



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

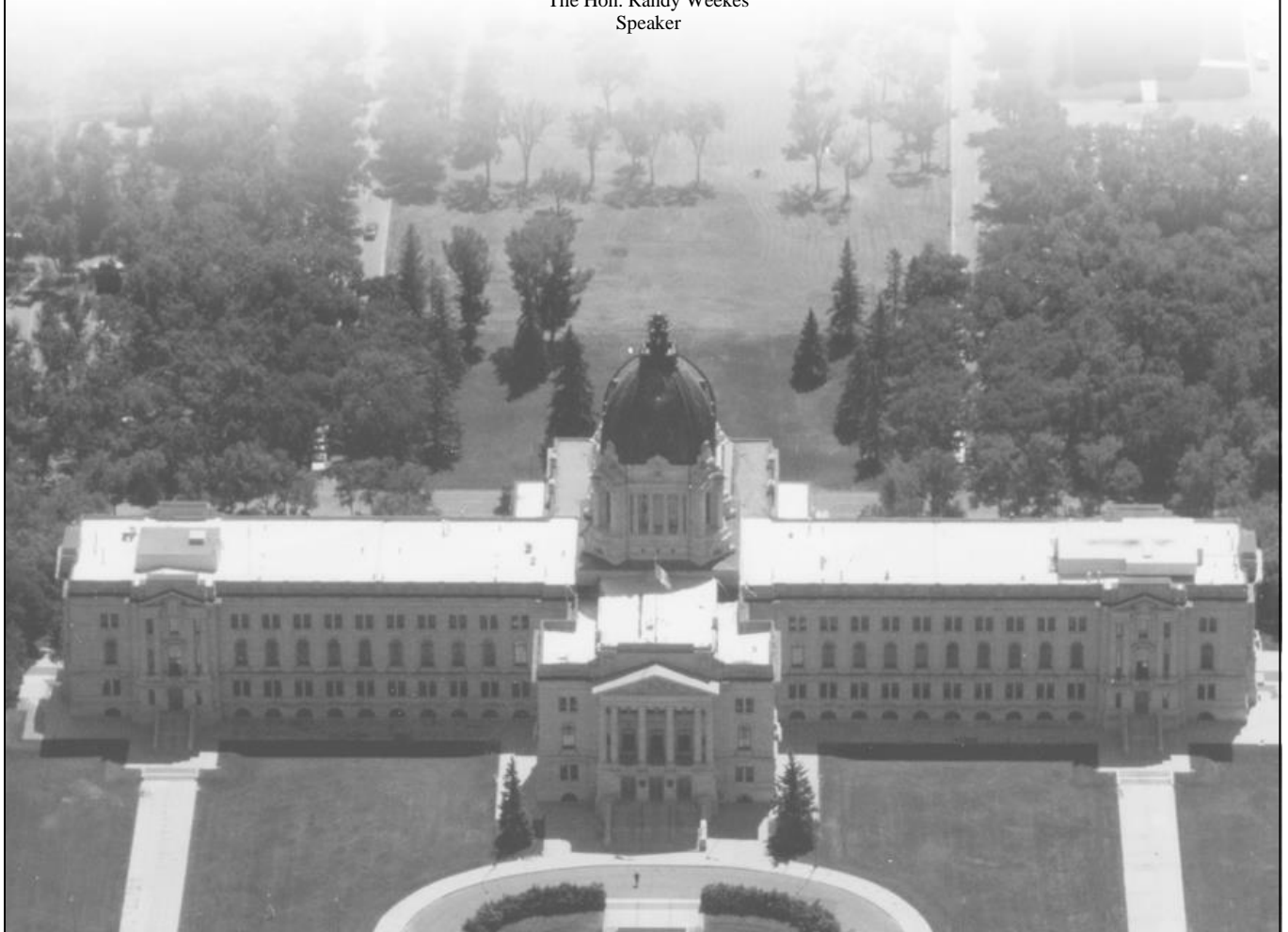
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**DEBATES  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Randy Weekes  
Speaker



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**3rd Session — 29th Legislature**

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

**Speaker** — Hon. Randy Weekes  
**Premier** — Hon. Scott Moe  
**Leader of the Opposition** — Carla Beck

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

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**Standings**

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 46; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12;  
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Vacant — 2

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Iris Lang  
**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  
within hours after each sitting.

<https://www.legassembly.sk.ca/Calendar>

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Introduction of Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms

**The Speaker:** — I would like to take this opportunity to introduce John Ford, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, who is seated on the Chamber floor with us today. Welcome, John.

### Vacancy in Lumsden-Morse Constituency

**The Speaker:** — It is my duty to inform the Assembly of the following vacancy in the constituency of Lumsden-Morse due to the resignation of Mr. Lyle Stewart.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure today to introduce two constituents of mine who are seated in the west gallery, Mr. Eric Pankratz and his son, Brandon. Brandon sent me the nicest email just to let me know where his thoughts were at. And he told me that he, around the age of seven, first got intrigued in politics from an episode of *Jeopardy!*, Mr. Speaker. It was about Canadian history in the categories, and so that kind of started his intrigue with politics. He is great at playing guitar, both electric and acoustic guitar. He enjoys a great game of chess from time to time. And the Premier will like this: he is a huge Edmonton Oilers fan.

So, Mr. Speaker, if you would all join me in welcoming Eric and Brandon to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it is my pleasure this afternoon to introduce a few people joining us today for Ag Safety Week. These are representatives from Saskatchewan's agriculture safety organizations, seated in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Speaker. And I unfortunately can't see them, but I'll ask them to give a wave when I introduce their names: Dr. Shelley Kirychuk, director of Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan; Dr. Merle Massie, farmer, historian, and professional research associate, also with the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture of the University of Saskatchewan; Robin Anderson, communications coordinator for the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association. And Robin is joined by her parents, Jack and Lois Anderson, who live on the family farm close to Lake Diefenbaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this time to thank these individuals on their hard work and how they contribute to the industry. Being a farmer all my life, farm safety is top of mind. I would ask all farmers and ranchers, please be safe. And anyone related to the ag sector, there's always someone waiting for you at home at the

end of the day. Welcome to your legislature. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the Ag minister to welcome these leaders in our province and leaders in agricultural safety each and every day to their Assembly, Mr. Speaker. These leaders and their respective organizations and institutions play an invaluable role within our province in keeping those on the farm safe, Mr. Speaker. We thank them for their work, and we recognize the efforts of producers across Saskatchewan who are so mindful of the risks on these fronts. It's a pleasure to welcome these leaders, not just on these fronts but on many fronts, to their Assembly, and on behalf of the official opposition to provide them a warm welcome.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, it's my privilege to introduce some guests in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. Representatives from the Saskatchewan Headquartered Oil Producers, or as they're known as SHOP, Mr. Speaker. We have the Chairperson, Warren Waldegger, Gary Becker, and Mike Mainil.

Mr. Speaker, this morning the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Kindersley and I had the opportunity to meet with these gentlemen to discuss issues in the oil industry. We had a great discussion. There'll be many more of them in the upcoming months and years. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take this opportunity to thank those gentlemen for all that they do for the province, and ask everybody in this Assembly to please give them a warm welcome to their legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the minister to welcome these oil producers to their Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and to thank them for their work in this very important industry in Saskatchewan and to the world, Mr. Speaker, to thank them for their time and presence here today, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce to the Legislative Assembly Trevor Ives and Sharon McIntosh, who are seated in your gallery. If we could get a wave? The west gallery, there they are, over there.

Mr. Speaker, Trevor was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2019 at the age of 53. He was healthy enough following his treatment. Trevor joined the board of directors to raise awareness and promote education about this rare cancer and help improve

patient outcomes. Trevor joins us here today from Prince Albert. Sharon is a member of the Regina myeloma support group and is also a patient, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this Assembly please welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the minister opposite in welcoming Trevor and Sharon to their Legislative Assembly today, for their advocacy on multiple myeloma, and you know, thank them for sharing their personal experiences with other folks and making sure that other people in the same situation are protected.

So thank you for the advocacy that you're doing on behalf of the people of the province. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly today.

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

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, it is my pleasure to introduce some special guests to the Legislative Assembly today. Seated in the Speaker's gallery are representatives from Saskatchewan's Fransaskois community.

Mr. Speaker, with us today is Mr. Denis Simard, president of the Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise. Also joining us today are grade 8 students from École Monseigneur de Laval here in Regina, accompanied by their teachers. Mr. Speaker, the students, along with the rest, of us have had a good day so far. We had a wonderful opportunity to meet. We gathered in a gallery today to celebrate Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, a national francophonie month of March.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the francophonie culture and how much it has contributed to our province, our country, and our quality of life right here in our wonderful province. Saskatchewan's Fransaskois community is vibrant, inclusive, and growing more diverse. Saskatchewan's community is vibrant, inclusive, and more diverse.

Mr. Speaker, the French language was and is an important part of our heritage and also our future. Best wishes for this whole month of Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Ms. Conway:** — Merci, monsieur le Président. C'est un honneur et un plaisir de joindre la ministre dans ma rôle comme critique officiel des affaires francophonies, et souhaiter une bienvenue à Denis Simard, le président de l'Assemblée communautaire francophonie, ses collègues, les élèves, les étudiants de l'École Monseigneur de Laval, et les autres organisations qui sont ici aujourd'hui.

