



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

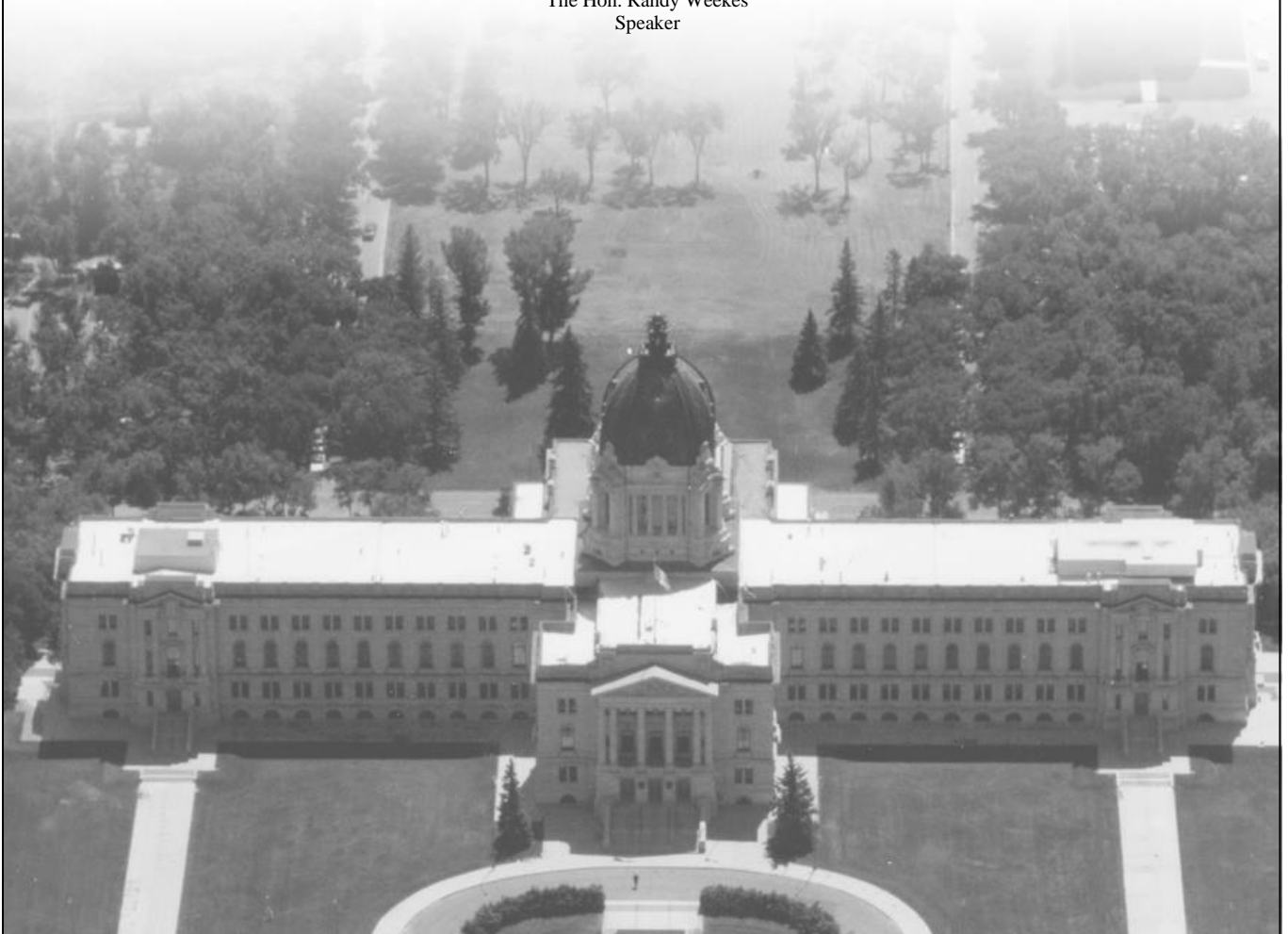
of the

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

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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)

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Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)

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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)

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Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)

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)

Vacant — Regina Coronation Park

Standings

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 47; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12;

Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Vacant — 1

Clerks-at-the-Table

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

Deputy Clerk — Kathy Burianyk

Principal Clerk — Robert Park

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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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 recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I request leave to make an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, and to all members of this Assembly, I would like to begin by introducing and welcoming some very special guests here who have joined us in our Legislative Assembly and are seated in your gallery.

Mr. Speaker, it's an absolute honour to welcome here today, and I would ask you to just to maybe give a wave when I say your name: Councillor Robert Sylvestre from Birch Narrows Dene Nation, Chief Norma Catarat from Buffalo River Dene Nation, and Councillor Dallas Billette from Buffalo River Dene Nation.

Along with these Indigenous leaders, I would also like to introduce and welcome a number of representatives from NexGen Energy's leadership team that are joining us here this afternoon: Leigh Curyer, chief executive officer; Travis McPherson, chief commercial officer; Luke Moger, vice-president of permitting and licensing; Adam Engdahl, vice-president of community; and Dylan Smart, director of regional development.

Mr. Speaker, we have many exciting stories to share from our North, and it is an absolute pleasure to have these fine people here representing one of these very exciting stories that we have to tell. NexGen, Mr. Speaker, is currently working through the development of a high-grade uranium mining project that is posed to bring huge economic benefits to Saskatchewan as a province, and certainly to our northern communities. The Rook I project and its benefits will be explained a little bit further by my colleague, the member from Athabasca, in just a few minutes.

But suffice to say, Mr. Speaker, I certainly, certainly would like to thank all the leaders that we have in your gallery here from Clearwater River, Birch Narrows, and Buffalo River Dene Nations and from NexGen, and just thank you for all that you do to make Saskatchewan the greatest place to live on the earth. And as the government we certainly want to say thank you and appreciate your efforts. And I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to this and their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a tremendous honour to join with the minister opposite to welcome these northern leaders and industry leaders to the Saskatchewan Assembly, to their Assembly, Mr. Speaker. The leadership, it's a pleasure to have a chief and councillors here in the Assembly from Clearwater, from Buffalo River Dene Nation, from Birch Narrows Dene Nation, leaders in the northwest part of this province, Mr. Speaker. I thank them for their presence and for their work and leadership day in, day out in this province.

I also welcome the leadership of NexGen Energy that are here, Mr. Speaker, an important company, an important opportunity, an important resource in Saskatchewan. The fact is we have an unmatched uranium resource globally in Saskatchewan. And this resource and that mining is so important to northern Saskatchewan and to all of Saskatchewan and to the world.

And it's my pleasure to welcome the leadership with NexGen, but very importantly these local Indigenous leaders, to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to also join the Minister of Environment to welcome NexGen and First Nation leaders from my constituency.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Denesuline.]

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Saulteaux.]

I want to thank you, the leadership that have come out here to join us in this gallery. miigwech.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Grewal: — Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. 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 resources rights unclear; that an unsupportive federal government will continue to impede Saskatchewan's potential to play a global role in providing resources to the world market.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to implement Saskatchewan-first policies

and legislation that will support the development of Saskatchewan as a global supplier of food, fuel, and fertilizer without federal infringement on Saskatchewan's constitutional authority.

The below undersigned are residents of Regina, Balgonie, Moose Jaw. I do so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention: this government has been selling off Crown land and leases with no meaningful duty-to-consult process; this failed duty-to-consult policy is an infringement on inherent and treaty rights; Indigenous people in this province must have the first right of refusal when Crown lands are being considered for sale and they must be consulted by both government and industry.

This government continues to ignore its own 1992 TLE [treaty land entitlement] Agreement, an agreement that is a constitutional obligation. This constitutional obligation has been breached by this government, and the 10 per cent Crown land left that we still have must be protected for First Nation and Métis people so that we may continue to exercise our inherent treaty right to hunt, fish, gather, and medicine pick.

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 stop the sell-off of Crown land, and work with First Nation and Métis communities in this province.

The signatories of this petition reside in Saskatoon and Sturgeon Lake. I do so present.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise and present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. Now it's no secret that we've been visiting with folks all around this province, and we've been hearing very similar concerns, very similar concerns as the folks who signed this petition today. They'd like us to be aware that recruitment and retention of health care professionals is a particular concern in rural areas, in smaller urban centres, where our health care facilities have experienced numerous disruptions and shutdowns over the last number of years under this government's watch, including disruptions to emergency room care, acute care, and lab and X-ray services.

