



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

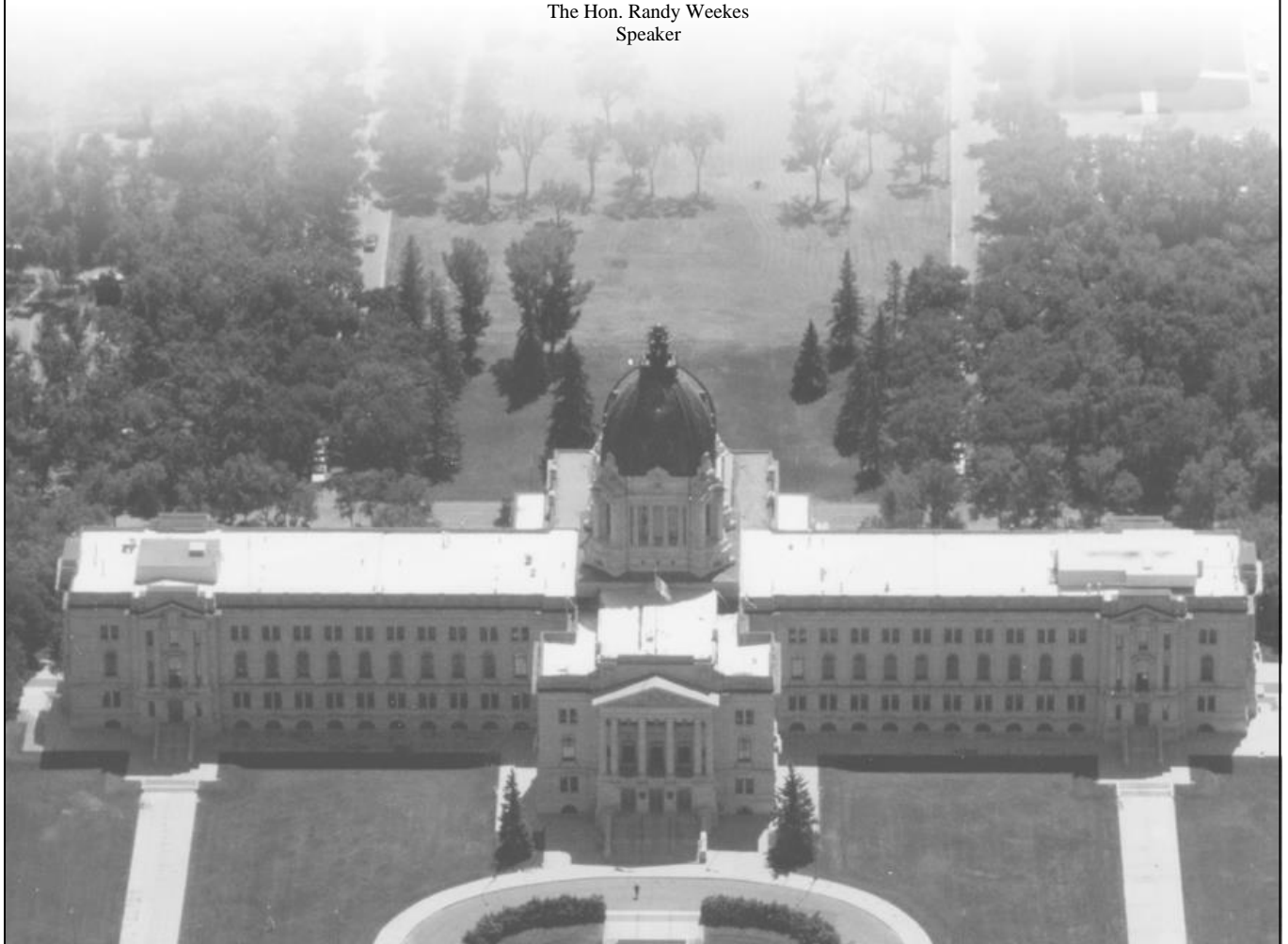
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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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

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<b>Harrison, Hon. Jeremy</b> — Meadow Lake (SP)	<b>Weekes, Hon. Randy</b> — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
<b>Hindley, Hon. Everett</b> — Swift Current (SP)	<b>Wilson, Nadine</b> — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
<b>Jenson, Terry</b> — Martensville-Warman (SP)	<b>Wotherspoon, Trent</b> — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
<b>Kaeding, Warren</b> — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	<b>Wyant, Hon. Gordon</b> — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
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<b>Kirsch, Delbert</b> — Batoche (SP)	<b>Young, Colleen</b> — Lloydminster (SP)
<b>Lambert, Lisa</b> — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	
<b>Lawrence, Greg</b> — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	<b>Vacant</b> — Lumsden-Morse
<b>Lemaigre, Jim</b> — Athabasca (SP)	<b>Vacant</b> — Regina Coronation Park
<b>Love, Matt</b> — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)	<b>Vacant</b> — Regina Walsh Acres

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**Standings**

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 45; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12;  
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Vacant — 3

**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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within hours after each sitting.

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This morning, to you and through you, I would like to introduce a man that needs little introduction, probably no introduction in this Legislative Assembly, the former member for Saskatoon Greystone and our good friend, Rob. He's sitting behind the bar today.

And I know Rob is a very busy guy in Saskatoon, helping various entrepreneurs throughout the city and I know he's involved in various endeavours. And I know he's a good friend to members on both sides of the House. So I'd like to ask you, through you to all members, to help welcome Rob Norris to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's a pleasure to welcome Rob Norris back to his Assembly, to have him here today, and to wish him well in his work throughout the province.

I remember back in the day when minister Norris was up there in question period. He was always a bit of a sight to behold. He was always thoughtful. There was a few thesauruses that would get opened up at the same time by members in this Assembly. I think he earned the moniker Norris the Thesaurus at that time, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to welcome Rob Norris, a good friend to this Assembly, to his Assembly.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present the following petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan for an apology and compensation to survivors of Timber Bay and Ile-a-la-Crosse residential school. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention that while residential schools were operated at the federal level, provincially the provinces have also operated schools. Ile-a-la-Crosse and Timber Bay have not ... There hasn't been responsibility taken by the operation of those schools. And many of those survivors are not here today and would like ... There needs to, something needs to happen.

So I will go and read:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to recognize the Ile-a-la-Crosse and Timber Bay schools as provincially run schools, release the records of these schools, and offer the students a formal apology and compensation for those survivors.