Aujourd'hui nous assemblons pour marquer le vingt-cinquième édition du Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. En fait, le mois de mars, c'est le mois désigné à célébrer la culture fransaskoise et la langue française. Il y a plein à célébrer. Historiquement, le traitement de la communauté fransaskoise ce n'est pas un sujet duquel nous devons être fiers. Par contre, l'histoire de la croissance de la communauté fransaskoise est matière de grande fierté pour eux et pour nous autres aussi. Malgré les avances, il faut que nous autres comme législateurs et légisatrices font plus pour supporter et augmenter la communauté fransaskoise.

J'étais là en bas aujourd'hui, monsieur le Président, pour la performance d'Alexis Normand et pour son message. Ça m'a vraiment touchée. Vous êtes une communauté résiliente. Vous êtes une communauté forte et diverse. À tous et à toutes, je vous souhaitez une excellente Rendez-vous de la culture francophonie, et je demande à mes collègues de me joindre pour offrir une bienvenue vraiment chaleureux à ces gens. Merci.

[Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and a pleasure to join the minister in my role as official critic of francophone affairs and welcome Denis Simard, the president of the Fransaskois community association, his colleagues, the students, the students from École Monseigneur de Laval, and the other organizations who are here today.]

Today we gather to mark the 25th annual Rendez-vous de la Francophonie. In fact, the month of March is the designated month to celebrate Fransaskois culture and the French language. There is a lot to celebrate. Historically the treatment of the Fransaskois community isn't something we should be proud of. However the story of the growth of the Fransaskois community is a matter of great pride for them and for us also. Despite these advances, we as legislators must do more to support and grow the Fransaskois community.

I was downstairs today, Mr. Speaker, for the performance of Alexis Normand and for her message. It really touched me. You are a resilient community. You are a strong and diverse community. To all I wish you an excellent Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, and I ask my colleagues to join me in offering a very warm welcome to these guests. Thank you.]

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased to this afternoon introduce a couple of guests that are seated in your gallery. Joining us today is Sheryl Harrow-Yurach, who is the executive director of the Foundations Learning & Skills Saskatchewan. She is joined with her colleague Rachael Sutherland, who is program manager for children's and family literacy. And so I would ask that they would give us a wave.

Mr. Speaker, I think members are familiar with the organization. Maybe if they don't quite yet recognize the name, this foundation has been in place for over 40 years, formerly known as Read Saskatoon, before a rebrand last year. So I want to thank Sheryl and Rachael and all the team at Foundations for the work that they do each and every day to champion reading, literacy, writing, numeracy skills, and the services that they provide to children and adults in Saskatoon and in a growing part of the province, Mr. Speaker.

And so I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to join with the Education minister and echo his kind welcome to these esteemed guests. I can't see them from where I'm seated, but I can see them when I am on my feet, and it's great to see here Rachael and Sheryl.

Sheryl is a constituent of Saskatoon Eastview. I've known her family for years: her husband Joel, daughters Alice and Olivia. I got to know them as a teacher, and I've always been a big fan of Sheryl's work and her leadership in the areas of literacy, financial literacy, family supports, and learning in the community, that goes beyond the walls of our formal educational institutions.

Sheryl is well known in Saskatoon as a leader in these areas, and I was honoured to see her recognized with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal just a few weeks ago. Welcome to your Assembly, Rachael and Sheryl. Thank you for being here and thank you for your service to Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and all members of the Assembly, I'd like to welcome, seated in the front row of the west gallery, 14 grade 4 to 6 students from Mortlach School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Greg Kotschorek. And we met a little earlier this afternoon where they had some very good, insightful questions on our roles and responsibilities of elected officials. We certainly talked about the economy. And they had some great historical questions and observations of the building that they are in today.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to welcome Mortlach School to their Legislative Assembly.

[13:45]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Batoche.

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce my daughter and son-in-law, Tracy and Mark, and with them are grandpa's boys, Carter and Lincoln.

They were thrilled today to be able to be here. They met with you, Mr. Speaker. They met with the Sergeant-at-Arms. They met with the Minister of Finance. And they're truly impressed. And thank you very much for being here. And I ask you all to welcome them to this House.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand and present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following: Quebec-based Lambert Peat Moss has proposed the creation of a peat moss mine near La Ronge in northern Saskatchewan; many local folks are opposed to the proposed peat moss mine and are concerned about the potential for damage to habitats, including critical habitat for woodland caribou, trap lines, and drinking water sources, as well as climate impacts; more than 20,000 people have signed an online petition calling for the proposed peat moss mine to stop.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the provincial government to protect the boreal forest and reject the proposed Lambert Peat Moss development.

The folks who signed this petition reside in La Ronge, Saskatchewan. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring your attention to the following: 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 the actions of the federal government have made the control of Saskatchewan's resource rights unclear; that is an unsupportive federal government that 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.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good residents of Carrot River

and Red Earth.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to act on a suicide prevention strategy. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act* received Royal Assent in April 2021; that the ministry is required under the Act to consult community organizations in the development of a suicide prevention strategy; that suicide remains the second-leading cause of death for young people age 15 to 34 in Canada; that 1,913 people have died by suicide in Saskatchewan over the last 10 years; suicide rates for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan are four times higher than non-Indigenous people; and northern Saskatchewan continues to experience high levels of suicide and overdose deaths.

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 work with community organizations and leaders in the North to develop Saskatchewan's suicide prevention strategy.

This petition today is signed by individuals from Regina and Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again 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 that conversion therapy is a discredited and abusive practice which attempts to actively change the sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of an individual; the practice of conversion therapy or reparative therapy is seriously harmful to individuals and is opposed by the psychological and psychiatric associations across North America and the world.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to ban the practice of conversion therapy and prohibit transporting 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 University.

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise as well once again today to present our petition calling for the government to bring in universal access to birth control for all Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan has some of the

highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the entire country, ages 12 to 20 years old; that cost is one of the biggest barriers to accessing contraceptive birth control in Saskatchewan, especially among adolescents; that having consistent and affordable access to contraceptive options is essential for promoting bodily autonomy, preventing unwanted pregnancy, and saving money on sexual and reproductive health care; and finally, that sexual and reproductive health and rights are human rights, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen BC [British Columbia] bring in this just recently, just in the last couple of weeks. We ask Saskatchewan to follow and be leaders in our country on behalf of women especially.

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 adopt a policy making no-cost prescription contraceptives available to all Saskatchewan people.

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

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### Saskatoon Nutana Constituent Awarded Platinum Jubilee Medal

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Mr. Speaker, I recently had the honour of nominating my constituent, Tristen Durocher, for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal. Tristen, originally from Buffalo Narrows, is an accomplished fiddle player and teacher. Tristen is also well known for his activism. After a suicide prevention bill by the member from Cumberland House was turned down by the provincial government twice, Tristen decided to take action.

In 2020 he led the Walking With Our Angels group on a 645-kilometre walk from Air Ronge to Wascana Park, across from the Legislative Building. Despite the refusal of the Premier to meet with Tristen and pressure from law enforcement for a court ruling in his favour, Tristen completed a 44-day fast, representing the 44 Sask Party MLAs who voted against the bill.

Tristen led the peaceful, respectful protest surrounded by the portraits of 89 people who died by suicide. The suicide prevention bill was tabled again by my colleague, the member from Cumberland House, and passed in 2021. In 2022, Tristen received a National Indspire Award for serving as a role model to other First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth.

My heartfelt admiration and congratulations go out to Tristen.

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

### Agricultural Safety Week

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan is internationally known for its food, fuel, and fertilizer, but what's most important is the people that produce them. And making sure



those people are safe and healthy is everyone's responsibility.

March 12th to 18th, 2023 has been proclaimed Agricultural Safety Week in Saskatchewan and across Canada. Many hazards exist on and off the farm and it is everyone's responsibility to prioritize safety, even during the busiest seasons where working long hours is the norm.

This government strives to ensure a safe and healthy workplace for everyone, and agriculture is no exception. Maintaining the mental health of our producers is a priority, and government has partnered with Regina Mobile Crisis to operate the Saskatchewan Farm Stress Line to ensure that there is 24-hour support available. We also work with the Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies and Exhibitions as they teach children about farm safety.

Mr. Speaker, I direct your attention to the ribbons being worn by all the members this week to acknowledge Saskatchewan Agricultural Safety Week. The AgSafe Ribbon Campaign raises awareness about farm safety and celebrates safe practices in agriculture. Together as a community and a government, we are committed to reducing all injuries and illnesses, on and off the farm. On behalf of all MLAs, here's to a safe and healthy season ahead for our producers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Regina Restaurant Recognized for Authentic Vietnamese Cuisine**

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize Quán Ngon restaurant. Quán Ngon is an authentic Vietnamese restaurant located on Victoria Avenue in Regina Douglas Park. Quán Ngon opened in early 2016 after Barbara, the family's matriarch, wanted to bring authentic Vietnamese food to Regina. Prior to opening, Barbara travelled back to her homeland and perfected traditional Vietnamese recipes and cuisine to better serve her customers. Since Quán Ngon opened, it has received overwhelming support from the community and was featured in both the *Leader-Post* and the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] for the quality of its food.