The staffing crisis is also creating burnout for folks who have put in time, in some case decades, serving this province. They're being forced to work overtime. They're being denied time off and they're burning out, leaving the profession, and in many cases leaving this province.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

The petition today is signed by residents of Wilkie. I do so present.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to introduce legislation to prohibit conversion therapy. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* names sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination. Conversion therapy is a discredited and abusive practice which attempts to actively change the sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

I'll read the prayer:

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

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

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that has stopped listening to the people of this province, and that couldn't be any more true when it comes to protecting Saskatchewan's water supply for current and future generations. Citizens concerned about drinking water and recreational water bodies have been denied access to invitation-only consultation on issues that impact their lives and livelihoods. Not only that, but as the Provincial Auditor has identified, they are failing to deliver a credible wetland policy while significant work remains to be done to protect wetland habitat and adequately regulate drainage.

The United Nations states that water is at the core of sustainable development and is critical for socio-economic development, energy and food production, healthy ecosystems, and for human survival itself. If this government is serious about sustainability then they need to quit the greenwashing and come up with a credible plan to protect our most vital resource.

I will read the prayer.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan actively protect Saskatchewan water from current and future threats to our valuable water supply.

This petition is presented by the residents of Regina. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Expansion of Educational Opportunities in Health Care

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to say there's more good news for Saskatchewan's health care sector. Last month the Ministry of Health announced another large expansion of educational opportunities for Saskatchewan students interested in a career in health care.

An investment of five and a half million will create more than 550 new post-secondary training seats across 18 health care training programs. This initiative builds on the fall 2022 expansion of 150 nursing seats in Saskatchewan's registered nursing, psychiatric nursing, and nurse practitioner programs. Our government continues to push ahead and see positive results from our four-point health human resources action plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain over 1,000 health care professionals.

[13:45]

We have received applications and reached out to more than 600 internationally educated health care workers residing in Canada to get their training up to date and to get them working. Additionally 159 bursaries have been approved to support Saskatchewan students in health disciplines with their final clinical placement requirements, the highest since 2014. As of March 1st, nearly 100 new or enhanced permanent full-time positions posted in rural and remote areas experiencing service disruptions have been filled.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

National Healing Forest Space at Westminster United Church in Regina

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, what potential lies in a space that may be less travelled, out of the way, and underutilized? I'll tell you what the Westminster United Church in my constituency found. They have what they described as a plain and shady area on their property underutilized and wondered what they could do with it.

That's when the National Healing Forest initiative came to their attention. This is an organization that encourages communities to develop a forest or a green space dedicated to healing, learning, sharing, and reflection about Canada's history and the legacy of residential schools.

The Westminster congregation decided that this would be a perfect fit for their space so that neighbours could come together in the spirit of reconciliation to heal and reflect. The community healing forest and garden space would be an excellent use of this previously unused corner of their property, and they got planning. Working with Elder Lorna Standingready, the space will be a gathering space for ceremony, reflection, meditation, and prayer, with several sitting areas and a walking path weaving through natural grass and medicinal and sacred plants with

identification plaques in both English and Cree.

Funding from this project came from individual donors, the Cathedral community association, the Suzuki Foundation, and the Justice and Reconciliation Fund of the United Church of Canada. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

NexGen Energy Develops Rook I Uranium Project

Mr. Lemaigre: — Mr. Speaker, there's more good news for Saskatchewan's uranium industry and northern development. NexGen Energy Ltd. is currently developing its 100 per cent own Rook I project in northwest Saskatchewan, which hosts a high-grade area of uranium ore deposit.

Our government is excited about not only the progress NexGen has made as it moves forward in the environmental assessment but also for the benefit this project will bring to northern communities. NexGen has signed agreements with several northern Indigenous communities to define the environmental, cultural, and economic opportunities and benefits that the Rook I project will produce and provide for these communities.

NexGen has also worked closely with local and Indigenous communities and has introduced several initiatives designed to improve economic development, health, and community well-being, including its summer student, youth sports, recreational, and dog adoption programs.

NexGen is an industry leader when it comes to environmental awareness and are dedicated to reducing its environmental footprint and promoting responsible social development. NexGen is ensuring that the environment that surrounds the project will remain as unaltered as possible during exploration, development, and mining.

We look forward to continuing to work together with NexGen Energy Ltd. as the Rook I project progresses towards a development decision. Mr. Speaker, this is growth that works for everyone.

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

Regina Senior Citizens' Centre Promotes Healthy and Independent Lifestyle

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize the Regina Senior Citizens' Centre, a very busy space in my riding.

The Regina Senior Citizens' Centre's goal is to help promote and sustain a healthy and independent lifestyle. Their hard-working staff believe in fostering and promoting programs for everyone aged 55 years and up. The RSCC [Regina Senior Citizens' Centre] currently is serving over 900 residents in the city and have activities and programs that run daily and consistently service large groups to take part. On any given day you can find residents playing billiards, partaking in line dancing classes, having fun singing karaoke, or enjoying an afternoon dance party.

Outside of these activities the RSCC also works with residents through their home help program. For a nominal fee the RSCC will help seniors with their general housekeeping, lawn services, yard maintenance, companionship visits, and their Independence Club, which provides seniors with transportation for appointments, shopping, and other activities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me today in recognizing the Regina Senior Citizens' Centre and all the important work they do for the residents of Regina. Thank you.

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

Canadian Blood Services Opens New Donor Centre

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this last month I had the privilege of attending the celebratory event in honour of the new Canadian Blood Services donor centre located on Albert Street. Blood and plasma donations save lives, and with a new, modern facility open to the donors, I hope to see many new faces at the centre. The new facility offers improved comfort and care for the donors by improving the accessibility and providing a welcoming environment.

Saskatchewan's blood donors are an important part of what keeps our province healthy. Unfortunately in December there were more than 800 unfilled blood donation appointments. I am encouraging all Saskatchewan residents to donate blood at least once in this year.

As a frequent blood donor, I may not directly see the impact my donations made, but I leave every appointment knowing that my blood could make all the difference in somebody's leaving the hospital or getting more time with their loved one.

Mr. Speaker, through you I ask all the members of Legislative Assembly to join me in congratulating Canadian Blood Services on the opening of this new donor facility. I also ask you to join me in thanking the many blood donors and blood bank workers in our province for taking the time to make the difference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Seven Citizens Invested into the Order of Gabriel Dumont

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Later this month seven individuals, who have distinguished themselves with their dedication to the Métis of Canada, will be invested into the Order of Gabriel Dumont. The Order is one of the Métis Nation's highest civilian honours and is awarded to both Métis and non-Métis individuals who have served or continue to serve with distinction.

Five gold medals and two silver medals will be awarded on March 22nd in Saskatoon. Margaret McDougall, Harriet and Edwin St. Pierre, Dale McAuley, and Michael Relland will receive gold medals for their lifetime of service to the Métis Nation. Margaret Harrison and Verna Demontigny will be awarded silver medals for their significant contributions to the Métis.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight the achievements of one medal recipient. Margaret — also known as Sophie — McDougall, was born December 22nd, 1928 in the small Métis community of St. Louis. Sophie has 13 children, 36 grandchildren, 46 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren. Sophie began her teaching career in 1945 and still serves as an active elder and language keeper for the school in St. Louis and works with many organizations in Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the Assembly join me in congratulating these individuals on their investiture into the Order of Gabriel Dumont and thanking them for their service to the Métis people. Thank you.

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

Economic Growth in Saskatoon

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud to say that Saskatoon's employment growth is up 9.6 per cent year over year. That means Saskatoon has the highest rate of job growth in the nation. It's also the largest increase the city has seen in the last 15 years. 16,700 more people were employed in Saskatoon in 2022 than the year prior and, Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon now has over 59,000 more people employed than it did in 2006.

The city is also anticipated to lead the nation in GDP [gross domestic product] growth with 7.2 per cent growth forecasted for 2023. All the while our province continues to have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

More people from across Canada and the world are wanting to work and raise a family in Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. In fact 7,167 newcomers now call Saskatoon home since last year, bringing our population up to over 348,000 residents. Most of the employment growth was led by the wholesale and retail trade industry followed by the health care and construction sectors. Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon had 3,100 more people employed in health care in 2022 than it did in 2021.

With more record levels of private investment coming into the province, we expect to see this growth continue across all sectors. Mr. Speaker, that's growth that works for everyone.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Management of the Provincial Economy

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government that's failing to deliver on every front — failure to deliver on health care, on the cost of living, and on the jobs front. Now, Mr. Speaker, they don't like it when we talk about that Premier's record, but the StatsCan data doesn't lie. Dead last in job growth and economic growth since that Premier came to office. My question is this: when will the Premier accept that he has the worst economic record in the country? And better still, when does he plan to do something about it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that over the course of the last few years, we've been through two years of a global pandemic and one year where we had a generational drought, a drought that impacted agriculture in the province of Saskatchewan. In fact — let's talk about the facts — the ag industry in Saskatchewan, the GDP in the ag industry was down some 38 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Had agriculture remained at zero per cent in 2021, Mr. Speaker, the GDP of the province would have increased 3 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, is what we see here is the Leader of the Opposition and the NDP essentially blaming agriculture and blaming farmers, using their numbers across the board. Most certainly when we look at what's happening in 2022 . . . Let's look at what's happening in 2022, Mr. Speaker. In 2022 the RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] had this to say about Saskatchewan's GDP growth, and I quote: "We project GDP growth will be strongest in Saskatchewan."