The folks who signed this petition reside in Piapot, Zagimē, and Nekaneet. I do so present.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Saskatchewan Polytechnic Recognized as Leading Research Institution

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 2023 is already looking like an excellent year for Saskatchewan Polytechnic. In January they took the number one spot on Canada's Top 50 Research Colleges list for completed research projects. Polytechnic completed 350 research projects in 2020-21, and they ranked second for number of research partnerships with 208 collaborations.

Some projects of note include working with the Cowessess First Nation on a joint initiative, the remote sensing of residential school cemeteries. Polytechnic's Digital Integration Centre of Excellence created a prototype that uses GPS [global positioning system] technology to identify the positions of people and equipment in an underground mine.

There's also the farmer and rancher mental health initiative. It was launched to study key features of a farm-culture-friendly mental health support system for ranchers and farmers in this province.

Research is one of the many things that polytechnic has been leading the nation in. For the seventh consecutive year, polytechnic has been recognized as a top employer in Saskatchewan by the editors of *Canada's Top 100 Employers*. Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons Sask Polytechnic was chosen is for the supports offered to the employees throughout the various stages of life.

I ask that all members join me in congratulating Sask Polytechnic on its continuing success as one of our leading research institutions in the country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Saskatchewan Athletes Shine on the Ice and in Gymnastics

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 2022 was a banner year for Saskatchewan athletics, be it in hockey, fencing, cycling, or basketball. And 2023 is looking to be another great year and it started off with a bang. Saskatchewan hockey player Connor Bedard made headlines for breaking records and helped bring home the gold for Canada at the World Junior hockey championships. They weren't the only stars on the ice. Just a few

weeks ago, Tristan Taylor of Regina and Ashlyn Schmitz, originally from Shellbrook, were beauty in motion when they represented Canada at the 2023 World Junior Figure Skating Championships.

On February 14th, I was invited to Taiso Gymnastics, located in my riding, to meet the Saskatoon men's gymnastic team just before they were headed to the Canada Winter Games in Prince Edward Island. Taiso is the only men's gymnastic gym in Saskatoon and has a proud history of sending athletics from Saskatchewan all over the world to compete. Saskatchewan continues to punch above its weight on the national stage and these young men are proof.

I want to say a huge congratulations to a constituent of mine, Brody Benson, along with his teammates Nicholas Boutin, Jordan Carroll, Tristan Marquis, Lucas Boutin, and Isen Young for their outstanding performances in PEI [Prince Edward Island], representing men's gymnastics in Saskatchewan.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating these young men and all the Saskatchewan athletes who competed in the Canada Winter Games on a terrific showing.

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

#### **Saskatchewan Wins 2023 Canadian Wheelchair Curling Championships**

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Mr. Speaker, from March 20th to 24th the Moose Jaw Curling Centre was host to the nation's best wheelchair curling teams competing in the 2023 Canadian world curling championships. Twelve teams from Saskatchewan, Alberta, BC [British Columbia], New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Quebec competed in the event.

The Saskatchewan 1 team, who curls out of Moose Jaw, consisted of the skip, Gil Dash; third, Marie Wright; second, Darwin Bender; and lead, Moose Gibson; and coach, Lorraine Arguin. The Saskatchewan 1 team came through the round robin to secure a spot in the semifinals on Friday. They defeated the Alberta team and advanced to the finals, where they'd take on Northern Ontario and beat them 6-2 on home ice.

I was excited to hear that the Moose Jaw Events Centre announced that they will be hosting the World Para Ice Hockey Championship for its first time on Canadian soil, showing that the Events Centre in Moose Jaw is world class and accessible.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Team Saskatchewan on their victory, as well as all the other curlers, countless volunteers who helped make this event a success. And I hope to join many others at the Events Centre once again for the world championships. Thank you.

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

#### **Vatican Repudiates Doctrine of Discovery**

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. Today is a good

day. Today the Vatican announced it has officially repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery. The statement says documents have been "... manipulated for political purposes by competing colonial powers in order to justify immoral acts against indigenous people." This is so important for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan and around the world. It goes on:

The Catholic Church therefore repudiates those concepts that fail to recognize the inherent human rights of indigenous peoples, including what has become known as the legal and political "doctrine of discovery."

Mr. Speaker, this is one small yet important step to correct the wrongs done to Indigenous peoples, and a meaningful path towards reconciliation. I ask all members to join me in recognizing this important day and in thanking those who have worked for centuries to call for this important step from the Catholic church. miigwech.

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

#### **India-Canada Cultural Association of Saskatoon Hosts India Night**

**Mr. Jenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our province's population is growing at a rate not seen since 1914. And much of that growth can be traced back to many different countries around the world as more and more people make Saskatchewan their home. Mr. Speaker, over the last five years India has been the largest source of newcomers to our province. Of the 71,394 individuals that have come to Saskatchewan in that time, 28 per cent or 20,162 have come from India.

Mr. Speaker, my family and I spent the evening of March 26th celebrating India Night in my home community of Warman. The Brian King Centre was filled to capacity, and the energy in the building was electric and fun. The event was hosted by the India-Canada Cultural Association of Saskatoon and featured a variety of dance and musical performances, terrific cuisine, and it was the perfect setting to learn about India culture.

Mr. Speaker, the ICCA [India-Canada Cultural Association] takes great pride in fulfilling its vision of working towards the betterment of the community and fostering a sense of unity and diversity among its members. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank President Laxmi Patel and the entire ICCA executive as well as all the volunteers for all that they do on behalf of the Indian community in Saskatoon, and wish them all the best as they celebrate their 55th anniversary this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Investment in Firefighting Training Program in Melville**

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan residents can soon begin training again to become nationally certified firefighters, thanks to a new Government of Saskatchewan investment in Parkland College's firefighting training site in Melville. Applications for the National Fire Protection Association training, which is starting in July, are now open.

The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, the Ministry of Advanced Education, and the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training will invest \$1.8 million into the college's firefighting training program in '23-24.

The funding includes investments of a one-time purchase of training equipment from the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency worth \$1.33 million; up to 250,000 in annual funding from the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training to deliver firefighting training programs; up to 210,000 in capital grants funding in '23-24 from the Ministry of Advanced Education for fixed, on-location capital assets.

The provincial firefighting training centre in Melville will accommodate between 18 and 24 students per cohort for those interested in becoming professional firefighters. The National Fire Protection Association Standard 1001 program will be the first training offered. Additional professional, industrial, and volunteer firefighting training will begin this fall.