Sadly, Barbara passed away suddenly in December of 2019 and after much discussion between her husband and her daughter, Quán Ngon reopened a short time later and retained the quality and experience they were known for. Today during difficult economic times, Quán Ngon has not only retained their customer base but are opening a second location in downtown Regina.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members in joining me to recognize the Truong family and congratulate them on their perseverance, entrepreneurship, and success in bringing authentic Vietnamese cuisine to our community and our city.

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

#### **Support for Multiple Myeloma Patients**

**Mr. Buckingham:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there were approximately 4,000 people diagnosed with multiple

myeloma in Canada last year, and every year we see about 80 new patients diagnosed in Saskatchewan. Multiple myeloma is a blood cancer that begins in plasma cells which are mainly found in bone marrow but can also be present in tissues and organs. Symptoms include anemia and bleeding, bone damage and pain, bruising, kidney problems, fatigue, and getting frequent fevers and infections. Unfortunately there is no cure for this rare disease.

Trevor Ives has joined us in the gallery today. He can attest that there are treatment options that can help patients gain more years with their loved ones. The majority of Saskatchewan patients receive treatment which can include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, and immunotherapy, as well as stem-cell transplants. While great strides have been made in treatments and therapy for people living with myeloma, there is a need to continue to raise awareness and support clinical research to find a cure.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in thanking the local support groups in Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, and Myeloma Canada for offering resources and a sense of community for patients, their families, and caregivers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Batoche.

#### **Commonwealth Day**

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Commonwealth of Nations that we know today was formed through the London Declaration in 1949 following the Second World War. In 2023, nearly three-quarters of a century after the declaration, we're proud to be part of the 2.4 billion people that belong to the 56 Commonwealth nations. And today is a celebration of the pride, unity, and diversity that binds the modern Commonwealth of Nations together.

Our shared value of democracy, human rights, and the rule of the law keep us united in a divided world. Our relationship to the Commonwealth goes back to the very inception of our nation as a dominion.

Commonwealth Day is held every year on the second Monday of March. This year the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was held in Kigali, Rwanda. In Kigali, 2023 was heralded as the Year of Youth, a time for us to tackle the epidemic challenges facing children and young people in our modern world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in recognizing today as Commonwealth Day across the world and remembering our ties to our fellow democratic nations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Guardians of the North Tells Stories of Collaborative Work Between Emergency Service Providers**

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm excited to recognize a new television production about our Saskatchewan heroes. *Guardians of the North* is a six-part docuseries that tells

the stories of wildfire and emergency responders. These are folks who protect Saskatchewan's northern resources, property, and infrastructure, and most importantly, the people. One of the producers, Chris Triffo, put it best when he said, "In an emergency, when people are running away from the fire, these men and women are running towards it."

In partnership with Creative Saskatchewan, the feature film and television production grant program, *Guardians of the North* also shows the collaborative work between emergency service providers. If you tune in to the show, you'll see how provincial and northern agencies work together to support the communities.

[14:00]

Some of the groups you'll see highlighted in the show include the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, Saskatchewan First Nations Emergency Management, the Muskoday First Nation fire department, and communities like Stanley Mission.

Thank you to Wavelength Entertainment for creating and developing this show. They do a great job sharing the stories of Saskatchewan. I highly encourage anyone wanting to learn more about what these brave men and women do to tune in to Citytv on Tuesday, Friday, and/or Sunday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

### Employment Numbers

**Ms. C. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to report to the House that Saskatchewan has added 2,600 more jobs since last month. That's 9,400 more jobs since February 2022. Mr. Speaker, that's now 23 months straight of year-over-year growth, and we continue to sit below the national average on unemployment. Our labour force is still at record highs: 608,500 people are currently working in the Saskatchewan labour force; 274,900 of those workers are women, the highest on record for our province. Both full-time and part-time employment increased by 8,000 and 1,400 respectively.

Mr. Speaker, that's more people working in professional, scientific, and technical services; more people working in health care and social assistance; and more people working in accommodation, food, and educational service jobs. With all this growth, our government is well on track to meeting our growth plan goal of 100,000 new jobs by the end of this decade. Saskatchewan people will continue to see the value of their products and exports increased, and that means more jobs and more opportunities for our residents.

Mr. Speaker, every month we have more people working and participating in the economy of Saskatchewan, and that's growth that works for everyone.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Job Creation and Population Numbers

**Ms. Beck:** — And now for the rest of the story, Mr. Speaker. This is a government failing to deliver on job creation, and

Friday's job numbers confirm that this Premier continues to have the worst economic record in the country. In fact, Mr. Speaker, since that Premier came to office in 2018, his tired and out-of-touch government has the worst job creation record in the country.

The question is this: when will that Premier take some responsibility for his record of failure on job creation?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, when you look at the forecast, whether it be from The Conference Board of Canada, whether it be from the major financial institutes across the nation, they're all projecting nation-leading growth, Mr. Speaker. Either first or second in many of the categories — whether it be jobs, whether it be GDP [gross domestic product], whether it be exports, whether it be opportunity — not only out this next year but extending into the years after that.

Most certainly, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province know that this government is one that continues to focus on growth. We focus on our export growth. We focus on our investment growth. We thereby focus on the opportunity that can be provided to Saskatchewan people that have not yet moved here, Saskatchewan people that are already here, and most importantly that next generation, our children, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that they have the opportunity that maybe some of us did not have.

At the end of day, Mr. Speaker, we're focused on growth that works for everyone. That growth includes more jobs, it includes more people, and it includes more opportunities for that next generation.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, it's always next year country for that tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government. But I know that he never wants to focus on the last five years where this Premier has been dead last in the country on the economy and dead last when it comes to job creation. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier likes to talk a good game when it comes to jobs, but the Statistics Canada numbers don't lie.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this: don't Saskatchewan people deserve better than a Premier that's all hat and no cattle when it comes to good-paying jobs in this province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I do thank the Leader of the Opposition for what is a very important question. Historically we have been challenged in this province — when you go back through the decades — when it comes to job creation and when it comes to population growth, Mr. Speaker. Thankfully, thankfully over the last decade or decade and a half, that has changed.

Mr. Speaker, we are now up, December the 3rd of last year we hit 1.2 million people in this province, a number that the opposition said was farcical, could never be achieved. Mr. Speaker, since then 1.21 million people, another 10,000 people in this province.

And to answer the Leader of the Opposition's question, to answer the NDP's question on what those people might be doing, Mr. Speaker, in February we added 2,600 jobs to communities right across Saskatchewan. That's 9,400 jobs year over year. Our unemployment rate in this province is 4.3 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's down from 4.6 per cent and it's second lowest, second lowest among all provinces in the nation of Canada.

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

#### **Funding for Post-Secondary Education**

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, let's put this plainly for the Premier. People in this province need bigger paycheques and more jobs, not more tired excuses and spins from that out-of-touch Sask Party government. Now, Mr. Speaker, they mention that some employees are having some trouble filling jobs. Fair enough.

But he ignores the fact that the cuts and underfunding of our public schools and our post-secondary institutions have created the mess with the labour force in the first place, Mr. Speaker, cuts like those at the University of Regina that are actually putting the viability of that institution at risk.

To the Premier: does he realize that his cuts and underfunding is contributing to the shortage of skilled workers in this province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, there's been no cuts at the University of Regina. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my answers last week, historic four-year funding agreement with our institutions.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the University of Regina is working through some challenges that they have. We have complete confidence in the president of the university and his executive team to move forward. He has indicated there would be no cuts to programs; there would be no cuts to classes, Mr. Speaker. And as the president has said, he's going to continue to work through his budget, and we'll wait for the final results to come as a result of their deliberations.

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

#### **Private Delivery of Health Care**

**Ms. Beck:** — Once again, Mr. Speaker, everything is just fine. But Saskatchewan people are paying the price for this government's choices. We certainly see that with job creation, and we see it in health care.

Mr. Speaker, last week, Health Canada announced that it would be withholding much-needed funding for our health care system because this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government chose to break the *Canada Health Act*.

Simple question to the Premier: will he scrap his failed American-style, private-pay health care scheme?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The short answer is no, we won't be changing this policy because it's done 15,000 scans that have been paid for by Saskatchewan people, which equals 30,000 scans that have actually been done for our province. This speeds up the process for surgeries, Mr. Speaker.

The federal government should not have done this. They are taking tools off the table, Mr. Speaker, for us to be able to address the pressures. The provinces need to be able to leverage every asset that they can to be able to address the pressures in the health care system. And it was absolutely ridiculous that the federal government is now clawing this money back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this is a Premier who is allergic to taking responsibility for his choices and apparently is allergic to answering questions. Now since this government passed its private-pay MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] bill in 2015, average wait times for MRIs in this province have gone up 63 per cent, Mr. Speaker, 63 per cent. And those numbers, those numbers are directly from that government's website.