Mr. Speaker, it's members on this side of the House that will always stand behind our Saskatchewan industries, in particular our Saskatchewan farmers, providing \$2 billion in crop insurance in a generational drought, Mr. Speaker, rather than using that drought for political points in this Assembly.

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

Utility Rates and the Provincial Economy

Ms. Beck: — [Inaudible] . . . there, Mr. Speaker. But let's be clear. This worst-in-the-country record isn't because of the pandemic or because of a drought or some bad luck, Mr. Speaker. Those things happened in other provinces as well. This out-of-touch government needs to know that its economic record is the result of the choices that that Premier has made.

Let's look what he's done with power bills, Mr. Speaker. Since 2018 they've raised power bills four times, forcing Saskatchewan people to pay for their own mismanagement, places like the GTH [Global Transportation Hub], the bypass, and so many more, Mr. Speaker. How can that Premier actually think that it's okay to force people to pay for the mistakes that his government, that he himself has made?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, it's the province of Saskatchewan that has 60 per cent of Canada's arable land, 40 per cent of Canada's arable cropland. It would stand to reason, it would stand to reason when you have a generational drought, that is going to have an impact on the broader economy across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

However, Mr. Speaker, we'll be watching because many of these producers, many of these agricultural producers are coming to town next week for the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention. And we'll be looking and watching closely as to whether or not the Leader of the Opposition addresses SARM, blames Saskatchewan agriculture for the drop, for the reduction in GDP here in the province, Mr. Speaker. Or will she agree with what's happening today, what's happening in 2022, Mr. Speaker, by her own admission? And I have a quote from the Leader of the Opposition that says:

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

Mr. Speaker, we agree with the Leader of the Opposition on that statement, not when she flip-flops and blames agriculture and blames farmers in this province.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I think I hurt someone's feelings over there because that spin is a little bit much. Now this is a Premier who is looking to again raise power bills for the third time in just a few months. Mr. Speaker, people in this province are already paying the price.

This weekend I talked to a gentleman who's in his 70s, and he told me how proud he was that he has always paid his utility bills on time up until now. But under the tax and fee hikes of this government . . . They think it's funny, Mr. Speaker. But this gentleman told me how difficult it was that for the first time in his life he can no longer pay his bills. He's falling behind.

[14:00]

Does that tired and out-of-touch Premier accept any responsibility for the hardship that he is putting on the people in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the utility rates that we have in this province, when you look at the bundle of utility rates that we have, they're among the lowest in the nation. We have amongst the lowest gas utility rates in the nation. We have amongst the lowest insurance rates in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

As the Minister of Finance has said many times in this Assembly, as we manage our way through supporting Saskatchewan families with inflationary pressures that we have, Mr. Speaker, there's \$2 billion in the budget each and every year to address just those pressures, year in, year out. In addition to that, \$500 tax affordability cheques were sent out last year, only available due to the resource strength of our economy, Mr. Speaker.

But back to where the NDP is, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the general economy in our province. As I said, we have 40 per cent of the arable cropland. Agriculture was down one year due to a generational drought. It was supported by the members of the government in this province like it always should be, Mr. Speaker. And most certainly we'll be watching at the SARM convention when that ag community comes to town. Will the Leader of the Opposition be talking down agriculture in front of those 2,000 farmers, Mr. Speaker? Or will she most certainly agree with the major banks across the nation that say that Saskatchewan is going to lead in economic growth not only this year but next year as well?

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, if that Premier was paying any attention at all or if he cared, he would understand the people in this province are facing a cost-of-living crisis. That tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government isn't making things better. No, Mr. Speaker, they're actually making things worse, piling on new costs.

Now this is the Premier who talks about growth that works for everyone, but under his watch, Mr. Speaker, the only thing that's growing is the number of people in this province who are falling behind. Again this tired and out-of-touch government is choosing to make life even more expensive. Mr. Speaker, why doesn't he understand that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, as a matter of fact we have the second-lowest utility bundle in the nation of Canada. This is an effort by this government and our Crown corporations to keep those utility costs as low as possible, not only for Saskatchewan people, but so that we're able to attract investment into this province and create jobs. As a matter of fact 16,400 of those jobs were created over the course of the past year, Mr. Speaker.

This province today, this province today is growing at its fastest pace in more than a century, Mr. Speaker. And it's our goal on this side, on this side of the House to ensure that that growth continues, that that is growth that works for everyone, works for everyone that's here, Mr. Speaker. And the fact today is this: there are more people in the province of Saskatchewan today. There are more jobs in the province of Saskatchewan today. There are more opportunities for those folks that live in community after community in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Growth is a good thing, but yes, it does create challenges, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we want to ensure that that growth is working for everyone from corner to corner in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — That tired, out-of-touch Sask Party government is hiking up SaskPower bills in part to pay for their own mismanagement, Mr. Speaker. Just think, you know, it was Bill Boyd who swooped in as SaskPower minister with SaskPower cash to green-light the GTH land scandals, all of which were part of the \$2 billion bypass, the biggest cost overrun in Saskatchewan's history.

The debt has tripled under that Sask Party government. It's nearly doubled under that Premier. How is it fair for families and businesses to pay higher power bills to pay for that government's costly mismanagement, and all at a time where that government's enjoying windfall revenues?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'll get to the power piece in a bit, but I would once again reiterate that we have the second-lowest-cost utility bundle across the nation of Canada. That's something I think the people of this province can be very, very

proud of, the work that the Crown utilities are doing in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I would encourage the member from Dewdney or member from Regina somewhere here . . . Rosemont to take a drive, to take a drive west of the city. And what he will see there is investment, over \$300 million investment in a canola crush facility, Mr. Speaker, people at work in the construction industry right here in the community of Regina. Another one going to be built north of the city, another one to the east of that, another one potentially being expanded up in the Saskatoon area, Mr. Speaker.

And I think this build, this is part of the investment story that is happening. We have folks here from the northwestern part of our province, Mr. Speaker, looking to make a significant investment, already have made a significant investment in providing uranium for clean nuclear power for us in Saskatchewan, for India where I was last week, and for other countries around the world. And this is the role that Saskatchewan will play in providing food, fuel, security for all of us, not only in the nation, not only on the continent of North America, but around the globe, Mr. Speaker.

We would ask the NDP to quit talking down this economy that's growing in Saskatchewan at the fastest pace that it ever has, Mr. Speaker. Get on board and understand that we are going to ensure that that's growth that works for everyone.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I know west of Regina real well. And I know the parcel of land where that government actually ripped off nuns, ripped off taxpayers, are now sticking ratepayers with the bill, Mr. Speaker. This government, SaskPower, the hike that they're bringing upon Saskatchewan families and business is a real hardship at a time of a cost-of-living crisis.

Last month the Canadian Federation of Independent Business released a report that showed rising energy and fuel costs as the number one concern for small businesses. These rate hikes are a serious hardship for families, and they're not going to help that Premier's worst-in-the-nation economic record.

Why is this government piling on with new costs for small businesses now?

The Speaker: — I'd just like to caution the member from Regina Rosemont about your language, please. I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I find it interesting that they're quoting the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business], given that their critic, Mr. Speaker, had this to say about the CFIB: "Imagine being the CFIB and just getting to go to work every day and lie." Now they're quoting the CFIB, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy actually to talk about this particular report. The number one issue that the CFIB cited as being a concern for businesses in this province — where we have the most optimism of any business owners in the country — is a labour shortage, Mr. Speaker, which is a legitimate issue.

These members opposite refuse to acknowledge, refuse to acknowledge that there is a challenge on the labour front, Mr. Speaker. Why do they refuse to acknowledge that? Because it cuts against their alternative facts narrative that somehow everything is terrible. Mr. Speaker, I challenge that member to stand up on his next question and acknowledge the fact that we have a challenge on the labour front. This government's working very hard on dealing with that, so I'll talk about that in the next answer but . . .

The Speaker: — I would ask the Minister of Trade and Export Development to withdraw and apologize. That word that you used, you know that's unparliamentary. You said "lie."

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — No, I didn't. I quoted the CFIB, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Okay. Well we'll check the record. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Sales Tax and the Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I can tell you the labour force challenges in this province are not made better by a government that's cut education and training and post-secondary, Mr. Speaker, and drove thousands of trades out of Saskatchewan with the PST [provincial sales tax] on construction labour. That decision itself drove thousands of hard-working skilled trades out of this province, contributing to a labour challenge today.