Mr. Speaker, firefighters play a vital part in our communities. The collaboration between Parkland College and the province of Saskatchewan will address the demand for all types of firefighters, including professional, industrial, and volunteer. Thank you.

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

#### **BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders Celebrates 25th Anniversary**

**Mr. Francis:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders recovery is a provincially and nationally recognized facility for individuals recovering from an often overlooked issue facing so many. Located in the quiet little west central community of Mildred, the facility recently celebrated its 25th year in operation.

Mr. Speaker, the work of BridgePoint Center goes often unnoticed and unrecognized, but to those touched or closely impacted, this facility and its services can be truly life-saving. The centre offers in-person programming and online options to help people stay connected both during and post-recovery.

Mr. Speaker, the work being done by the centre also helps break down the stigma and myths around eating disorders, and it's so incredibly important for all of our citizens. There are so many misconceptions on this topic, but as Carla Chabot, executive director of BridgePoint puts it, "eating disorders definitely do not discriminate."

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of the Assembly join me in recognizing the work of BridgePoint Center and its dedicated staff like Jennifer Frerichs, Carla Chabot, Lauralyn Blackburn, Helen Uhrich, and Sharie Jensen. Thank you for the work you do in keeping our communities healthy. And it seems only fitting that on this week of tribute to our beloved colleague we recognize the ongoing work dedicated to initiatives like this.

And a big thank you to all the members on both sides for your sincere and heartfelt tributes this week. Thank you.

[10:15]

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Affordability and Cost of Living**

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, more than half of Saskatchewan people say they're worse off this year than they were last year. That's more and more people struggling to pay the bills. Yet this Premier's budget fails to deliver any cost-of-living relief for those families. Why did the Premier bring forth a budget that does nothing to help families struggling with the cost of living?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, as we've said many times in this House, each and every budget has over \$2 billion of investments in affordability measures for families, many of those targeted at lower income families and individuals, Mr. Speaker.

We saw in this budget a number of targeted initiatives. The SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program, for example, Mr. Speaker, up 6 per cent. We saw the seniors' income plan — didn't exist under previous administrations, Mr. Speaker — been increased four times. I believe this was the fifth time, and it was up 9 per cent. We see the personal care home benefit, Mr. Speaker, which has been raised in constituency offices and the floor of this Assembly, up some 20 per cent.

A targeted investment, Mr. Speaker, into what thankfully today is 210,000 more people living here than did just 15 short years ago, Mr. Speaker. More on the way as we see we are today at the highest rate of population growth that this province has seen in over 108 years.

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

#### **Carbon Tax and Crown Utilities**

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, it's only 15 per cent of people in this province who say that they're any better off this year than they were the year before, but there's nothing new in this out-of-touch budget to help families with the cost of living, costs that go up each and every day. And in just a few days, SaskPower rates are set to go up again, leaving families with no relief to help manage these costs. Mr. Speaker, the never-ending rate hikes are making life more expensive. Will the Premier scrap those rate hikes today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan we continue to have the lowest utility bundle, suite of utilities, available in Canada — lowest natural gas rates, lowest personal auto insurance rates, Mr. Speaker.

Where there is a significant increase in our utilities, not only the charges that they provide to . . . the charges on the bill, Mr. Speaker, and I think the Minister of Crown Investments will have more to add on this in detail soon. But where the largest increase is, most certainly, is in the increase in the carbon tax that is going to occur over the course of this weekend, Mr. Speaker, the Justin Trudeau carbon tax — supported by Jagmeet Singh and the entire

NDP [New Democratic Party], including the NDP here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that carbon tax is set to increase 30 per cent. Set to increase 30 per cent, Mr. Speaker. It's 27 per cent of the average Saskatchewan resident's energy bill. Twenty-seven per cent is due to the carbon tax. The quickest way to reduce energy costs, if you reduce utility costs, would be for Justin and Jagmeet to remove the carbon tax from those bills, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, let me be crystal clear. We don't support the carbon tax, and now is not the time to raise it. Mr. Speaker, despite the rhetoric, we've been clear about that from day one.

But what is also clear, what is also clear, Mr. Speaker, is that this is a government that has no plan for their own carbon tax dollars. The Sask Party's carbon tax for large emitters, it's been in place since 2018. Since January of this year, SaskEnergy and SaskPower have been included as well.

A simple question for the Premier: what is his plan for those dollars?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, we're quite likely going to invest those dollars into areas like Estevan, Saskatchewan to replace the coal-fired power that they are currently using there that is being phased out by the federal government, Mr. Speaker, the federal government that currently today is supported again by the NDP.

There is no doubt that in this changing world, Mr. Speaker, the inflationary pressures that families are feeling in this province, most certainly are being felt by the utility bills that they're seeing in Saskatchewan, across Canada, and around the world. We don't deny those inflationary pressures.

What the opposition is denying, what our federal government supported by the opposition is denying, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the carbon tax also has an extreme impact on Saskatchewan families, on Canadian families. It has a price on our energy rates — 27 per cent of our costs is going to the carbon tax. It has an impact on our grocery store rates, all felt by Saskatchewan and Canadian families, Mr. Speaker.

Most certainly we have never supported this tax. Took the federal government to the Supreme Court of Canada. They had the opportunity to intervene and support in that motion. They chose not to. They chose to support Jagmeet Singh, who supports Justin Trudeau, who is costing Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, it looks like someone is going to have to rewrite his talking points, because I said it clearly: we don't support the carbon tax, and now is not the time to raise it.

Mr. Speaker, if the Sask Party government wants to take responsibility for the heavy emitter program, they should have a

plan for what they're going to do with those dollars. Now we have our own ideas about how they could be used. How about give people a break on their power bills, create more jobs with bigger paycheques by building out renewables, and help people and businesses with energy efficiency retrofits.

Why won't the Premier put those dollars to work and give families a break, and create those new jobs that, Mr. Speaker, this province desperately needs?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, why won't the Leader of the Opposition, all of the members over there, stand behind their member from Nutana who said that the carbon tax is not up for debate any longer, Mr. Speaker?

She said, and I quote, "We know it's time for ambitious climate action using all of the tools at our disposal, including the most cost-effective regulatory and market-based approaches, such as placing a price on carbon," Mr. Speaker. Such as placing a price on carbon. Went on to say, Mr. Speaker, "We don't think of the carbon tax as a tax. This is a price on pollution and a necessary one."