The question: how much longer will Saskatchewan people need to wait to access care before that Premier recognizes that his paying-out-of-pocket scheme for health care was a mistake?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — You know what, Mr. Speaker? I'll tell the House and I'll tell the opposition: this side of the House, we're going to focus on delivering health care, not ideology that's outdated, Mr. Speaker.

We campaigned on this in 2016 and got an overwhelming majority from the people of Saskatchewan that said that they wanted this to be part of our health care access. Mr. Speaker, the NDP should be clear. What they are saying, Mr. Speaker, would result in the cancellation of thousands of MRIs, CT [computerized tomography] scans, and surgeries.

We believe that health care delivery is extremely important. And we're not stuck in the ideology of the NDP, Mr. Speaker. We take our direction from the people of Saskatchewan who had the privilege of putting us in here, Mr. Speaker, certainly not from Justin Trudeau.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Just utter nonsense from that minister, Mr. Speaker. He knows that strengthening the public system is an option and is the option in this case, and he's making it out like that is not an option at all. Shameful. Shameful, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear about what's going on. The Sask Party government is breaking the *Canada Health Act*. They knew this was going to happen. They've known for years that this private-pay system breaks the law. We flagged this with the minister all the way back in 2015 and several times since then, but they've plowed ahead with this privatization plan anyway.

Will the minister admit that this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government's choices are breaking the law and that they're the ones who are to blame for this clawback of federal funding?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Mr. Speaker, they act like we're the only ones in Canada doing this. The NDP government in BC is doing this. The province of Quebec is doing this. The province of Ontario is doing this. The province of Alberta is doing this. And we're all disappointed the same that . . .

Again, Mr. Speaker, there have been two elections, two elections for the people of Saskatchewan to stand up and ask about this. And they have spoken. They have put us back into government based on the policies in our health care system, Mr. Speaker, to be able to do exactly what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to listen to the people of Saskatchewan on how to deliver our health care system, certainly not to the NDP and Justin Trudeau.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — You know what the people of Saskatchewan want is access to an MRI when they need it, not a growing wait-list under this failed experiment, Mr. Speaker.

It's not working. That's what this is about. Two tiered health care under the Sask Party government is not working for regular people. Despite assurances at the time that this would lower wait times, wait times for MRIs have increased 63 per cent since 2015. Private facilities draw staff and resources away from the public system, making wait times longer for everyone, Mr. Speaker.

How much worse do the wait times need to get before this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government will scrap their failed experiment?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll remind the members opposite that this started under the NDP government. This was done for the Saskatchewan Roughriders, done for Workers' Compensation. It seemed to be fine when they were in government, Mr. Speaker.

What I'll ask the member opposite is, is she going to stand on her feet today and ask for the cancellation, since 2016, of 30,000 scans that we've been able to do in this province, Mr. Speaker? Are they going to stand up and say we should cancel all of these scans?

Everybody that is booked in for a scan in the next two months is cancelled now. Is that what the NDP is saying, Mr. Speaker? Because I'd really like them to get on the record and say that this was good enough for the Riders, good enough for WCB [Workers' Compensation Board], but not good enough for the rest of Saskatchewan.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, they have a responsibility to pay for the scans that are necessary to deliver health care in this province, and they know it. Stop pointing the fingers elsewhere. It's your responsibility and this is not working.

This is what health care looks like in 2023 under this Sask Party government: longer waits, higher costs, and clawbacks for violating the *Canada Health Act*. This should not be happening in the birthplace of medicare. People should be able to have access to health care with their health card, not with their credit card.

This is not a radical idea, Mr. Speaker. What is next for the Sask Party government? What will they privatize next, and how much more funding are Saskatchewan people going to be on the line to pay for?

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — No answer from them, Mr. Speaker. Would they cancel all of those? Would they cancel . . . which the Leader of the Opposition campaigned on is cancelling all private surgeries, Mr. Speaker.

Again what their answer to everything was, was not being innovative, Mr. Speaker, was not looking at what other provinces are doing and what we can do to maximize our health care system. Their answer was to fire doctors, fire nurses, and close down hospitals. That's what their record is. That's their legacy in the province. They need to understand that, Mr. Speaker, and they need to own up to their legacy.

We're very proud of how we're being innovative in this province in delivering the best health care for the people of Saskatchewan.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, it's shameful to see a Health minister who can't even defend his own record. A simple question, a simple question, Mr. Speaker: who benefits? Who benefits from the Sask Party government's privatization of medical scans and further health care privatization?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — The easy answer is, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan and all of us benefit from this, 30,000 scans that have been done, over 140,000 surgeries, which that Leader of the Opposition would cancel. She'd cancel every private clinic, Mr. Speaker.

We're looking at expanding our private clinics that are publicly funded . . . Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows exactly well that she campaigned on cancelling all of the private surgeries, Mr. Speaker. If she doesn't, then I'd like her to stand up and correct the record. Because we're going to advance as many dollars as we can into the publicly funded system to deliver those scans or those surgeries either in a private clinic or in our hospital systems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, the question was, who benefits? And it sure isn't patients. It sure isn't patients who are waiting longer today for an MRI than they were before this Sask Party government brought their private-pay MRI legislation in 2015. The ones who really benefit, Mr. Speaker, is the Sask Party. Since this Sask Party government brought forward their private-pay scans, they've brought in more than \$26,000 of donations from private medical imaging companies.

Follow the money, Mr. Speaker. Does this Health minister not understand that he's supposed to be working in the best interests of all Saskatchewan people, not for the profitable companies that bankroll his party?

**The Speaker:** — I want to remind the member, and you need to withdraw and apologize saying the Sask Party's benefiting. Please withdraw and apologize.

**Ms. Conway:** — I withdraw and apologize, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Health minister.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again if the Leader of the Opposition said she never said that, then she's obviously very supportive of the private surgeries and the private scans, Mr. Speaker. They can't have it both ways. They can't say, "well we never campaigned on cancelling it, but we want you to get rid of it now." It's absolutely ridiculous that the opposition is so outdated in their dogma, Mr. Speaker, to be able to say that we shouldn't be using every asset we have in this province to be able to address the surgical needs.

As far as the wait-list, Mr. Speaker, absolutely we've acknowledged that in the House that the wait-list has increased. Most of our systems were shut down for two years during COVID. Maybe if they took that into . . . [inaudible] . . . they'd understand.

But I want to thank the people that are out there, both in our private clinics that are publicly funded and our hospitals, that have been working day and night to be able to get that surgical list back where it should be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, again, patients are waiting longer for MRIs after this government's privatization experiment.

This party doesn't like these questions, and I don't blame them, Mr. Speaker. It's not easy having anyone question your intentions or who you're really working for. But there's an easy way to make it all go away, Mr. Speaker. This tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government could get big money out of Saskatchewan politics once and for all. Will they commit to doing that today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — What we will commit to today, Mr.

Speaker, is delivering the best health care service that this province can provide for the people of Saskatchewan, whether that is privately delivered or delivered through our public system. But it is all publicly funded, Mr. Speaker.

It is absolutely ridiculous. They keep going on this, Mr. Speaker. So if they're saying that we should cancel all these scans and cancel all of these surgeries, are they going to go over and pick up the phone and call somebody that's got a scheduled surgery and a scheduled scan for tomorrow and say, "I'm sorry but because of our ideology, we're not going to do this anymore," Mr. Speaker?

It is absolutely outdated. We're disappointed that the federal government has decided to do this, to cause these problems not just here but in other provinces across Canada. Mr. Speaker, the NDP need to get up to date with what's actually happening in our health care system.

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

### Food Pricing in Saskatchewan

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, anyone that's been at the meat aisle or meat counter recently knows that the prices of meat are still sky-high, and they're forecast to go even higher. But beef and livestock producers aren't seeing those dollars. They're simply not making their way back to them in a fair way. In fact between droughts and rising costs, many are having to sell off cattle and reduce their herds just to stay afloat, Mr. Speaker. The prices at the meat counter aren't going to cattle producers. They're going to the big out-of-province anticompetitive meat packers and supply chains.

We've called for action on this. The stock growers have called for action on this. Instead of sitting on their hands, why won't this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government commit to an investigation into food and meat pricing?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said in previous sessions in this House, Mr. Speaker, the one thing that's driving up the cost of food prices is the carbon tax, a carbon tax that those members opposite, along with the Justin Trudeau government, have been supporting for ever and ever.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, carbon tax is tax on every portion of food that we grow. Every farmer is paying carbon tax on everything coming into his farm and leaving his farm. Same with the livestock producer, Mr. Speaker. They haul their cattle to market; there's a carbon tax on it. The market pays the carbon tax on all the business that they do. The packing facilities are paying carbon tax on everything. The grocery stores are paying carbon tax on every bit of fuel and everything they're using, Mr. Speaker.

It's inevitable what's driving the cost of food here, Mr. Speaker. It's the carbon tax, which on April 1 we're going to see a significant increase again. Are they going to stand up and say they don't support the carbon tax, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, we've shared our concerns on that front as well, and we said that that should be part of the committee. But that minister is being incredibly weak for the producers and consumers of this province on this file, Mr. Speaker, standing up for the out-of-province, anticompetitive meat packers instead of producers in this province.