Under this Premier we have the worst annual average growth in building permits in Canada. The PST drives up costs for projects big and small, and it drives down our ability to compete. It makes no sense. Why won't the Sask Party government, which is sitting on record revenues, scrap this tax on jobs and investment?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let's set the facts clear on building permits, which they egregiously misrepresented in the House yesterday. Building permits increased by 21.9 per cent from 2021 to 2022. That is the fact, Mr. Speaker, regardless of what the alternative narrative that those members opposite are seeking.

With regard to the labour market challenge they, I would note, refuse to acknowledge it. And the reason they refuse to acknowledge that we have a labour market challenge . . . and what I mean by that is that we have a labour shortage. Every business owner in the province knows the number one issue we have right now is a labour shortage.

They refuse to acknowledge it. They're not serious on the economy. This shows why. They put politics in front of the facts every single day of the week. Because if they were to acknowledge that there is a labour shortage in this province, that blows up their entire fake news narrative, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the economy and everything being terrible.

This government is taking very real, substantive action on the labour market, Mr. Speaker. We're taking an all-of-the-above approach, training more of our own people, making sure

newcomers can get into the labour force. I would love to talk about more, Mr. Speaker, in the next answer.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So, Mr. Speaker, the minister is entitled to his opinion, but he's not entitled to his own facts. That government has presided over the worst out-migration in the country, Mr. Speaker. The facts stand on their own. Statistics Canada shows that this government is dead last when it comes to average and annual growth in construction investment under that government. Dead last on jobs, dead last on out-migration, dead last on GDP.

The decision of this tired, outdated, and out-of-touch government to add the PST to construction labour has held our economy back. It's choices like this that have resulted in this Premier having the worst economic record in Canada. When will this Premier show an ounce of contrition for the damage he's caused to our economy, and why won't he make it right and scrap the PST on construction labour?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite wants to talk about population growth. Let's talk about population growth, Mr. Speaker. We have seen the population of this province grow by 200,000 people over the course of the last 16 years, Mr. Speaker. The last quarter, the last quarter we saw the largest increase in population in the history of the province. And, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't just by a little bit that we saw the largest population growth. It was by 40 per cent that we saw the largest population growth.

They are so desperate, Mr. Speaker, to create a narrative which is not accurate. They are so desperate that they come in here with misinformation day after day after day. They are so desperate to run away from their own pathetic record, in which they actually lost population over 16 years. We gained, Mr. Speaker, 200,000 people over that exact same period of time. Their record is horrendous. They're running away from it. They're desperate.

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

Support for the Health Care System

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, this government is failing to deliver on jobs and they're failing to deliver on health care. The issue of short-staffing comes up at every table and with everyone we talk to in the health care system. The minister says he has a plan to recruit and retain workers, but that plan falls short. On hiring, 1,000 workers short according to the Provincial Auditor. And it doesn't address how to retain existing staff.

This minister thinks he has all the answers, but he isn't listening to local voices who have the solutions to address short-staffing in our hospitals and our clinics. When will we see a real plan, developed with local voices to address these challenges?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And just to the member's direct question, we are listening. We have been out talking to front-line health care providers, Mr. Speaker, for over a year now. Since the pandemic has slowed down, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health and I have visited many, many facilities from all corners of this province. And what we did, Mr. Speaker, is we took that information back and we developed our four-point plan, which I've talked about.

I'll give some of the results of our four-point plan to update the House, Mr. Speaker, since we haven't been able to do this since last year. Mr. Speaker, 550 additional training seats have been added in 18 designations in our post-secondary institutions. On top of that, 150 nursing positions that were announced in the budget; 158 doctors hired; 57 family physicians; 98 specialists have been hired in the last 17 months; 185 job offers have gone out to Filipino workers; 67 health care workers and nurses have been hired since December; 159 bursaries have been awarded to 250,000. I'll continue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, the plan falls short. Don't take my word for it; take the word of the Provincial Auditor.

Mr. Speaker, let's take Prince Albert, one of the communities that we visited. They're frustrated by the lack of staff in the hospital, frustrated by the shortage of mental health and addictions supports, frustrated by the lack of mental health supports for kids, and frustrated by a tired and out-of-touch government that isn't listening anymore.

What does the minister have to say to the people in Prince Albert and all across the province who can't get the mental health and addiction supports they need because the Sask Party government has broken the system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I was just up in Prince Albert touring the hospital as well as the University of Saskatchewan post-secondary nursing institution up there. And the people from Prince Albert are very happy that this government is building them an extension to their hospital, the P.A. [Prince Albert] Vic hospital, Mr. Speaker, something that's needed to be done. And we're stepping up and doing that.

Mr. Speaker, do we have some challenges out there? Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. But as the lists that I have already put out to the House of some of the successes . . . I ask the opposition, Mr. Speaker, I ask them the question. If we're hiring all these doctors, we're hiring all these nurses, we're hiring all these technicians, they're choosing Saskatchewan because they see the opportunities that are here, not just in health care but in our economy.

Mr. Speaker, 1.2 million people. Are all of these people wrong for choosing Saskatchewan, and the opposition is right? Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely ridiculous to be able to say that all of these people — the 10,000 people that chose Saskatchewan in

the last quarter — are all wrong and everything is wrong in our province, but those people over there are right.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, we've been listening to Saskatchewan people. That minister's answers prove once again that they clearly have not. We've been meeting with leaders and health care workers in Saskatoon, Regina, Delisle, The Battlefords, Fort Qu'Appelle, Watrous, Humboldt, Lanigan, Prince Albert, Cupar, Shellbrook, and Southey. And there's more to come.

The challenges in those communities are certainly unique, but there's one thing common in every single meeting: we hear that this government isn't listening and they are not interested in finding solutions. Why does this tired and out-of-touch government continue to ignore local voices in health care?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is in touch with constituents across this province in communities right across Saskatchewan, continuing to meet with, whether it's locally elected leaders, organizations like SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM, local advisory groups of which there's many across this province, such as the South East Medical Group, the Esterhazy Health Foundations, St. Peter's Hospital Foundation, a number of these foundations and groups all across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

To talk about some of the investments that have been made as part of the four-point action plan to recruit, train, and incentivize and retain health care workers in this province that the Minister of Health spoke about earlier, we are seeing positive results and seeing success, Mr. Speaker. In Humboldt, as an example, all acute care beds in Humboldt were restored in January due to the successful recruitment of two RNs [registered nurse], two LPNs [licensed practical nurse], and a CLXT [combined laboratory and X-ray technologist], Mr. Speaker.

Those are results as a result of the action plan and the work that we're going to continue to do to enhance and stabilize health care across this province.

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

Funding for Child Care

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked a simple question about how many provincial dollars that government is spending on child care right now. Now the minister provided an amount, and I'm admittedly struggling with that number. If indeed they're maximizing federal dollars, carrying forward what they can, it would appear that this government has taken the federal child care agreement as a pretense to cut the provincial budget on child care significantly. During our recruitment and retention crisis, thousands languishing on wait-lists, that would be wildly irresponsible.

So we know how much they love to prove us wrong on that side, Mr. Speaker. The minister, being a man of honour, a man of his word, will he agree to table tomorrow in this House a breakdown of both provincial and federal dollars going to child care in this province today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the member opposite for an estimates question. We're a little bit early for that, but I'd be happy to provide that information, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are spending in this budget that is just about to conclude, \$309.6 million. Obviously that does include federal dollars, Mr. Speaker. But there is only one taxpayer, and so we are using a combination of federal and provincial dollars.

Mr. Speaker, this year we are providing funding for 5,000 new child care spaces. This brings us to a total of 19,709 child care spaces in the province. But, Mr. Speaker, the most important number is 10. We are at \$10 per day across this province. On April 1st we will be the third province to achieve this, Mr. Speaker. That's growth that works for everyone.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have multiple points of order.

The Speaker: — State your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ran out of ink, but I caught the Premier called the member from Regina Rosemont the member from Regina whatever. I do not believe that's parliamentary language. And then the House Leader had multiple unparliamentary phrases today. The ones I picked up — and I don't know which ones I missed — were "alternative facts narrative," "fake news narrative," "misinformation," and "misrepresenting," Mr. Speaker.

I'd ask that you find all of that language unparliamentary and that both members apologize and withdraw.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would respond to the point of order from my friend opposite. With regard to the specific . . . I mean number one, that's not a point of order. But number two, the Premier temporarily forgot the riding name, which he added in immediately thereafter as far as a discussion across the floor.

The Speaker: — Any comments on the other points of order? If not, we will take it under advisement and get back tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to question 83.