Well Saskatchewan families think of it as a 27 per cent tax on our energy bill, Mr. Speaker, supported by the NDP who are supporting Justin Trudeau in this ridiculous tax.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows that's a bunch of nonsense, loud nonsense, Mr. Speaker. He needs to use his ears. Listen to our leader. Listen to us. We've been clear. We don't support the federal carbon tax, and it's not the time, certainly not the time, to be increasing it.

But we do need to see those dollars collected by that Sask Party government on SaskPower and SaskEnergy bills put to good use and offering relief now. Sitting on those funds doesn't do any good. Those dollars should be putting people to work to make bills more affordable, funding energy efficiency retrofits for families and local businesses. Why won't that Sask Party government do that today and provide some cost-of-living relief?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, they can say what they like. The fact of the matter is here in this province, Mr. Speaker . . . I have a SaskEnergy bill in front of me. On an \$85 fuel charge, \$85 gas charge, there is \$60 in carbon tax — \$60 on an \$85 fuel charge. If we want a reduction in our utility bills, Mr. Speaker, the quickest way to do that is for Jagmeet Singh to talk to Justin Trudeau, drop the carbon tax off these bills, Mr. Speaker.

And I would say to the member opposite, most certainly, does he stand with his colleague from Nutana or does he discredit his colleague from Nutana, Mr. Speaker, who is highly supportive, given the three quotes that I just read, is highly supportive of a Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh carbon tax?

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



Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I stand with my leader, my caucus, and Saskatchewan people who are opposed to a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, one that's collected now by that Sask Party government.

You know, the Premier can huff and puff all he wants, Mr. Speaker, but the fact of the matter is this Sask Party government imposed its own carbon tax in 2018 on large emitters, and they've done nothing to get those dollars out the door to fund any projects at all. And now they're collecting it on SaskPower and SaskEnergy bills, all while they're jacking up rates on top of that. Those are the facts.

Why won't this Sask Party government get those dollars into the economy and help families and businesses, small and large, to reduce their emissions, create jobs, and reduce their bills to offer up some cost-of-living relief?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, is that the federal government, the federal Liberal government that is propped up by the federal NDP, the NDP across Canada, still has the money. They have not returned the money to the province of Saskatchewan or any of the other provinces that they imposed this ridiculous, ineffective, inefficient tax on, Mr. Speaker.

What we are saying today is asking the members opposite to join with us, out of lockstep with the federal Liberal government, out of lockstep with the federal NDP government, Mr. Speaker, and let's remove these \$60 a month, \$60 a month in carbon tax off the average energy bill in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

### Carbon Tax and Renewable Power Generation

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is this government fails to listen to the citizens of this province. We do not support the carbon tax, and we do not support the Premier sitting on dollars that could be used to create jobs and reduce emissions.

They are collecting this tax on large emitters. They should put those dollars to use. They were so proud to say they were taking control of the carbon tax dollars at SaskPower and SaskEnergy. Why won't they use those dollars to create jobs and lower bills for the people of this province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the simple reality is we haven't seen that money back from the Liberals — not one penny of that money has come back to this province.

But I can tell the members opposite that we are negotiating aggressively, and we want that money to come back. It will come back with strings attached to it, and it will not be able to be passed

back to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan as we would like it to do.

What we would really like to have happen is the tax to go away. Their leader, their former leader said, "I will support a carbon tax. I will support a modest carbon tax." The other members over there have done exactly the same thing.

We will have a list of things that we will work with the federal government to make sure the money goes back to grids, to grid updates, to grid infrastructure that will help and support the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the best thing that the members opposite could do, the best thing they could do is get rid of that \$60 a month that's going to be on homeowners' bills, the people that are retired, people that are needing money.

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — This is coming from somebody . . . They're in government. They could do that today.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has made it clear what he thinks about climate change. This government has made it clear what they think about climate change. They do not care. However Saskatchewan people do. They want to see more renewable power. They want to be able to be part of new renewable projects in their communities and on their rooftops.

Why won't the Sask Party use these dollars to bring back rooftop solar and help people be a part of local renewable power?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the members opposite, they live in this province. They know what it's like when it's 35 below or 40 below and the shortest days of the year, and your rooftop panels are running at about 5 per cent efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, we will take all kinds of steps to support renewables like wind and solar, and we will work with First Nations Power Authority and a number of different providers to do that. But, Mr. Speaker, we need reliable baseload power in this province, and we're going to make sure that we have it. And, Mr. Speaker, we will take all the steps necessary to make sure that that happens.

That's not going to happen with the support of the people across the way. We need to work on large emitters that are creating jobs, running businesses, and generating electricity for the people in this province.

[10:30]

Mr. Speaker, there's lots of challenges as we go forward, and we're not going to be taking advice from the members opposite that say we can have a rooftop panel that will support and do it. Try it when it's 35 below. Try it when it's 40 below.

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

### **National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence**

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the worst rates of intimate partner violence in the country, and while the provincial announcement for funding for second-stage shelters was very much welcome, it is but one piece of the puzzle.

The federal national action plan to end gender-based violence was applauded by this government late last year. The bilateral agreement that will be signed pursuant to this plan between the feds and the province could put millions of dollars into the province to help survivors and address the root causes of gender-based violence, to stop violence before it occurs.

When will this government sign this bilateral agreement so this money can be made available to address this issue?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the member opposite for addressing the national action plan to end gender-based violence. And, Mr. Speaker, we have signed this plan. Thank you very much.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, how much money will be flowing to the province? And who can expect to see that money, and when?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

**Hon. Ms. L. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I said, I was pleased to endorse and sign the national action plan to end gender-based violence. This plan is being looked at and worked together with provinces and territories to ensure that the needs within our individual jurisdictions are being met. So we are still working on the plan of what's going to come forward, and that has to come from the federal government. So thank you very much.

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

### **Inflation and Agriculture Industry**

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's clear that this government is not interested in cutting taxes. Instead they think we should applaud the fact that they did not raise taxes, but even that isn't entirely right.

Mr. Speaker, why does this government continue to crush farmers by hiking the rental prices of farmable Crown land by 22 per cent — 22 per cent? Is that not a tax on the farmers that feed this province, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Mr. Speaker, we have addressed the Crown

land rental rates for the ranching community here in the province. We froze them to 2022 levels in the Crown land lease with the ranchers, Mr. Speaker. We also added another part to that as well, that if there's a drought situation in their pasture, they can pull those animals off and their rent will come down as well at least 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's really kind of ironic that a party that claims to be so concerning about protecting people's private information is now accusing and taking private information from another party, Mr. Speaker, and then using to invade people's privacy by sending unsolicited emails, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the member wants to explain why is she trying to grab money and email lists . . .