Even former premier Brad Wall said hearings would never hurt and "I think you'll see provincial governments, especially in the West, line up in favour of having a look at this." Yet this government refuses to act for producers and consumers. This is a government failing to deliver. Why are they unwilling to investigate what the heck is going on with meat prices and act to deliver fairness for producers and consumers?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I can say this. I know one thing for sure: the farmers and ranchers in this province are going to support this government long before they ever support those members opposite in what they ever did, which they did nothing for agriculture.

Let me give you a list of just a few things we've done for the farmers and ranchers in this province, Mr. Speaker. We doubled the low-yield appraisal threshold values. We increased the farm and ranch infrastructure program. We removed the reference margin limit in AgriStability, Mr. Speaker. We increased the AgriStability compensation rate to 80 per cent. We created the livestock price insurance, significantly enhancing all other livestock programs such as forage rainfall insurance, forage yield insurance, wildlife damage compensation — which we pay out at 100 per cent compensation — the drought response initiative, which put \$119 million directly into livestock support, Mr. Speaker. The list goes on and on. I hope there's another question.

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

#### **Overdose Numbers and Provision of Care for Mental Health and Addictions**

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, the coroners service has released the latest overdose numbers. In January and February of this year, a suspected 103 people died by overdose — 103 in two months. In 2016 the number was 109 for the whole year.

Overdose numbers are spiralling out of control, and we see no plan from this tired and out-of-touch government to stop the harm. How many more people have to die before the minister delivers a mental health and addictions strategy that works for everyone?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The loss of any life to overdose is a tragedy, and we're seeing this right across our province right now, right across the country. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we are making record investments into this

area, but we know we need to do more when it comes to supports and programs and services to address this.

Mr. Speaker, we are very close to being able to announce the first phase of our additional treatment-space capacity here in this province, which will help provide more access for people to be able to access long-term rehabilitation and treatment and recovery options right across this province. And, Mr. Speaker, we're also investing in overdose outreach teams, which recently launched earlier this past winter partway through a pilot project.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we just had a briefing with officials this morning about the current progress being made in that regard. And I have asked questions as to how we can speed that up and enhance what we're doing to provide that support for people across Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, words are one thing, but what communities are calling for right now is action. Soon — the answer of "soon" coming from this government — is not good enough for families that are dealing with mental health and addictions crises. When will we see a mental health and addictions strategy that works for everyone?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as I said previously, we're trying to or we're going to make more investments into this area, Mr. Speaker. We have now operational overdose outreach teams in Regina and Saskatoon. We have operational now mass spectrometers, drug-checking devices operating in Regina and Saskatoon as well.

We continue to expand the access to naloxone across this province, getting it into more communities, getting it into more pharmacies as part of that community pharmacy program, Mr. Speaker. And you're going to see in next week's budget, additional investments into this very important area for this provincial government.

#### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

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

#### **Government Action on Immigration**

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to inform the House of very positive steps on the immigration file. And a copy of the statement was provided to the opposition earlier today.

Mr. Speaker, while attending the Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration in Halifax this past Friday, federal, provincial, and territorial ministers discussed and confirmed significant progress forward on levels, selection authority, and settlement resource allocations.

On levels or numbers, Mr. Speaker, the actual allocation for

provinces through their provincial nominee programs, there has been agreement to significantly increase provincial nominee program levels. This will include a very significant increase this year with a commitment to increased allocations flowing out over the next three years. This will ultimately result in a 42 per cent increase in Saskatchewan's SINP [Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program] by 2025 to a total of 8,500 nominations. This year the allocation will increase from 6,000 where it is today to 7,250; the year following, to 8,000; and 500 more spots for 2025 for the 8,500 nomination total. This will mean that nearly 18,000 newcomers per year will be processed through the SINP.

Secondly, there was agreement with provinces and territories and the federal government on selection to reduce federal duplication in the processing of Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program nominations. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has agreed to amend federal regulations and the Canada-Saskatchewan Immigration Agreement to give Saskatchewan the sole authority over assessing a candidate's ability to economically establish and their intent to reside. This was a central proposal in the Saskatchewan Immigration Accord.

[14:30]

On settlement funding, provinces and territories were in favour of the devolution of federal settlement funding, to be managed by provincial and territorial governments in a similar fashion to how labour market resources are managed at the provincial level. This was further to the discussion that Saskatchewan initiated at the FMRI [Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration] meeting in July of 2022 as a part of the Saskatchewan Immigration Accord. Such devolution would result in over \$40 million per year being transferred to our province by the federal government for the purpose of settlement supports in immigration.

Saskatchewan has seen record-high population growth numbers, and immigration to the province has played a significant role in that. We're well on our way to our goal of 1.4 million residents by 2030.

Mr. Speaker, while these changes do not fully yet address the Government of Saskatchewan's request for more autonomy over immigration as proposed in the immigration accord, this is very significant progress. And the Government of Saskatchewan will continue to negotiate with the federal government and leverage pan-national support amongst provinces and territories for more authority over immigration.

Immigration plays a vital role in our workforce, and our government is in the best position to respond to local labour market needs with newcomers. Our government is proud of our record on immigration. Saskatchewan's been a leader within Canada through its recent international health care recruitment missions, its welcoming in support of chartered flights for displaced Ukrainians, and the introduction of the most comprehensive foreign credential recognition legislation in the entire country.

With the changes mentioned today, we're able to continue addressing employer challenges due to the labour shortage. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to stand up for increased provincial autonomy and continue to develop our made-in-Saskatchewan

approach to immigration. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister to rise to respond to this announcement. I want to thank the minister for providing his remarks in advance of session here today, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly immigration is critical to the future of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, built upon a foundation of treaties and First Nations and Métis people in this province. We've seen wave upon wave of immigrants come to Saskatchewan together to build our province. We see that continuing to this day and it's critically important, Mr. Speaker.

And certainly we see some positive announcements in this agreement that's been found with provinces and territorial leaders, Mr. Speaker, that will increase the allocation for Saskatchewan of the number of newcomers that can choose to come to Saskatchewan to build and contribute and shape our province, as well as to find a more efficient path, Mr. Speaker.

Having more control as a province will also give this government the ability to make sure that they do a better job of honouring the commitment to families, Mr. Speaker. We know that the setback a number of years ago with the gutting of the family class was a real setback for immigration in this province, more so a real setback to many, many individuals who chose Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and deserve to have family be able to join them here in Saskatchewan to support them here in Saskatchewan, which will aid our retention of newcomers as well, Mr. Speaker.

Just as important as it is to recruit, Mr. Speaker, and to have those newcomers choose Saskatchewan, we have to make sure that this government does a better job of retaining newcomers to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We've watched the five-year retention rates absolutely plummet in this last five years under this government, Mr. Speaker.

Right now 40 per cent of those that settle in Saskatchewan, with the current five-year rate, depart Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Not long ago Saskatchewan had retention rates hovering around 78 and 80 per cent, Mr. Speaker, now languishing with 60 per cent or so. It's simply not acceptable, Mr. Speaker. It's a loss for all of Saskatchewan. It's not fair to those who are making that choice to build their life here in Saskatchewan. Right now, if you look to places like Ontario, their rates are well above 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

So we need to make sure we have the jobs and the opportunity and the cost of living that those newcomers deserve, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure we have a respectful path for their family to also settle here, Mr. Speaker. And we need to make sure those supports are in place in the community, the settlement supports, Mr. Speaker, and that those classrooms that those students will be entering into have the supports they need as well, Mr. Speaker.

Not what we've seen under this government on this front where we've seen class sizes go through the roof, Mr. Speaker, class complexity go through the roof, and inadequate supports for English as an additional language, Mr. Speaker. Education

matters to newcomers, Mr. Speaker, and it matters to everyone in Saskatchewan. But certainly with respect to this accord, we see a lot of progress here, Mr. Speaker, and it's a pleasure to rise to speak to it.

#### MESSAGE FROM HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III

**The Speaker:** — I'd ask all the members to please rise.

His Majesty the King's Commonwealth Day message:

Commonwealth Day was an occasion of particular pride for my beloved Mother, The late Queen — a treasured opportunity to celebrate our Commonwealth family, to whose service she dedicated her long and remarkable life.

In succeeding Her Majesty as Head of the Commonwealth, I draw great strength from her example, together with all that I have learnt from the extraordinary people I have met, throughout the Commonwealth, over so many years.

The Commonwealth has been a constant in my own life, and yet its diversity continues to amaze and inspire me. Its near-boundless potential as a force for good in the world demands our highest ambition; its sheer scale challenges us to unite and be bold.

This week marks the tenth anniversary of the Charter of the Commonwealth, which gives expression to our defining values — peace and justice; tolerance, respect and solidarity; care for our environment, and for the most vulnerable among us.

These are not simply ideals. In each lies an imperative to act, and to make a practical difference in the lives of the 2.6 billion people who call the Commonwealth home.

Whether on climate change and biodiversity loss, youth opportunity and education, global health, or economic co-operation, the Commonwealth can play an indispensable role in the most pressing issues of our time. Ours is an association not just of shared values, but of common purpose and joint action.