The Speaker: — The question 83 is tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 101

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill 101, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2022*. Mr. Speaker, some of the changes in here are needed and it's important. I'm hoping that, you know, the government . . . And we keep telling the government they don't listen and they don't consult with First Nations and Métis, many of those that are impacted when it comes to changes in legislation and new legislation. They do not consult. They do not talk with our Indigenous people and hear the concerns.

Here's an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for individuals to actually come forward and make some changes that will help families. And some of them . . . And I think about the Sixties Scoop. I think about the residential survivors. I think about legislation. I think about the Privacy Commissioner, who has made it very clear about providing legislation, providing the information and not making it harder for survivors to get the information from the Sixties Scoop, to make it easier for them.

What does the government do? Here was a chance to make some changes and to give those survivors an opportunity to have access, easier access to the information they've been asking for. But again we go to show how a government likes to make it harder for those individuals to access that information. Why would you not take any of the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner to actually provide the information to those survivors? But no, more hurdles, more challenges. I don't understand it and it's confusing.

You have an opportunity. You've heard from Sixties Scoop survivors, residential school survivors saying, please make this information easier for us to access so they can go through with their claims and whatever they need to help them move and heal forward. But instead, we have a government that seems to make it harder.

I know my colleague's going to, and the critic is going to do lots of work on this and going to get a good chance to ask a lot of questions. And I thank her for the great work she's been doing to advocate for individuals who are needing that information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much more. I mean sometimes there's changes that are in here we agree with, and it's good for

people and good for our residents, our kids, you know, those who need the services when it comes to family, you know, when I think about child and family services, those services that are provided.

So again it just shows how this government just doesn't seem to understand where they could help Indigenous people, residential survivors, Sixties Scoop survivors. They could do that and make it easier to say, hey, we hear you, we're going to work. But no, you know, they want to make it even more difficult and harder. So it's pretty sad that they haven't taken any of the recommendations that were provided to them and given to them by the Privacy Commissioner.

And you know, actually I think, to me as a member of the Assembly, it's insulting that you have a government that doesn't want to even take recommendations that are being brought forward in a meaningful way to help people heal and move forward in life, struggles as it is. Because so many of those individuals struggle in so many different ways and have, you know, been taken away from their families. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker. I could go on about the challenges that they face. And we should be making it easier for them, not harder. And you know, my heart goes out to those individuals that struggle.

But at that point, you know, Mr. Speaker, I'll wait till my colleague I know will have more to say on this bill, but also the critic will definitely in committee get a good chance to do some work. So I am prepared to adjourn on Bill 101, adjourn debate, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 103

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

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief in my comments today about Bill No. 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*, as my colleagues have really put some amazing, important comments on the record already. I just want to thank our critic, my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, for doing just amazing advocacy work on this bill and the much needed stakeholder engagement work that is needed for quite a broad, expansive bill of this calibre. I know that she will have many more questions and comments in committee and I look forward to hearing that.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is frankly just long overdue, and we in the opposition welcome it. Mr. Speaker, as a party, the Saskatchewan New Democrats have been working hard to make our party policies integrate accessibility into those party policies. We have tremendous advocates within our party on accessibility. I am

proud to say that one of those advocates sits on my executive, my friend Lynnett Boris, always providing feedback on bills just as these.

You know, during my by-election the topic of accessibility was top of mind as we looked for a suitable campaign office that was accessible, because Lynnett wanted to volunteer so frequently in our office and I really appreciated her support. We needed a space that was accessible for wheelchairs for folks. Accessible spaces are friendly spaces, Mr. Speaker. This is something that we need to continue to work on.

And, Mr. Speaker, not to say that accessibility won't be a huge challenge that we have to face head-on. That is why I'm pleased that this government has proposed this legislation. The opposition, as I said, is in support of any legislation that makes our cities, our communities, our buildings more accessible and inclusive.

Some of the highlights that this bill proposes are timelines on accessibility plans for buildings, communications, employment, transport, service animals, the creation of an accessibility office to advise the ministry. We have standards. It's a creation of standards laid out to apply to employers, to builders. There's penalties for non-compliance. Every time I look at these bills and I see these penalties, I hope that the government is building teeth into these bills so they can be enforced.

And a real big highlight, Mr. Speaker, for this bill was that American Sign Language and Indigenous sign languages are being codified as the primary languages for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

[14:30]

Is there more that this legislation could do? Absolutely. This is just a start. We know that this legislation will need to be reviewed, will need to be added to as we continue to build a more inclusive society. And I would really hope that future iterations include amendments that will include Quebec Sign Language, recognition for francophone hard-of-hearing communities here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on Bill 103. I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 104

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and turn to the debate on Bill No. 104, *The Local Improvements Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this bill really speaks to the work that municipalities do. And I know it's a complicated structure, the different levels of government and the relationships that they have and how the funding works and all of that.

And I very much thank our critic for the work that she's been doing, reaching out across the province, speaking with municipal leaders, local leaders, and really understanding the importance of that local voice at the table. Mr. Speaker, I think government often makes decisions without appropriately consulting and listening to those local voices in those local communities. So I just want to take the opportunity to thank her for the work that she's been doing in reaching out and getting feedback from those folks.

I know I have a lot of colleagues who are looking forward to discussing this piece of legislation in a more fulsome way, so in order to allow them to do that I am prepared now to adjourn debate on Bill No. 104.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 105

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

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

Mr. Teed: — Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, thank you so much. That's all good. There's two big cities here.

I'm going to continue to heap some praises on my colleague, our critic for municipal affairs, my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana for the absolutely great work she's been doing engaging municipalities on issues across our province. I had the pleasure of joining her and my colleague from Regina University as we met with community leaders in Humboldt and Watrous and one of my favourite Saskatchewan summer destinations, Manitou Beach.

You know, those conversations were really enlightening and they surrounded, you know, many topics. We talked about, you know, the concerns that municipalities are seeing finding or retaining workers in small communities. We talked about concerns about housing those folks when they arrive in those communities to take up the jobs people are looking to fill.

And, Mr. Speaker, municipalities raised big concerns about how much of their budgets are being sent back to the provincial government as they see these PST costs on large construction projects continue, continue to skyrocket. You know, a \$2 million

project will see a million dollars sent back, Mr. Speaker. It's one hand and the other.

But that's for another time. Today we're talking about local government elections. This is another area that municipalities that we spoke to had a lot of feelings about. There were a lot of concerns that if they were consulted, they weren't listened to.

There were concerns that, you know what? No one's listening to their concerns around, you know, election date changes. Mr. Speaker, it seemed like the government came in and decided that municipal election dates were that optimum moment to hold elections so they punted them into November, and municipalities are upset. There is also just great confusion that when you're holding a provincial election within weeks of a municipal election, there's great confusion on the doorstep. So this date change just, you know, isn't really working for municipalities.

There's also the concerns that were brought forward around having and retaining or finding election workers. Mr. Speaker, it's difficult already to find election workers who are committed to working at the provincial election, and then to find folks that want to come back four weeks later and work in another election. It's very difficult to fill those positions. These municipalities are saying we need to review this, we need someone to listen, and we need to find alternative dates to move these elections.

Mr. Speaker, there are quite a few regulations that this bill goes into. I know that our critic and I know that my colleagues have put a lot of fantastic comments on the record, and I just want to mention quickly that, you know, one of the important things I think that this bill brings forward is a streamlining of that voting process. You know, those are great plans. It talks about some rules around by-elections. You know I love a good by-election, Mr. Speaker. And I'm optimistic that some of the changes around voter lists, efficiencies, privacy, and concerns are taken care of.

So, Mr. Speaker, I won't talk too long on this. I know we'll have great entrances on it. I will move to adjourn debate today on Bill 105.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 106

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

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into debate on Bill No. 106, *The Police Amendment Act*. This bill was introduced last fall. It's a part of this government's overall law-and-order agenda that's very much building on people's fears and creating what we're concerned about in terms of new layers of policing, which is going to cause confusion and

ultimately not result in better outcomes.

What this bill does specifically is that it allows for the minister to send special constables or another police service to any municipality they think isn't doing a good enough job of policing. And so you know, I think when you start off with that premise, that municipalities' police forces are underperforming and your solution is to have another layer of policing on top that doesn't respect and honour the job that the municipal force is doing, that it's only going to create confusion and animosity and not ultimately address issues that may be occurring.

Not only that, but the municipalities are going to have to pay for this unwelcome intervention, and the minister can request any information on police service positions from police boards or chiefs. It's heavy-handed, it's overreach, it's unnecessary, and ultimately is not going to provide any benefit, only cost, to the people of Saskatchewan.

We know that this is a bill that's paving the way for the marshals bill. And it's highly offensive to police, to municipal police forces, when the minister feels that they aren't doing their job and instead of offering them more resources and better supports, that instead they're taking this punitive approach and on their dime.