**The Speaker:** — I'd like to caution the Minister of Agriculture not to engage in a political party's discussions or actions. Please just keep it to the topic. I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well clearly you're not listening to the rural farmers, the rural landowners. Mr. Speaker, this government is clearly profiting off of the inflationary crisis. It's always rules for thee and not for me. They raise rates on farmers to pad their bottom line and say, sorry, it's due to inflation, while raising their own salary because oh, it's due to inflation.

The people of Saskatchewan do not have it so easy, Mr. Speaker. They don't have the privilege of setting the rules to make it so they profit from a crisis. Mr. Speaker, my question is simple: why is this government so content to profit off of the inflationary crisis on the backs of the farmers?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — As I said in my previous answer, Mr. Speaker, we have done a lot of good things for the ranching community and the pastures here. We have. We froze the rates to 2022. We didn't increase the rates. There is a formula for the rates on pasture land, and it's all reflective of the price of cattle, Mr. Speaker. We also added a factor in where we've mandated the level. If they take cattle off of those pastures, we will reduce their rent as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we've done a lot for the livestock sector in this province, Mr. Speaker. In 2021 we gave them well over \$100 million to protect the herds and to be able to buy feed for the cattle as well, Mr. Speaker. There's one thing we will do on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. We will look after the agriculture community here in this province.

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

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So you're looking after the farmers and the landowners, are you? It seems like inflation is the order of the day for this government. What were they telling you at SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]? Or were you not listening? While they . . .

**The Speaker:** — I just want to caution the member. Member, please speak through the Chair. Please speak through the Chair.

You have the floor.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll begin again. It seems like inflation . . . Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems like inflation is the order of the day for this government. While they inflate rate hikes on farmers, they are also inflating the size of their own bureaucracy with a 19 per cent increase in the size of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the Saskatchewan United Party, I hear from farmers all over the province, every single riding. They tell me the same thing: they want less bureaucracy, not more. Why is this government continuing to crush farmers with more bureaucracy and more red tape? Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of the people that work in the Ministry of Agriculture. They're very dedicated to the industry, Mr. Speaker. If you look historically at the number of employees that work for the Ministry of Agriculture, it has been reduced — Mr. Speaker, over years, it has been. But these people are very dedicated to the sector. They're very dedicated to the industry.

I will not take any lessons from the member opposite on people working for the largest industry in this province, in the Ministry of Agriculture, that do their job and do it very, very well and making sure that we deliver the programs to the farmers and ranchers of this province, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to do that by making sure that the dollars are delivered in a very timely manner, whether it's through the Ministry of Agriculture or whether it's through Saskatchewan Crop Insurance as well, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the member should take lessons from the people of Saskatchewan and listen to them. It's very clear that this government is not interested in listening to the people or cutting the taxes. You keep applauding the fact that you didn't raise the tax, but that's not entirely right. This government continues to crush farmers by hiking the rental prices of farm Crown land by 22 per cent.

I'm going to ask again: is that not a tax on the farmers that feed the province, that feed the country? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, as Leader of the Saskatchewan Party and Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, I'll take no advice from that member opposite or any of these members opposite when it comes to supporting Saskatchewan agriculture and Saskatchewan farm families.

Mr. Speaker, this past year we saw record investment in our business risk management programs in this province. We saw record exports, agricultural exports of \$18.4 billion, Mr. Speaker. Some of the most sustainable product that you can produce in the world is being provided to other North Americans, creating

continental food security, and to people around the world, Mr. Speaker.

We are very proud of the investment in our business risk management programs, very proud of our investment in agriculture in this province. We're going to continue to support it through ensuring we have market access around the world, Mr. Speaker, ensuring we protect that market access and expand it wherever possible, Mr. Speaker.

Again, this government, this Minister of Agriculture will take no advice from any member, any member sitting across the floor, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The inflation keeps going and while raising their own salary — oh, it's due to inflation. But can't we do something for the people of Saskatchewan with inflation? They desperately need help and direction from this government. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Two hundred and ten thousand people have moved here over the last decade and a half, Mr. Speaker. Those members thought that was farcical, Mr. Speaker. And most certainly we are going to continue to grow that.

People are coming to Saskatchewan. And why they're coming to Saskatchewan is to work in industries that are being invested in — over \$15 billion, Mr. Speaker. Billions of that is into the agricultural sector, not only in primary agriculture where we lead the world, but in the canola crush plants, Mr. Speaker. Canola crush plants here in the city of Regina, in the city of Yorkton, and across the province.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it's this party that talks to farmers each and every day when we go home. It's this party that continues to support our agriculture industry. And it's this party that continues to listen and support the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill No. 129 — *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023***

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 129, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 129 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First reading of this bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 130 — *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act***

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 130, *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 130 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First reading of this bill.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 131 — *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Consequential Amendments Act, 2023/Loi de 2023 portant modification corrélative de la loi intitulée The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act***

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 131, *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Consequential Amendments Act, 2023* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 131 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First reading of this bill.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 132 — *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel (Automation and Remote Supervision Pilot) Amendment Act, 2023***

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 132, *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel (Automation and Remote Supervision Pilot) Amendment Act, 2023* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 132 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First reading of this bill.

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Next sitting of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, I table the answer to question 92.

**The Speaker:** — Tabled.

[10:45]

**SPECIAL ORDER**

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY  
(BUDGET DEBATE)**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to offer my remarks on the budget that has been presented. Before I begin my remarks, I just want to say thank you to my family, my CA [constituency assistant] Shane Partridge, my community, our caucus staff, and my constituents who have and continue to

support me in my role as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly].

Mr. Speaker, this government keeps making claims that Saskatchewan is the most affordable province to live. With the outrageous cost of food and fuel, people in Saskatchewan feel worse off financially compared to any other province. Mr. Speaker, this budget does not capture what actual people might be living. To be blunt, Mr. Speaker, this budget is about political spin, smoke and mirrors, creating an illusion of growth and affordability that works for everyone.

This tired and out-of-touch government talks about investing in people, programs, and projects, yet they have chosen to leave out many folks in this budget. I concur with Murray Mandryk when he says:

Surpluses come from the choices governments make and frankly, the budget choices this government has made seem suspiciously to be as much about political factors as they are about economic ones.