In this we are blessed with the ingenuity and imagination of a third of the world's population, including one and a half billion people under the age of thirty. Our shared humanity contains such precious diversity of thought, culture, tradition and experience. By listening to each other, we will find so many of the solutions that we seek.

This extraordinary potential, which we hold in common, is more than equal to the challenges we face. It offers us unparalleled strength not merely to face the future, but to build it. Here, the Commonwealth has an incredible opportunity, and responsibility, to create a genuinely durable future — one that offers the kind of prosperity that is in harmony with Nature and that will also secure our unique and only planet for generations to come.

The myriad connections between our nations have sustained and enriched us for more than seven decades. Our commitment to peace, progress and opportunity will sustain

us for many more.

Let ours be a Commonwealth that not only stands together, but strives together, in restless and practical pursuit of the . . . common . . . [goal].

Thank you. Please be seated.

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask for leave to make a motion regarding a change to committee membership.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has asked leave to make a motion for committee membership. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### MOTIONS

##### Committee Membership

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you for recognizing me. And I thank the House for granting leave. I would move, Mr. Speaker:

That the name of Tim McLeod be added to the membership of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

I so move.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has moved:

That the name of Tim McLeod be added to the membership of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Is the motion approved?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

##### ADJOURNED DEBATES

##### SECOND READINGS

##### 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 for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet and enter into debate on Bill No. 103, *The Accessible*



*Saskatchewan Act.* Mr. Speaker, I am the designated critic for disability issues on this side of the House, and it's with pleasure that I enter into debate on this bill.

This is a bill that's obviously needed, Mr. Speaker. We do need an accessibility Act and legislation. And over the last couple of months, my aim has been to enter into consultation with the disability community and the disability support community — because they are two distinct communities, Mr. Speaker — and collect feedback on whether this bill gets it right.

And I do look forward to exploring those questions more in committee, Mr. Speaker, but the answer that I've heard so far is it does and it doesn't. There are some good things about this bill, Mr. Speaker, and this opposition is more than willing to give credit where credit is due, particularly on such an important topic as improving the accessibility of our province to all.

But there are some themes in terms of what is lacking with this legislation. One of those themes revolves around the lack of prioritization of the lived experience of people living with disability. Now this is no small failure if indeed the Act falls short, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll just give one example. The Act provides for an advisory board, and the folks that make up that advisory board include persons living with disability or someone from the disability support sector, I believe is the wording. I don't have it right in front of me. But there is an option not to include that individual with a lived experience as making up a certain portion of that advisory board.

And I have heard almost without exception that the community of stakeholders are concerned about that word "or." It's funny how in legislation, a word such as "or" instead of "and," or "shall" instead of "may," these are very important words when it comes to setting a standard for these kinds of issues, Mr. Speaker.

The other theme is the lack of detailed plan for rolling these standards out, Mr. Speaker. And the focus is on having a plan in this legislation, but it doesn't necessarily define the application of the plan, and certainly not the implementation of the plan, Mr. Speaker.

The third kind of thematic area around which I've heard concerns around this accessibility Act, Mr. Speaker, is the lack of teeth, the lack of mechanisms to ensure compliance. And that's too bad as far as I'm concerned, Mr. Speaker, because there actually are other jurisdictions right here in Canada — and I'm looking forward to exploring these more in committee — that do have more detailed plans and more teeth, including timelines and oversight in consequences for non-conformance with the standards that are outlined in the Acts. So there is a feeling from some that this is a bill that is more about aspirational encouragement than really ensuring compliance with robust accessibility standards.

Mr. Speaker, the other theme I would point to in terms of some of the concerns I've heard is the lack of sufficient scope of this bill. Now one of the questions going into the creation of this accessibility Act is who will be subject to these standards? Is it just going to be the public sector or is it going to be the private sector as well? And I know that some folks hear, you know,

accessibility standards for the private sector and they go running because they hear that and it sounds expensive and it sounds difficult. But actually other jurisdictions have done a really good job of ensuring that the burden doesn't just fall to, you know, small business in the private sector in making sure that their businesses are accessible.

[14:45]

And they've really made the case for how actually making the private sector more accessible improves the outcomes of that private sector, because they have a greater clientele and they're really well regarded within their community. And there's lots of ways that the public can subsidize that transition. What are we as lawmakers and as government if not positioned to really encourage and ease the transition around big change? That's absolutely a role for government, Mr. Speaker. So there's lots of imaginative ways to do this, and I think the concern here is that this bill only covers government and public bodies, Mr. Speaker. And if that is the case, that is a shame.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've also heard concerns around the lack of detailed plans around what service and procurement standards, how they will apply as it relates to distinct areas such as health care, such as education, such as housing. These areas, where we really see the lack of participation of folks living with a disability, really impact their lives in very dramatic and real ways, Mr. Speaker. So I think folks are looking for some clarity and some detail about how they can expect their lives to improve in really real ways, Mr. Speaker.

So those are sort of some themes, Mr. Speaker, and again there are some good things about this Act, and I'll get into some of the meat of that in committee, Mr. Speaker. And I think that I'll draw my conclusions to a close. But before I do that, I just want to put another all-points bulletin out there to the community, the disability community and anyone with family, friends, the support community, Mr. Speaker, that if they have feedback about this bill, please reach out to me, to my office. I will be happy to add your concerns and your questions to what I bring to committee on this bill in terms of feedback. We have done consultation for months now right across the province, both in person and online.

And lastly I will say that one of the recurring themes, Mr. Speaker, that I forgot to mention earlier is that transportation and access to internet services. Now there's a question, you know, that is something that folks who are living with a disability are really concerned about, the difficulty accessing urban centres due to the lack of transportation. Of course that goes back to the closure of the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] and that was a shame, Mr. Speaker.

But again people want to know how this legislation will impact their real life, the real barriers they're facing in their communities. Transportation is of course a huge one — getting to appointments, participating in their communities, Mr. Speaker — and access to internet wherever you live in the province. And that is something we've still not seen this government deliver on. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to move that Bill No. 103 . . . No, I'm happy to allow this bill to move to committee, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 103 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Human Services.

**The Speaker:** — The bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

### 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 Regina Douglas Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and join in to the debate on Bill No. 106, *The Police Amendment Act*. And I thank my colleagues who have had the opportunity prior to me to weigh in on this so that I could do the work in reaching out to community members, in particular leaders in policing in Saskatchewan, to get their thoughts and concerns on this legislation.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've been hearing a lot of concerns about this bill, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the lack of consultation. This is something that we hear time and time again from this Sask Party government. This is a government that refuses to consult with the public, to get feedback prior to introducing legislation. The same thing happened here, Mr. Speaker. Not one leader in policing was consulted prior to the introduction of this legislation.

We're hearing concerns about a government that wants to expand the definition of what a type of member would be, that wants to create an alternate governing structure beyond the traditional police boards, Mr. Speaker, that wants to give themselves more flexibility, more ability to intervene in circumstances where they're not happy with how municipal police services are operating.

Mr. Speaker, this is a pattern. This is a pattern of this government, disrespecting the work and the independence of police forces in Saskatchewan, both municipal police forces and RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] that put their lives on the line every single day for us and our safety, Mr. Speaker. We saw this several years ago from this government in Regina with the Justice for Our Stolen Children camp, Mr. Speaker. That government didn't like how the Regina police were handling that situation. They were quite vocal publicly about that, Mr. Speaker. And then we

saw it again from this government with Bill 70 and their takeover of the legislative security here in the legislature, Mr. Speaker.

More and more, Mr. Speaker, we see a government who wants to shape and mould policing to its own liking, Mr. Speaker. There are other governments that do this too, Mr. Speaker, but they're not democracies. And I worry about the growing sense of entitlement in that ministry and what that's going to do to policing moving forward in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Now we see this government announcing the marshals service, and this bill will pave the way for that. Marshals service, Mr. Speaker, a word that doesn't exist in Canadian jurisdiction. It's an American term, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that would rather build their own policing service from scratch rather than properly and adequately fund the RCMP, who have asked for an investment. If they would have been given this \$20 million that was requested, or that's been announced by the marshals service, they could put more policing in the front lines of rural communities in Saskatchewan tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. Instead we see a government that wants to create an entire policing body from scratch instead.

I've heard from several policing leaders who said, if this government has \$20 million that they want to invest in, we could give you a dozen — a dozen — suggestions for that money that would help put more front-line police officers on the street tomorrow. And none of those would include creating a new policing body from scratch, Mr. Speaker.

Lots of questions to ask the minister and officials about this bill in committee. I'm looking forward to that conversation. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member that Bill No. 106 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Division.