All that being said, I do also want to highlight the fact that . . . I mean we know, we know that our communities are struggling in myriad ways — coming out of a pandemic, addressing a generational cost-of-living crisis, facing housing security, mental health and addictions crises, suicides, you name it — and those are the conditions that create deviance and criminality in our communities.

And so if we really want to address the root causes of crime, if we really want to ensure the rule of law, we need to be addressing those social factors, not piling on more police services as a way to clamp down on issues that are rooted and based in our communities and stem out of the failures of this government to address needs in our communities, needs that we are hearing time and time again when we meet with municipal leaders across the province. They make the connections between these rates of crime and the loss of economic opportunity, the loss of housing, poverty, minimum wage, and causing such a disarray. And people are, you know, responding in very desperate ways.

So I have to say I'm, you know, I'm deeply, deeply saddened by the situation that we're faced here in Saskatchewan with, and I'm deeply saddened by the messages that I'm hearing from community leaders when they talk about tent cities and cardboard cities and how their municipal police forces and fire service are having to redirect their efforts towards addressing all of these crises that are going unaddressed by this government.

If you really want to have growth that works for everyone and that benefits everyone in our society, we need to be addressing those root causes, not creating special marshal services, not creating intrusive police services and powers of the minister to now swoop in and frustrate what are already very fragile services within our municipalities — municipalities which are struggling under the burdens created by this government by clawing back on the monies that they're receiving, clawing back in ways that are off-loading onto them — and really making a situation that is

creating a lot of issues in our communities.

That's really all I want to say on this bill right now, Mr. Speaker. I know that our critic will have much more to say and hold the minister to account on this misguided bill. And so with that I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 106.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 107

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act*. Initially looking at this, I talked to the critic a little bit just to understand the changes, that the government is taking different police services and providing them under one umbrella, I guess is what they're trying to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, again I don't know who the minister, who government consulted, if they consulted with anyone, because we see a pattern of this government consulting with no one and doing it and . . . [inaudible] . . . And we see a minister who's responsible for policing taking over certain authority and moving over a jurisdiction under her control and her ministry and under . . . really her having the ability to I guess make the decisions that . . . We're watching this closely and we're a little concerned.

And why I say we're a little concerned, Mr. Speaker, because we see that the government also wants to have a new marshals unit that the minister will be responsible for. You know, spending, I believe they said start-up costs will be somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$20 million to get it going and start it up.

You know, and unfortunately we've heard, and I think in frustration that . . . Who did they consult with when it comes to RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], our municipal police? Who did they consult with when they decided to do this, and why didn't they talk to the RCMP and those members that do a great job in some of our communities? And we're very pleased with the service that they provide to us. We are. And you know, we thank the men and women who are on those lines. When there's emergencies, we call them and they come to take care of the situation where we're all running in, you know, the other direction. And they know we can count on them to protect us, our children, and our grandchildren. That's important.

But how were they consulted, and were they talked to? Did this government take the time to say to them, look, we're thinking of doing this marshals service. We want to give the minister more power. We want her to have more authority. We want her to have control of more.

Just like they do in the legislation that we're sitting in this Assembly, and the police service . . . I think Bill 70, as I remember it, where we fought and said, really, we wanted to have it independent so that they would, you know, deal with the Speaker at that time. So things have changed with this government.

[14:45]

Again this shows how they want to handle, they want to control everything. They want to control the story. They want to control what people are saying. And that's the concerning thing. That's how people feel. When you don't consult with them, they feel like you're actually stick-handling them and you're trying to tell them this is how they're going to do it. Like it or don't like it, we're the government and we know what's best for you. And people are getting tired of that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look at it from this point. You could have taken that \$20 million and provided more police officers in our communities and the rural areas that are truly suffering with crime rates, and they have been calling out for more supports and help. That's one area where they could have had the opportunity to work with our police and the services that are being provided by many, you know, to provide safety in our rural areas.

But here is a government that wants to have control over it and do whatever they want. We don't have a clue because they don't want to talk to anyone and they don't consult anyone. And that's the problem, you know, when you have a government that's been sitting there too many years, 16 long years, and they want to dictate everything and just decide what they want, we know what's best.

And then you have members, you know, a part of government that have the nerve to say, we can do whatever we want. They're still going to elect us. They're still going to vote for us. I want them to one day wake up and realize what you're telling people out there in this good province. You're starting to take them for granted, and you're going to pay a price. There's going to be a price to pay.

And I know they sometimes want to mock and laugh and say, oh you guys only have 12 members over there, ha, ha, ha. We're so big, our government, we've got so many members doing nothing over here, you know. But that's going to come a time where the people of this province are going to send a message to the government. And they're going to tell them, hey, you're taking the voters for granted. Trust me. And I know they like laughing and think it's funny. I watch how they are. They think it's all funny.

I think people who are struggling to make ends meet in this province want to be consulted and talked to, and they want to feel like our government is standing up for their rights and for them, and helping them with the cost of living. And I think about our seniors. I think about our First Nations. I think about our rural people. I think about urban. It's all over. People are struggling with the cost of living. And here's a government who just doesn't seem to get it and doesn't listen and doesn't want to consult with individuals in so many ways.

Whatever legislation we talk about, it seems like we have people

who are not a part of the government loop. They're not a part about that. Well unfortunately I think some of the backbenchers, you're not a part of the cabinet. You don't even get any say, is what it looks like sometimes. Because I keep reminding even the member from Athabasca, fight for the northern people, for the people in your riding. You told them you were going to fight for them. You are part of government. And what do I see? Just quiet. Just quiet, you know, quiet, just like a little mouse. Just quiet, doesn't want to say nothing. So you know, unfortunately . . .

Mr. Speaker, I'm hoping one day that member will get up and start fighting and maybe call this government to task on some of it. It's your own government. So maybe you could just, you know, tap the Premier on the shoulder and say, Mr. Premier, could you help out the northern people over here? They're struggling, Indigenous people. Maybe he'll do that. One day I hope to see that happening. But I don't know if that's going to happen.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, I just want it to be very clear about how this government does not consult in so many ways. It's not just First Nations and Métis. It's not just our northern leaders. It's not just municipal leaders. It's not just police services. It's not just seniors. It's not just the most vulnerable that they don't consult with. They just want to do what they want to do, make it up as they go along and say, we're the big government; we know what's best for you. Just sit there and be quiet, and here's what we're going to do and that's it. Go away now.

So enough of that. I think I've said for the record what I need to. I'm prepared to move to adjourn debate on 107, Mr. Speaker. I'll move that right now.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 108

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 108 — *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 108, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act*. I believe that I will be briefer than my colleague was. I just want to put a few thoughts on the record here with this bill. For anyone who has taken a look at this bill, there are a number of quite technical amendments that are being made here to this legislation, and some of them seem to be more sort of run-of-the-mill than others, and some of them are quite a bit more substantive in nature. There are proposed powers for the superintendent that seem to be quite extreme at first glance.

There are a number of changes that I would say need some better explanation in terms of why they're taking place. Any time we're talking about pensions, obviously, you know, these are people's

plans for retirement. This is how they plan to make a living for themselves. For those who have the privilege of having a pension at work, we put quite a bit of stock into what that looks like and count on our pensions to be able to support us later on and to be able to have a, you know, a bit of livelihood as we age, especially when we're looking at defined benefit pension plans.

I know there are fewer and fewer of them that exist out there, and there are some changes in here that I think need some really close scrutiny by folks who have more knowledge of the financial world than someone like myself, Mr. Speaker. Some of the fiscal changes seem more reasonable, but I know we will be . . . We have been consulting. We'll continue to consult and to examine what some of the implications are for this bill. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on this bill for today.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 109

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 109 — *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2022 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter my remarks on Bill No. 109, *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act*. You know, what I find is how interesting it is, when it suits this government, how swiftly they act in making amendments to bills. This bill, *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act*, is very contentious in the Indigenous community. And why is it contentious? Why are they not happy with this is because this government did not consult impacted communities. They did not consult First Nations and Métis peoples and they did not consult municipalities.

So last summer when the federal government and their employees went to do some testing, there was an order in council on a Saturday, a Saturday to make this amendment. Yet poverty, cost of living, lack of meaningful duty-to-consult, it falls on deaf ears. Even though First Nation and Métis people continue to call the RCMP to let them know and report non-Indigenous people trespassing on their property by non-Indigenous people, those non-Indigenous people are politely escorted off the property. Yet Indigenous people are not treated in the same way.

Consultation on this bill has not happened. There are many treaty rights holders that still exercise their treaty rights. Many grassroots people don't pay attention to where's the boundary, where is this boundary. They just know the territory that they hunt for sustenance is on traditional territory. Yet they face six months in jail or a fine for \$5,000 when they unknowingly trespass. And there's challenges when they go and ask landowners for permission to cross so they could get on to their traditional territories. There's challenges.

