, but what I believe is the best province in this entire country. Because if we don't do that as legislators, as the people who represent them, then who is going to do that?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know there was a lot of stories there and I did talk about my brother quite a bit. And I do appreciate that you gave me the chance. Because as a non-firearms owner, I think this is an extremely important stand for us to take on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. So I am more than happy to stand and support this motion. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — It now being 5 o'clock, 5 p.m., we stay on recess until 7 p.m. tonight.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe
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
Minister of Finance

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Trade and Export Development
Minister of Immigration and Career Training
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Hon. Everett Hindley
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
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Hon. Gene Makowsky
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Hon. Paul Merriman
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Minister of Crown Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
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Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Energy and Resources

Hon. Laura Ross
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Hon. Dana Skoropad
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Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety
Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Advanced Education