Mr. Speaker, this government keeps saying our province is growing. Well, Mr. Speaker, the only growth this budget brings is growing privatization, growing hospital wait times, growing classroom sizes, and growing cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, in my community there are folks who set up tents on sidewalks because they are houseless. People are living in mouse-infested houses. It is common to see folks walking down the street with all their possessions in a shopping cart. Yet, Mr. Speaker, this government has been selling off social housing units for these past few years that could have been housing folks. And how many units are sitting vacant when families could be living in those units? We must stop creating more and more barriers for those that are often ignored.

This government hasn't increased benefit payments for the most vulnerable in nearly a decade. Now they are touting themselves on \$30 going to folks on the SAID program. Thirty dollars isn't going to pull folks out of deep poverty, especially when this government continues to create barriers like clawbacks. How far is \$30 a month going to go when utility rates continue to increase? I know SIS [Saskatchewan income support] and SAID recipients who cannot pay their rent. They can't afford their power bills or groceries.

This budget shows just how out of touch this Sask Party has become. Not only have they become so out of touch with the citizens of this province, they have also become so arrogant that they don't believe they have to consult with anyone. This budget misses the mark yet again, leaving the citizens of Saskatchewan paying the price for this out-of-touch, tired, worn-out Sask Party government.

Mr. Speaker, as the critic for Environment, I find it appalling that there is no mention of investment in environment. As a matter of fact, this government is taking away nearly one million dollars from the environment portfolio and doing nothing in the way of reducing Saskatchewan's negative impact on our environment.

The Sask Party government has touted itself on having a billion-dollar surplus. Well, Mr. Speaker, a billion-dollar surplus is not

a surplus; it's hoarding money when it is needed most for the people of Saskatchewan.

The Finance minister has missed the mark with this budget. There is nothing new to address climate change in this budget. In the delivery of the budget, Mr. Speaker, all we got was some indistinguishable mumbles from the Finance minister in the way of the environment. Most likely the Finance minister knew the Sask Party government does not hold our environment a priority. Extract our natural resources, sell off everything that isn't rooted or tied down — that's the theme we get from this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government.

Mr. Speaker, the world is trying its best to respond to the much needed action when it comes to climate change, yet Saskatchewan is wasting precious money on ill-conceived court cases when it should be used to move our province forward and in line with the rest of the world.

The Sask Party government is irresponsible by passing the climate cost onto future generations and onto the next government when they are elected. The Finance minister touted record revenues from our natural resources, yet there is increasing pressure for all countries to meet at the table and avoid "freeloading," as the Finance minister suggest we do in Saskatchewan.

The sell-off of Crown lands and the continuing loss of native prairie is very similar to deforestation. This is when our native prairie has already been reduced to 7 per cent of what we had. Saskatchewan citizens, farmers, ranchers, Métis, and First Nation communities all recognize the value of native prairie. Some might say it's Saskatchewan's best asset, yet the Sask Party government keeps selling it off, making farmers, ranchers, and all people of Saskatchewan pay for this inaction to address climate change.

My questions that I have and have received is how much native prairie has the government sold off in the last five years? And how much has been lost? And what is the range health of prairie that remains?

There are multiple win-win scenarios that are open to this province. This Sask Party government is so out of touch, missing out on opportunities to combine grasslands and help avoid the 2 degree Celsius warmer world that is predicted.

Scientists have proven that grasslands store approximately one-third of the global terrestrial carbon stocks and can act as an important soil carbon sink. Studies show that plant diversity increases the amount of carbon stored in the soil. This great opportunity to tie into something that can really help the world, and all we get from the Sask Party government is the sound of crickets.

The IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] AR6 [sixth assessment report] report has just been released. For those in the Sask Party government unfamiliar with the environmental issues and jargon, IPCC AR6 is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change sixth assessment report. I hope they will take this opportunity to review it now that I've told them about it.

Saskatchewan has a rapidly diminishing carbon budget before we

reach the 1.5 degree Celsius IPCC's advised limit. This is likely the last IPCC report before this limit is reached. We have the resources and expertise to build out wind and solar and geothermal. This government isn't interested in pursuing those opportunities. Instead they have their heads in the sand.

Mr. Speaker, this is very concerning. Citizens and young folks in this province are concerned for the future of our province, and we will be leaving them a mess. And those not yet born, we are not leaving any sort of legacy. We are not passing a torch, Mr. Speaker. We are leaving future generations to clean up our mess.

Mr. Speaker, this is an out-of-touch budget. Local businesses are struggling to pay for this government's hikes to power and energy rates. Municipalities are still reeling from the job-killing PST [provincial sales tax] on construction labour. And year after year we see more headline-grabbing announcements.

The mental health crisis gets worse and worse. And we are still on track for another record year of suicides. And this budget does not provide a cent for safe-consumption sites. Many folks are struggling with addictions, whether it is our family, our friends, our neighbours.

Yes, we do not find any relief in this budget. The Sask Party government could fix this and provide real relief, as they are sitting on a mountain of cash because of high oil and potash prices. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, what more can we expect from an out-of-touch Finance minister who makes no qualms about firing up the jet for an \$8,000 luncheon in North Battleford?

Mr. Speaker, this budget has missed the mark. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I won't be supporting this budget motion, and will support the amendment put forward by the member for Regina Rosemont. miigwech.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will keep my comments brief and get right to the nub of it as I realize we are short on time and need to wrap up debate this morning.

But first I want to acknowledge my gratitude for my family, my office team — Kerry, a new member, McGinnis Reeve — our staff here in Regina and especially those who are moving on, to Katherine Norton and Nathaniel Cole. I want to acknowledge my caucus colleagues for their unwavering support and dedication, and last but not least, my constituents and constituency executive for their ongoing commitment throughout the year.

I also want to extend my condolences to the family of Derek Meyers for their loss. Truthfully I never had the opportunity to get to know Derek as a member in this House, but I was deeply touched yesterday listening to stories of his quiet and patient leadership, and advocacy for mental health support following the loss of his daughter by suicide.

Listening to those stories offered each of us time for pause and reflection on why we entered politics. This budget debate is a reflection of that. Government budgets reflect our priorities and our efforts to make life better for the people of this province. For

me, our children and their future has been my guiding star, ensuring that our children are nurtured to experience their full potential and have a happy life. But sadly I have to say that this is a budget that is bankrupting our children's future, leaving them hopeless, anxious about their futures, and leaving this province in droves.

This is a province that fails to deliver hope because it falls short in so many ways, from inadequate funding in education that increasingly fails children in reaching their full potential as funding per student has bottomed out. Increasingly complex needs in the classroom are going unmet as teachers struggle under the weight of larger class sizes and inadequate supports.