We on this side have been consulting with stakeholders, those that are being impacted by the decisions this government makes. It's important to us to ask, how is this proposed bill going to impact you?

You know, when I think about this Act . . . and we all know why this came to be, and I'm not going to get into that because somebody's going to take it and go wherever they want to go with it. But what I do want to say is, had this government consulted with First Nation and Métis people, they would know how this Act would infringe on their inherent treaty rights. But they didn't pay attention, and this is just another example of how this government does not care about the citizens of this province and, in particular, Indigenous people.

My colleagues and the critic for this area will have more questions to ask. I just wanted to enter my remarks on this from an Indigenous world view that this amendment — no matter how you spin it — is infringing on inherent treaty rights in this province, and Indigenous people are not happy. And this government continues to ignore people; it continues to ignore impacted communities.

So I will leave this to my colleagues that will further scrutinize this and ask questions. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 109, *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act*. miigwech.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 110

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 110 — *The Wills Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur les testaments*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 110, *The Wills Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, from my understanding of this legislation, it will allow for the execution of electronic wills. This is something that happened initially as a result of the pandemic. It's something that's been talked about for a while in the legal community, but the pandemic and the shutdowns really forced some of these modernizations into hyperspeed in a few different areas, Mr. Speaker, and one of them was around the electronic signature allowance for wills. I believe this is something that occurred during the pandemic. If not, it was something that was definitely talked about during the pandemic and requested from the legal community.

Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to having the opportunity to ask questions about feedback that was solicited from the ministry by the legal community on these changes, and whether or not there'll be any similar types of changes to legislation moving

forward. And in order to allow myself to be able to have the opportunity to ask those questions, I'm prepared at this time now to allow this bill to move onto its next stage.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 110 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

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

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

Bill No. 111

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 111 — *The Family Maintenance Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur les prestations alimentaires familiales*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 111, *The Family Maintenance Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that contains some fairly interesting changes around family maintenance and how it operates in Saskatchewan, definitely an area of concern for many in the province.

Folks who go through the family justice system are oftentimes left feeling frustrated and unhappy, and that partially is a result of the fact that you're going through a family breakdown, if you're dealing with any sort of maintenance issue. But also I think there are a lot of improvements that could be done within the justice system to help expedite the process for families, leave families feeling a little less, well, financially broke and perhaps keeping families a little bit more intact. Making the process a bit more user-friendly, Mr. Speaker, is something that's been talked about for a while within the legal community.

I had the opportunity and the honour of being a part of the Dean's Forum at the College of Law last Friday. I've been able to go nearly every year since I've been critic. Mr. Speaker, it's always a really good opportunity to meet with legal leaders from across the province at the table with College of Law students who present on a variety of topics.

We specifically talked about the family justice system last Friday at that Dean's Forum. I think there's a lot of really exciting ideas

for how the system could be improved. There's definitely a lot of work that's already happening organically in the province with the judiciary, with family justice services branch, Mr. Speaker, with maintenance enforcement branch, a lot of really great innovations that are happening, Mr. Speaker. I'm looking forward to asking questions at committee to officials about those improvements, how this particular piece of legislation will help further that goal in making the family justice system a little more user-friendly.

In order to allow myself to have those discussions, I'm prepared now to allow this bill to move on to its next stage.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 111 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

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

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

Bill No. 116

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Marit that **Bill No. 116 — *The Plant Health Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to be on my feet to talk about Bill 116, *The Plant Health Act*. A kind of initial overview here, I certainly support a number of the measures taken here in this bill, Mr. Speaker, you know, especially as we need to take into consideration what we do have within our control in our jurisdiction. And I think there's lots that we can do to control the escalating costs of food and our own food security here in Saskatchewan.

Now despite, you know, some of the baseless attacks from the Premier earlier today on this side, we certainly do support our producers and those who work and benefit from our incredible agricultural sector here in Saskatchewan. And that display we saw earlier today was nothing than the lowest form of politics that sometimes makes its way in here. But when we do have measures taken to ensure that we have food security and affordability, then I think that those are good things that we should be considering.

So in this Act we have the ability for the minister to declare animals, insects, disease, or pests — things that may threaten production in this province — to take action to ensure that our crops are protected and that the ministry is given power to do so.

But also to ensure that producers are considered and taking care that the ministry would pay for any crops that are destroyed. Obviously the right thing to do.

There's a number of other measures here, considerations in to what the consequences may be of these steps of the ministry or municipality needing to step in to maintain the integrity of a crop or an area against disease, insects, or pests. So by and large, that is good to see.

I was somewhat surprised at the very short comments put on the record by the minister for this piece of legislation, but again I think that in the interest of preventing further escalation of food prices and access to good, healthy, locally grown and produced food, that I'll voice my support for this piece of legislation, although I do look forward to hearing more comments from my colleagues in opposition.

But at this time, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 116, *The Plant Health Act*,

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 117

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 117 — *The Saskatchewan Firearms Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Glad to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 117, *The Saskatchewan Firearms Act*. Mr. Speaker, this bill intends to enshrine the rules and processes around the seizure of guns in this province. And of course we, as the opposition, agree that such a process must be nuanced; it must be fair.

I do want to focus a bit on the minister's remarks around this bill, Mr. Speaker. So in her remarks she had noted that her government is committed to defending the rights of lawful and responsible gun owners. Fair enough. No disagreement there.

But then, Mr. Speaker, in her remarks she also did reference the government's Throne Speech commitment to "... take significant action to crack down on the illegal and violent use of firearms." I think, Mr. Speaker, we can all recognize the irony of that statement, given that her government invited an unrepentant, convicted wife-murderer as a special guest of honour to their tough-on-crime Throne Speech this past session. And we all recall, Mr. Speaker, that the minister's response when asked for her views on the appropriateness of that invitation to Colin Thatcher were very dismissive and very enraging to many people across this province, especially women.

Mr. Speaker, I really wish that we would see more from this government around getting tough on violent crime against

women, specifically against women. We don't see a lot of that tough-on-crime approach from this government when it comes to women, who make up more than half of our population in Saskatchewan. And that's a real problem. So, Mr. Speaker, where is this government's urgency on that front? That's what I'd like to know.

We have the highest rates of domestic violence in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker, some of the highest rates of sexual violence in the entire country. We have alarming levels of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people. We have significant issues when it comes to sexual exploitation and human trafficking of women and girls in our province as well, Mr. Speaker. And we have increasing levels of transphobia and violence against trans women in this province too. So where's the tough-on-crime agenda for these crimes, Mr. Speaker?

We obviously have no shortage of issues with violence against women. So then why is it that we see this government failing to get tough on violent crime against women? Tomorrow we know is International Women's Day, so here's a concept, Mr. Speaker. How about we finally see some firm and serious commitments from the Sask Party government tomorrow to make life safer for Saskatchewan women? How about they, for once, they go to bat for women in this province and actually govern on behalf of everyone, not just their favourite select few?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to end on this note. I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 117, *The Saskatchewan Firearms Act*. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 118

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 118 — *The Warrant Compliance Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter debate on Bill No. 118, *The Warrant Compliance Act*. This is a bill that will allow for the ministry investigation unit to ensure that those who are receiving benefits and are violent offenders with outstanding warrants, that those are cut, and also that administration can let benefits continue if they consider cutting them would cause significant hardship, and also that there be an investigation unit that will be able to demand location information of violent offenders.

I do want to start by saying that I of course am supportive of measures that ensure safe communities. I believe in personal accountability and there being clear consequences when warranted. However yet again I think we see a government that is more than happy to have a knee-jerk response and cut benefits in these cases. Not something I am going to oppose, but I will say

that it is highly ironic that we see that social services have remained flatlined for recipients while at the same time they've been experiencing massive cost-of-living increases. And every day my office continues to field calls from individuals experiencing difficulty accessing their SIS [Saskatchewan income support] and SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] benefits.

And so once again, you know, it's a question of priorities. This government is very quick to be tough on crime and yet seemingly ignorant and oblivious to the real challenges facing members of our community who are struggling through very desperate times. And I would simply ask that, you know, when they're looking at the range of measures to address the many challenges that our province is facing right now, that they do so in a balanced and measured way to ensure that we're both lifting people up and supporting them through difficult times while also ensuring that those who are violent offenders and risks to our community, that those risks are indeed being addressed.

I think it's also highly problematic that there is no definition provided in this legislation for prolific violent offenders. In my estimation, there is too much ambiguity within the legislation and it's ill advised to undertake a case-by-case basis. I'd like to see more certainty provided in this bill as it goes forward.