**The Speaker:** — Division. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 14:52 until 14:56.]

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the second reading motion of Bill No. 106. All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 45]

Moe

**The Speaker:** — Order.

McMorris	Reiter	Harpauer
Morgan	Duncan	Tell
Wyant	Makowsky	Marit
Cheveldayoff	Bradshaw	Kaeding
Cockrill	L. Ross	Eyre
J. Harrison	Carr	Hindley
Skoropad	Buckingham	Hargrave
Fiaz	Lambert	Dennis
Kirsch	A. Ross	Ottenbreit
Francis	C. Young	Steele
Lawrence	Bonk	McLeod
Meyers	Friesen	Grewal
Nerlien	Goudy	Keisig
Lemaigre	Jenson	D. Harrison
Domotor	Wilson	

**The Speaker:** — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 11]

Beck	Nippi-Albright	Vermette
Mowat	Wotherspoon	Love
Teed	Sarauer	Conway
Bowes	Ritchie	

**Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 45; those opposed, 11.

[15:00]

**The Speaker:** — I declare the motion carried. To which committee? I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly . . . sorry. The committee stands to the committee of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**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 Regina Douglas Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter in the debate on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act*. Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation leaves us with a lot of questions about how it will operate, Mr. Speaker.

We have some concerns about who will be covered and who will not be covered, and just questions about the centralization of all of the different policing bodies that are moving under one umbrella pursuant to this legislation, Mr. Speaker. To allow for those questions to go to committee, I'm prepared now to move this bill to its next stage.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion

by the member that Bill No. 107 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — 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. 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 Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join on Bill 108, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of people in our province, whether they work for government, different agencies, whether they're private sector, they have a pension benefit that benefits them. They work and their employer joins them. There's different ways of formulas done, but it's to give them a good pension so that when the day after they've worked hard, they earned a good pension that will take care of them when they're older.

Because like everything else, we see a government who . . . And I know a government here, like even last year. I think about last year, 31 new fees and taxes this government introduced on our seniors who are pensioners, and some don't have a pension. And unfortunately . . . It's good for those that have a pension. I know members in this Assembly, we have a pension. A lot of government employees have a pension. We want to make sure that those pensions are taken care of and they're looked at.

I know my colleague is going to do some work on this, the critic. He's going to reach out and he's going to do some talking. But he's going to get a chance to ask the officials and the minister questions about why we are forward with this amendments and why the changes are.

And they might be needed, you know, with changes in times and whether it's federal. I'm not sure the reason why. But there's some . . . When you look through the binder, just some changes that have come federally I believe as well if my understanding. So they're going to have to, I guess, come and finding ways that best will protect people's pensions and the process, how it's going to go.

I know that he will get a chance to ask those officials exactly what it's all about and what does this mean. Because any time

you give jurisdiction and powers, certain powers . . . and some of the stuff that I've seen, and my colleagues, and even in the minister's comments, just looking over them, there are some powers that are being given to certain individuals, you know, and I don't know why. And I'm no expert, and I'm not going to try to figure that out.

But I do know that people that have a pension want to make sure their pension is taken care of, so that to the day they pass away, that they're taken care of and they can, you know, afford to live and pay their bills. And especially in a time with . . . You have so many years of this current government and the taxes and fees that are being put on them more and more, wanting more from hard-working people. This government's getting more and more taxes, you know, and fees. And we've seen that and we've talked about that. So that's important, cost of living. We see SaskPower rates, time after time, the government raising them.

So those individuals who are on a pension want to make sure that that pension's taken care of. So we want to make sure, as opposition and the critic, we want to make sure we talk with individuals. We want to make sure we've done the work that we need to do to make sure that those pensions and those seniors . . . Once you're a senior and you're ready to go into pension and draw that pension, that you have enough hopefully and that it's being taken care of best we can to protect those pensions. And so there's quite a bit of discussion about that. You hear it from people who are struggling out there.

But I guess there's so many individuals out there that don't have a pension. They have Canada pension or old age security — very little, some of them. You know, there's not a lot of Saskatchewan residents that have a defined pension like this, and they're struggling to make ends meet. You know, they work hard, some of them two jobs, just to try to make ends meet. You know, we talked to some of our seniors, some of the people I've talked to, and they're working hard, two jobs. Some of them you'll even hear, you know, they have a full-time job and two part-time jobs because they're just trying to make ends meet. This government raising power rates and raising fees, and the list goes on of what they're doing. And they're asking, you know, citizens who are struggling to pay rent to cover their monthly bills.

So having said that, you know, again I go back to . . . My colleague will ask some of the questions. But I just want to show why it's so important. And I've seen some of my, you know, colleagues talk about having a pension and about the struggles, you know, and the cost of living, and having a fair wage to be able to provide for your family. You know, we're always talking about that. So that all comes together — a fair wage to work and then a pension, so that they can go on and take care.

I know that my colleagues that are around the table here and in the Assembly will have more to say, more questions. And I'll allow that to happen when it needs to happen and the critic will ask the questions. So at this point, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 108, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 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 Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today, this time for Bill No. 109, *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2022 (No. 2)*. Changes being proposed in this legislation just include the fact that the federal government can't trespass on private land.

You know, I think most people know about the incident that is being referred to here in this legislation. I think it's really disappointing to see this government looking for yet another opportunity to pick a fight with the federal government for political purposes, using this incident for political purposes. And of course we agree that federal employees, like provincial employees, have to follow trespass laws, but these federal employees are residents of Saskatchewan. It's extremely alarming and irresponsible to see the government treating their own citizens this way just to score political points. Of course we believe in the rights and dignity of landowners, and these are something that are very important to us, Mr. Speaker, and that's why we are intent on working with stakeholders to make sure that all interests are protected here.

I think something that was really jarring for me around this incident was the violent and hateful comments that were left on social media that were hosted by the government. I know my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre provided some examples of this, and it is just completely heartbreaking to see this type of speech being allowed, these types of sentiments being fostered by our government here. I think we need to do better. We have a responsibility to do better, and it's disappointing to see this being used as a political agenda, Mr. Speaker.

I know many of my colleagues will continue to consult on this bill, but with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 109 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. 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 Centre.

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be entering my comments into the debate on Bill No. 116.

So I understand that the minister can declare any animal, insect, or disease dangerous to plants or crops a pest, and appoint also pest control officers who take care of it, order the destruction of at-risk plants, and declare a state of emergency. And also this bill, I understand, is that the ministry must pay for these destroyed crops. Municipalities can also appoint pest control officers and order compliance, however the ministry's regulations beat the municipal bylaws.

So I won't say too much on this, as my colleague would have more questions to ask about this. We are an agricultural province and it's important to prevent and contain any pests that threaten our farmers' crops. So the last thing we need is pests causing food scarcity, causing food prices to rise even higher than they already have.

I think what's very interesting in this bill is that they're allowing municipal and provincial pest control officers free access to any land suspected of having pests, just on the heels of the trespassing amendment banning federal agents from coming out.

Another thing that's very interesting is that, where is the collaboration between this government or the ministry and the municipalities? I think any time we're looking at making changes to legislation that we need to work in collaboration and in partnership with those that are going to be impacted. And I would like to see more . . . I'm interested to see how the municipalities — and also in particular First Nations, Métis communities — are being engaged in this process when we introduce legislation that could potentially impact them, as we know that there are many Indigenous farmers out in the community as well.

So I'm interested in what my colleague in this area would have, the questions they have to ask, and looking forward to hearing the questions that they have in committee on this. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 116, *The Plant Health 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. 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 Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to weigh in briefly here today with respect to Bill No. 117, *The Saskatchewan Firearms Act*, Mr. Speaker. And certainly we've been clear in raising our concerns with respect to the overreach of the federal government on this front, Mr. Speaker. We've expressed those concerns, of course, in this Chamber. We've

stood united actually in a vote in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the federal overreach with respect to firearms bans and actions by the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

What seems clear to me is that often down in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, that the federal government has such a poor understanding of Saskatchewan on these fronts and the practical relationship that Saskatchewan people have with firearms, if you think of long guns and the connection to heritage activities like hunting and trapping in this province, Mr. Speaker. You know, such an important relationship to First Nations, Mr. Speaker, Indigenous peoples exercising their treaty rights, Mr. Speaker.

[15:15]

And of course all the hunters as well. I count myself as a proud hunter in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I'm a member of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Mr. Speaker, who have also expressed their concern with respect to the federal government on this front as well, Mr. Speaker. And so we'll continue to, you know, give voice to that.

There's a failed understanding as well, I think, as to the importance of a firearm on a farm, Mr. Speaker, and the practical tool that it is on these fronts. And certainly what we have seen from the federal government of late is overreach, Mr. Speaker. I know that when Premier Romanow was in power, when he was the premier, Mr. Speaker, I know he never supported — that government, the Saskatchewan NDP of that day — never supported the gun registry, Mr. Speaker. They always stood up and gave voice to firearm owners in Saskatchewan and that practical relationship we have with firearms. Mr. Speaker, that's the approach that we'll be taking. That's the approach I'll be taking on this matter as well.

It is noteworthy that with respect to the legislation, the legislation that's here, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe there's been consultation with First Nations and Métis people on this front, Mr. Speaker. I would urge that, because certainly Indigenous peoples have a very practical relationship with long guns in this province. Hunting and fishing is very important to treaty rights, Mr. Speaker, and we'll always stand up for practical laws on these fronts and stand against the overreach and actions of the federal government.

I know our critic will, you know, in due course be entering into committee to make sure that this legislation is as effective as it can be, is as robust as it can be to stand up against some of the actions of the federal government and to reflect the relationship that so many have with firearms in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to that. At this point in time I'll simply adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 117.