This is a budget that does not offer hope to Saskatchewan families. This budget offers no new measures to address the cost-of-living crisis, failing to ensure that our children experience the security of a stable home environment with enough food to eat, affordable utilities, and parents free from the stress of rising rents and mortgage foreclosures. This is a budget that does not offer hope to Saskatchewan families.

The budget displays an outright refusal by this government to fund and support harm-reduction measures to help those suffering from mental health and addictions. It is an utter moral failure of this government that is blinded by an ideology and partisan politics that is having devastating consequences. In the past three years, more than 1,200 Saskatchewan people have lost their lives to this devastating crisis. Once again, this is a budget that does not offer hope to Saskatchewan families.

This budget represents a missed opportunity to address the crisis in health care by presenting a status quo budget that barely keeps up with inflation, while failing to deliver any new measures to fix the fee-for-service model of physician care or meet the crisis in emergent or primary care head-on. Rather the pleas of doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals have gone unheard as this government bumbles their way through this crisis with a privatization agenda that is only further destabilizing our health care system. Mr. Speaker, this is a budget that does not offer hope to Saskatchewan families.

[11:00]

I want to now turn my attention to an issue that is very near and dear to my heart and what has been called the defining issue of our time, an issue that cuts deep into the lives and livelihoods of every family in this province. I'm talking, Mr. Speaker, about the climate crisis, an issue that should transcend petty political partisanship, but that has received scant mention or attention in this year's budget.

It is sadly disappointing once again that this budget has offered not one thin dime to help families and businesses reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. There is no plan articulated in this budget to offer meaningful incentives to homeowners or businesses for energy retrofits, energy efficiency, or renewable power. Not only that, but at the same time we have a government sitting on massive revenues collected from carbon pricing. So what is the plan?

The Premier is on record last year stating that he doesn't care about our worst-in-the-nation greenhouse gas emissions record.

He is on the public record denying any moral obligation to do anything material about it while fabricating a greenwashing campaign lacking any credibility. This is a moral failure on an epic scale, leaving children genuinely worried about their futures in a world ravaged by rising temperatures and extreme weather. This is a budget that does not offer hope to Saskatchewan families.

Now I know the members opposite will accuse me of a lack of optimism and an inability to accentuate the positive but, Mr. Speaker, I don't subscribe to toxic positivity. I believe in facing our challenges head-on with courage, hope, and determination.

We have much to be proud of in this province. We have a history of rising to the challenge, of pulling together in tough times. And I want to be optimistic about our future but, Mr. Speaker, that means pulling together all in the same direction. And when you leave people behind and ignore their limitations, well I'm sorry, but that's not growth that works for everyone.

And with that, I will not be supporting the motion to approve the budget but will be supporting the motion brought forward by the member for Regina Rosemont, because it fails to provide cost-of-living relief for families, fails to provide needed investments in health care and education, nor address the climate emergency.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, there's an interesting phenomenon that tends to occur when governments have been in power for a long time, say 16 years. They tend to get comfortable. They tend to start spending more time at legislative teas than they do in the coffee shops speaking with their own constituents.

They might start musing out loud how the media is somehow out to get them, and take every criticism, no matter how factual, no matter how founded, as a partisan or even a personal attack. And as a delegate at SARM recently said to me, observed, sometimes they forget that partisan politics is different than the work of actually governing and serving the people.

Now I know the government will say that they will take no lessons from members on this side of the aisle. Speaking frankly, Mr. Speaker, I'm not really that interested in taking their advice either. Any government that can boast, can clap for themselves, can talk about how great they are while the majority of people in this province — seniors, students, the most vulnerable foremost amongst them — are struggling and falling further and further behind, well, Mr. Speaker, that is not an example that this team wants to follow.

In the cut and the thrust of debate in this Chamber, we must always keep that north star, that guiding star in mind. That is what you stand for and why you serve. And, Mr. Speaker, for members on this side of the aisle, that north star, that reason why, is the people of this province.

As I've said before in this Assembly, the reason that I got involved, put my name on the ballot for a first time, was because I wanted every person, but particularly every child in this province to have the opportunity to meet their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, budgets are about choices. They're about values, about priorities. But when you forget the reason that you were sent here, when you stop acting in the needs of your constituents, when you stop thinking about those who are struggling, Mr. Speaker, when your priorities become more about your own re-election rather than the needs of the people that you serve, Mr. Speaker, there's another tendency. That tends to be when the sun starts to set on old and tired governments.

So allow me to spend my response to this budget not sharing my own thoughts, but by sharing the thoughts of the people that we all represent, the people who call this province home, the people, Mr. Speaker, who will have to live with the consequences of this budget. Because on this side of the aisle, those people, those voices are our north star.

And I want to start, Mr. Speaker, with voices from the education sector. I quote: "This budget contributes to the erosion of the publicly funded education system," the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association]. Another quote: "Shock, disappointment, sadness, anger. Saskatchewan students are losing out with this budget." That's from the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation]. From a teacher, Mr. Speaker: "It's a crazy year and I've given up trying to stay afloat. I can't do it."

When the Education minister tells us that this budget is all great news for our kids, Mr. Speaker, it begs the question, who should Saskatchewan people trust, our educators or that government?

How about health care? I'm going to enter another quote:

We are in trouble and nothing in this budget is going to change things for registered nurses, and the government has done so at their own peril by ignoring all of the conversations that we've had. It's shocking that there could be such tone-deafness in what's actually going on in health care in this province.

From SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses].

Another quote from the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association]: "With every day that passes and as we continue to fall behind, Saskatchewan becomes a less desirable place to practise family medicine." Another quote from the SMA: "It's frustrating to sit by and watch other provinces make significant investments and announcements that signal they value family physicians." This one from a doctor in Saskatoon: "We're going to fall behind and doctors are going to leave, even new graduates."

Mr. Speaker, these are not the voices of people who are out to get the government. They are aware of what this budget offered up. They're aware of the good intentions and the four-point plan. And they certainly know the reality on the front lines of health care better than anyone else in this Assembly. But the minister says it's all fine. So I ask again, Mr. Speaker, who should the people of this province trust: those voices from the front line or that government?

Mr. Speaker, voices we don't hear enough, the voices of SAID recipients in this province, the most vulnerable. What do they think? I quote: "Thirty per cent is basically a slap across the face." From another SAID recipient, "Thirty dollars on your

minimum benefits from SAID isn't really going to do a whole lot."