I will limit my comments to that right now. I'm sure that our critic for this area will have many questions to understand who was consulted before this bill came forward. Were there experts engaged, and what did they recommend? And with that, I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 118.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[15:15]

Bill No. 120

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Merriman that **Bill No. 120 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Health Professions) Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Happy to be on my feet to put some comments on the record about Bill 120, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Health Professions) Amendment Act*. It's my understanding that a number of the changes brought about in these amendments were requested and brought to the minister and the ministry to ensure that those organizations that regulate our health professions in this province are both up to date and are, you know, covering the mandate for which they exist.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the changes included in these amendments I think are positive changes, but they're just really a small part in ensuring that we're able to build that trust with the

public in ensuring that all of those different professional colleges that exist and will be undergoing name changes due to these amendments are able to meet the needs that we have in this province. Regulatory changes are part of building that trust. And I will say, Mr. Speaker, that from the health care professionals that I've talked to, we've got a long way to go to ensure that our health care workforce feels valued and supported through the actions of this government in Saskatchewan.

That being said, I'll continue to listen to the comments of my colleagues in opposition and continue to work with my partner as critics for Health, the member from Saskatoon Fairview. And I will continue to put some thought into this as it proceeds, but at this point I'm looking forward to hearing comments from my colleagues as we continue in adjourned debate. And I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 120 at this time. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 121

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. J. Harrison that **Bill No. 121 — *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 121, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Act*. Now from what I understand, Mr. Speaker, this bill will add the flexibility to allow government to create an honour of the Crown in right of Saskatchewan, and adds the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal that we have all had the privilege and the pleasure of handing out to thousands of citizens of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it's been a great opportunity to be able to participate in those awards, and this will allow the government to be able to more easily add those sorts of medals into the legislation in the future.

Mr. Speaker, largely procedural in nature from what I understand, but I am looking forward to asking questions of officials at committee about this legislation and its impacts on the province. In order to facilitate that work, I am prepared now to allow this bill to move on to its next stage.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 121 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be

committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

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

Bill No. 122

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 122 — *The Saskatchewan Revenue Agency Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into debate on Bill No. 122, the Saskatchewan revenue Act. Mr. Speaker, this is a rather useless, wasteful, terrible idea, the piece of new legislation we have before us here today, Mr. Speaker. It will cost taxpayers more, it will cost the small businesses — businesses that have to now file their taxes twice — more, Mr. Speaker.

A lot of time and energy on this. We don't know why, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like there was absolutely no consultation done before this piece of legislation was brought forward, which is a growing theme from this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

Under the current federal tax system, you know, the other thing I'd like to add is that if someone doesn't pay their taxes, the federal government actually makes the province whole, so they take on all the risk. The Sask Party government now wants to make government bigger, wants to spend more, take on the risk of requiring businesses to file taxes not once but twice.

The admin costs will be higher, Mr. Speaker. We'll need to train and recruit personnel and specialists in this area, Mr. Speaker. We'll take on the risk. This is a costly, unneeded piece of overreach, is what it is, Mr. Speaker, and this is what I call stunt legislation, Mr. Speaker. This is one of their autonomy bills. And this, much like the Sask first Act, is just a stunt. It's about distraction. It's about distracting from their record.

But the people of Saskatchewan are not duped by this, Mr. Speaker. They are on to this Sask Party government. They know this is a tactic. They know this is a piece of distraction, Mr. Speaker. What are they trying to distract from? Probably lowest growth rates in the country, Mr. Speaker, highest out-migration in the country, Mr. Speaker, and a shrinking GDP. Sask Party shrinkage — not really growth that works for everyone, Mr. Speaker.

So with that I look forward to hearing from my colleagues on this bill, and I'll move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 122.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 124

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carr that **Bill No. 124 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll weigh in very briefly here today with respect to Bill No. 124, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker. I know this bill speaks to modernization and updates, Mr. Speaker. I haven't been able to dig into it in full. I know that our critic certainly will be and has and is working with stakeholders on these fronts, Mr. Speaker.

I want to give a shout-out and recognize the production that is happening in Saskatchewan by very talented brewers and distillers in this province, Mr. Speaker. And this is certainly an industry that I've been proud to support, Mr. Speaker, one that is growing within Saskatchewan. And I want to thank all those entrepreneurs, all those local businesses across the province who have taken on risk and created exceptional product, Mr. Speaker, by way of our craft and local brewers, Mr. Speaker, by way of the distillers and the winemakers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They've got product that's not only exceptional, Mr. Speaker, but often they also have wonderful stories of where that product's been sourced, and how that connects to agriculture and fruit growers and others within the province, Mr. Speaker.

And it's also a story of creating those jobs. Back here in Saskatchewan at one time there was a proud brewing history, for example, in Saskatchewan. But that was all hollowed out, Mr. Speaker, over the years and consolidated in these large multinational operations, Mr. Speaker. Of course Saskatchewan people still enjoy the product, but we lost the economic benefits and the jobs on so many fronts, Mr. Speaker.

But we've got so many to recognize. I always think of that amazing story of the original 16, Mr. Speaker, that have made Great Western such an incredible success, Mr. Speaker, and continuing to thrive and to bring that product, you know, across Canada. And then we have all of our other local craft brewers that have been spoken about and distillers and wineries, Mr. Speaker, who are really punching well above their weight and allow Saskatchewan to proudly punch above our weight in sharing some of the very finest product you can find when it comes to local brew or spirits or wines, Mr. Speaker. So we'll be interested in making sure we're supporting that important industry to continue to grow, Mr. Speaker.

What I would say is that this is a government that has devastated the livelihoods of many, Mr. Speaker, and has impacted many communities with the shuttering of SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] stores, Mr. Speaker. This is something that this government never ran on. In fact they had promised that they wouldn't kill those stores, kill those jobs.

I always think on these fronts, Mr. Speaker, there are matters, differences of opinion on these fronts. I think the balance we had was a good one. I valued those jobs, those operations. But I think when you're, you know, running for office, Mr. Speaker, when you're seeking election, you owe it to the people of Saskatchewan to be straight-up with them, Mr. Speaker, about your agenda, about your plans, and to let them decide what their preference is on these matters.

This is a government that had promised not to sell off these stores, had promised not to kill these jobs, but of course that's exactly what they've done, Mr. Speaker. Stores that, you know, earned profits, Mr. Speaker, that were strong revenue generators, and that families all across Saskatchewan counted on by way of livelihoods, Mr. Speaker.

And I always think it's gutless, Mr. Speaker, when a government promises one thing and then surprises folks and, you know, deprives people of their livelihoods but doesn't have, you know, the wherewithal or the spine, Mr. Speaker, to take their plan to Saskatchewan people through the democratic process and be straight-up about their intentions, Mr. Speaker. With that being said, I'll adjourn debate on Bill No. 124.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 125

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carr that **Bill No. 125 — *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet again to speak to Bill No. 125, the cannabis control amendment Act.

So this bill is creating First Nations cannabis authorities to regulate on-reserve cannabis retail and distribution. It's very interesting how this bill came to be. Often, you know, we have governments and in this case provincial governments telling on-reserve what they can and cannot do. And also we know that First Nations obey the law. They do on these reserves. They also have their rules that they enforce in their communities.

So what is interesting about this is . . . I guess I would like to know, and probably many other First Nations would like to know, is when were First Nation communities consulted in the creation of this Act as well as the amendment? And it's also important that we enshrine First Nations' on-reserve rights into laws where possible just like my Bill 610, *The Meaningful Duty to Consult Act*. That is something that Nations have been asking, is to enshrine their laws into the provincial system.

So I would like to know more about how that consultation has

rolled out within First Nation communities that do sell cannabis in their retail and distribution on-reserve. I don't have much more to add to this. I'm sure the critic for this area would have much more questions to ask when it does move forward. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 125, the cannabis control amendment Act. miigwech

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 126

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 126 — *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 126, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2022*. There are a number of changes that are taking place here, Mr. Speaker, with regards to First Nations having the ability to enforce laws and bylaws on-reserve. So there's currently a pilot project that's taking place on Muskoday First Nation and Whitecap Dakota First Nation, and we're watching to see how these play out and what solutions exist to some of these challenges.

[15:30]

We know that enforcement and prosecution are long-standing issues on reserves, and we want to make sure that this amendment will be able to assist with that. It is good to see these changes coming forward. You know, it is an important milestone here, especially with allowing for enforcement of summary offences through payment of a fine, similar to how provincial traffic offences are currently handled, rather than going through the court process, Mr. Speaker. It's good to have an extended grace period for conviction reconsideration, as well as added powers for prosecutors and judges to make that happen.

But there's still a lot of questions to look at, at this legislation, and make sure that everything is as it is intended here, Mr. Speaker. We will have a lot more questions. We continue to do consultations on this bill. But with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 126, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to

facilitate the work of committee this afternoon and this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:33.]

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