**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 Meewasin.

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 118, *The Warrant Compliance Act*. I want to start by thanking my colleagues for the comments they put on the record of this bill. And a huge thank you to our Justice critic for her work on this file, as it's a very nuanced bill. I know that she has been working hard to engage stakeholders and will definitely have more to ask in committee. But I am honoured today to put some comments on the record.

Broadly speaking, Mr. Speaker, *The Warrant Compliance Act* is an effort by the government to provide more resources and teeth for warrant enforcement for what the government calls prolific violent offenders in Saskatchewan. The bill would create an investigation unit within the ministry that would be able to investigate and give orders to social-spending ministries to cut the benefits of violent offenders with outstanding warrants.

Upon receiving such an order from the ministry, the benefits administrator then has the opportunity, or must cut, suspend, or reduce set benefits. We have some really interesting wording here in this bill, as it said admins can make a judgment call on this order if slashing their benefits would cause significant hardship.

Lastly, the bill allows the investigation unit to demand the location information of violent offenders with outstanding warrants from any government institution.

Mr. Speaker, while we support this as an additional tool to apprehend violent offenders, especially in the wake of such recent tragedies, I have concerns over this bill and this government's continued tough-on-crime agenda.

We continue to see little effort made to address the root causes of crime in our province. This government couldn't even review a guest list for a Speech from the Throne when they invited a convicted wife killer to this legislature. Perhaps this is something that this new committee can investigate or could take on in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very concerned about the lack of definitions in terms put forward in this legislation. We have terms like "prolific violent offenders," "significant hardships." Leaving these terms undefined means there is substantial grey area wherein one person might have a very different idea of what they could mean.

I also have grave concerns about how orders from the ministry will impact families and children caught in the ebb and flow of our criminal justice system. We need assurances that families and children will be protected and supported.

I am also concerned about the powers of the ministry to share information and demand location information.

Lastly I am very concerned with, as I've mentioned before, I'm always very concerned with tough-on-crime legislation,

especially legislation that intersects with social programs. I firmly believe that crime, the crime we experience in our province, is a direct offshoot of the socio-economic conditions in which folks find themselves. We already have some of the country's lowest rates of social assistance, essentially legislated poverty, Mr. Speaker.

The best way to deal with crime is to go to the root of the issue. We must address poverty. We must address homelessness. And we must continue to build a mental health care system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill 118, *The Warrant Compliance Act*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 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 Saskatoon University.

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good to enter into adjourned debate on behalf of the opposition with respect to Bill 122, the Saskatchewan revenue Act. Mr. Speaker, this bill creates a new Crown corporation. Wow. I didn't think I'd see the day when the Sask Party government was creating a Crown corporation instead of killing one off as they usually do. But here we are. Interesting to see.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is incredibly vague, so certainly much more scrutiny will be required beyond what's in the bill itself and beyond the minister's comments. There is really no clear indication around why this government is creating its own revenue agency. It appears to be completely redundant and wasteful, like a growing number of this government's bills, Mr. Speaker. I mean, this is becoming a bit of a pattern here, where absolutely no one asked for this, Mr. Speaker.

No one's asking for this bill. No one's asking for the marshals bill that they just called a standing vote on for some kind of theatrical reason. No one asks for this stuff. You don't have a mandate for it. You're spending more and more of Saskatchewan people's hard-earned dollars on these petty pieces of legislation that do not have meaningful value to the majority of the people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this government didn't campaign on legislation for a Saskatchewan revenue agency. There was no mention of it. They have no mandate for it. It is increasingly fringy and out of touch, these priorities like this marshals service which is again redundant, like this piece of legislation appears to be completely redundant and unneeded.

How much more will these guys pile onto their burgeoning record levels of conservative debt? What will the cost of this new agency be, Mr. Speaker? What will the cost to Saskatchewan people be for this latest example of Sask Party government waste, for their latest example of schoolyard behaviour, their complete inability to collaborate in an adult fashion with our federal government, Mr. Speaker? They are squandering our tax dollars left and right, Mr. Speaker. How much will taxpayers be on the hook for this time around, Mr. Speaker?

We as the opposition do not support this bill. We do not support more of the same wasteful and petty governance by this Sask Party government, which is growing more and more out of touch and more and more fringy as the days go on. Saskatchewan people deserve so much better, Mr. Speaker. With that, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 122, the Saskatchewan revenue 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. 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 Saskatoon Centre.

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter my remarks on this bill, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act*.

Well this bill is giving municipalities and regional parks the authority to designate outdoor public spaces as drinking and also allowing special occasion liquor licences can be served, like homemade beer and wine. Re-corking laws are modernized, etc.

So with this bill, I don't have too much to say on it other than that we've had mixed reviews on this, mixed response on this from stakeholders and whether it will be good for municipalities. Municipalities have pointed out their concerns. We already know that municipalities are at capacity in the good work that they do in their communities, and this is going to add to those responsibilities.

And also people in Saskatchewan are facing real devastating issues right now, and we all know that, you know, any time alcohol is consumed we have people that abuse it. We have people that abuse it. Regardless whether they drink in the home or in public, there's always that risk of those abusing alcohol, and we know in some cases driving drunk and putting citizens at risk.

This is a very big concern for the Indigenous community. I know that alcohol has wreaked havoc in the communities.

And also we all know the amount of unreported sexual assaults that occur, and that by allowing alcohol in the parks increases that.

One of the things that I was very interested in is how now we're giving permits to allow for special occasion liquor licences for making homemade beer and wine. And I think back as a child hearing about siaboo. In my language, siaboo, that's moose milk. You know, homemade brew is what the folks would drink. And I thought about that and I thought, oh, I wonder if this applies to siaboo, or what Indigenous communities called moose milk.

On a serious note though, I know there's folks out there that are thinking this is really good. But there's also serious questions that have been raised about having alcohol in public spaces and how much risk people are going to be at, especially when we know that . . . the unreported cases of sexual assault.

And you know, I'm all for modernizing. However any time that amendments are being made or legislation is being made, those that are going to be impacted must be consulted, because if we want to do well as legislators we need to consult with those that are going to be impacted by the laws that we make.

So with that, I'm sure the critic for this area will have more questions to ask in committee. With that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 124. 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. 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 University.

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My pleasure to enter into adjourned debate with respect to Bill 125, *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Amendment Act, 2020*. Mr. Speaker, this bill will create First Nations cannabis authorities to regulate on-reserve cannabis retail and distribution. There will be the same regulation-making authority as off-reserve for hiring minors; setting prices; issuing, refusing or revoking permits; and issuing fines. As well, police and judges will have the same enforcement powers as off-reserve. Difference being here, under this bill, these First Nations authorities will not have to apply to SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] for permits. That makes sense.

I think, Mr. Speaker, this on the face of it — well certainly we will need to do further consultation here to make sure that stakeholders are having their interests properly represented by this legislation — but on the face of it, it does seem to me to make sense to turn over jurisdiction to First Nations.

[15:30]

I hope to see more of this, honestly, from this government, Mr. Speaker. I hope to see more relinquishing of settler jurisdiction over First Nations in this province because, you know, the issue that I've spoken to in this House before and the one that comes to mind is jurisdiction of First Nations over child welfare. And I've referenced before, we've heard about and seen the historic agreement that Cowessess First Nation undertook to take back jurisdiction over their children and their child welfare.

And so I support all measures in principle to turn over jurisdiction back to the original peoples of these lands. And so again, our critic will take much more time to go through to make sure that this legislation is serving its intended purpose and that it will be something that is amenable to First Nations in this province. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I will leave it at that for now. I'll move that we adjourn debate on Bill 125, *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Amendment Act 2022*. 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. 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 Eastview.

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to be on my feet to make a few comments about Bill 126, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2022*. I have taken the time to review some of the amendments, the explanatory notes, comments from the minister opposite, and from my colleagues in opposition. I want to express thanks for the thoughts put on the record by my colleagues thus far. I've seen, you know, some thoughtful interjections, and I want to thank our critic for always helping the rest of us out to understand how these changes might impact folks.

I think that my understanding is that there is some long-standing requests and issues here experienced by First Nations leaders and individuals that are hopefully addressed by these amendments. But I do want to point out that with the ongoing pilot project at Muskoday and Whitecap Dakota First Nation, that we'll see what those pilot projects result in with much interest to see what the impacts are on folks with these changes. In particular, changes that allow for First Nations to enforce laws and bylaws on-reserve and to move away from required court appearances to the issuing of fines and tickets for violations related to traffic violations and other small convictions that in the past perhaps would have required a court appearance and can now be addressed in other ways.

I think that we're hopeful that this will be a positive step towards

self-government and self-autonomy for Indigenous nations in Saskatchewan. I trust that the leadership from these First Nations conducting the pilot projects have been consulted, and know what's best for their people and for the members of their nations.

So we'll continue to watch and continue to listen to my colleagues in opposition as this bill proceeds, but I think that we are in favour and in interests of seeing these changes brought forward to this legislation. But at this time, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 126, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2022*. 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. 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 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:35.]





# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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