And from the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry: "People are far worse off on SAID in 2023 than they were in 2015."

When the minister tells us that it's all fixed up, Mr. Speaker, who are the Saskatchewan people to trust? Those actually receiving and working with people on the SAID program, or that government?

More quotes, Mr. Speaker. More voices from small-business owners. "It doesn't really do much as far as helping consumers with those rising costs. It missed the mark." Restaurants Canada.

From the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business]: "We would have liked to see some of that surplus money used to provide some relief to struggling small businesses." Again, Mr. Speaker, who should Saskatchewan people trust? Those small-business owners or that government?

And what about the cost-of-living challenges the people in this province are facing? Who do we trust? Those advocating for bigger paycheques, or this government? I offer this quote from the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour]: "There's literally nothing there for working people. We were really hoping to see a little bit of relief for people that are struggling, and there is literally nothing there."

From CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees]: "The Saskatchewan Party chose not to provide significant relief from inflation and the rising cost of living. It just goes to show how out of touch they are with the needs of working people in this province."

Mr. Speaker, another quote, this time from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation: "Governments across the country are cutting gas taxes, cutting income taxes, and making it easier for those people to afford gas and groceries. But Saskatchewan families are being left out in the cold and are not getting any of that relief." Again, Mr. Speaker, who do we trust? The workers in this province, the Taxpayers Federation, that government?

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask again. When Saskatchewan people are reporting the second-highest rate of financial insecurity in the country — 55 per cent of people reporting that they are actually worse off this year than they were a year ago, 30 more reporting that they are no better off — and we have a budget that has failed to deliver any relief on the cost of living, who are we to trust? The people of Saskatchewan or that government? Because let me assure you, let me assure the people of this province, on this side of the aisle we are listening. Let me say this clearly. We do not think the status quo is good enough for the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I love this province. We love this province. And we do, we do have so much opportunity and so much potential right here at home. But, Mr. Speaker, let me also be clear about this: I am so done. I am past done with a government that has grown so tired and comfortable that they're willing to settle for last or second-last place on the things that matter to people in this province, or maybe even throw themselves a break.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, that is not the Saskatchewan that I know, and it certainly is not the province that I grew up in. Let there be no mistake, no mistake at all — the criticism, the rightful criticism that we offer of that government and this budget and its track record, is not directed at the people of this province. Far from it. It is precisely because we care deeply about the people of this province and the future of this province that we take aim at the record and the decisions made by that government. And it is frankly past time that they were held to account for their own record.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they don't like this mirror being held up, but this is their record. This is a government that blew through a surplus, blew through a boom. And not only did they fail to save a dime, they piled on debt almost as fast as they piled on taxes on the people of this province. This is a government — that government — that has the worst record on job growth in the entire country and near-worst record on wage growth in the past five years, almost the slowest population growth, and the worst out-migration record in the country.

And by their own short-sightedness and unwillingness to listen and work with others, they are squandering the opportunity that we have in this province today. That, Mr. Speaker, that is their record.

We will always root, cheer, fight for team Saskatchewan. But sometimes, Mr. Speaker, when the team isn't performing up to their potential, it's time to cut the coach. We should be striving, we should be striving to lead Canada across the board. Because let me tell you this, any person who's made a bet against this province has come up short every time.

And we've travelled, I've travelled, this team has travelled right across this province, and I know that the people in this province still have that hope. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province deserve so much better. Hope for a province of opportunities where you can afford to buy a house, where you can raise your kids. Hope for a reimagined public health care system that's available to everyone in this province regardless of your postal code. Hope, hope for an education system where we have more teachers, lower class sizes, and kids have the supports that they need to meet their full potential.

I see people who have hope that it is possible for a real and meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Nations, beyond just words and platitudes but towards real collaboration. And, Mr. Speaker, the future of this province depends on getting that right.

I see people with hope for a diversified economy that delivers more jobs and bigger paycheques, opportunities across the board to not just survive but to thrive.

This is a province that has proven time and time again that we are at our best when we lean on each other, and we do have the solutions right here at home and the resources to make good on that promise. And this, this I want to say very clearly. The people of this province deserve a government that puts their needs first and a government that trusts them enough to listen and work with them to meet the potential that we see in every corner of this beautiful province.



Mr. Speaker, this is a budget that missed the moment, that missed the mark. And you know what, Mr. Speaker, this government doesn't need to take my word for it. But I will offer them one small piece of advice: you ought to be listening to the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I trust the people of this province. And I have full confidence that they know their lives, their struggles, and their hopes better than anyone else. And they tell us, the people of this province tell us that this is a budget that failed to deliver for them.

So for that reason, I will not be voting in favour of this budget. I will be supporting the amendment put forth by my friend from Regina Rosemont. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — It is my duty pursuant to rule 31(7) to inform the Assembly that the Minister of Finance is about to exercise her right to close the debate, and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to use this opportunity to thank a number of people. And of course, first and foremost — it'll be no surprise — it's my family. My three daughters, their partners, husbands, and the grandchildren. I've had their support throughout my political career, and it's never wavered. And it's never ever not been my utmost important thing in my life.

As you've seen demonstrated yesterday, Mr. Speaker, that my other family is right here with our caucus. And I want to thank caucus for their support through all of the hours and of coming forward with a budget and their suggestions and all that they do to guide me and give me an idea of what they're hearing back home in their different constituencies right across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my constituency assistant, Susan Dunne, who holds down the fort back home because I do spend many hours here, especially through the deliberations of a budget. And those that spend more hours than any is my office staff right here in Regina. I have three amazing women. It's an all-female office: Ashley, Jennifer, and Sofiya. There's only three in there and they work tirelessly through the budget process and they are matched by none, I dare to say.

I want to thank the ministry officials led by Max Hendricks. This is Max's first budget, and he's great. I have a fabulous team in the Ministry of Finance.

I want to send a shout-out to the treasury board members. We have the Minister of Trade and Export. We have the Minister of Government Relations, the Minister of Environment, the member from Moose Jaw North, the member from Kindersley, and the member from Prince Albert Northcote. I can't do this alone and I can't do it without the caucus, and I certainly can't do it without these treasury board members that sit there for hours with me going through many, many ledgers of numbers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank one person more than all, and that's the person that leads this caucus, this family, and that's the Premier of Saskatchewan. You know, I read once that anyone can lead through good times, but it's a true leader that leads through challenging times. And we've had some challenging times

considering a number of issues and incidents and the pandemic. And this has been a leader that I am so proud to be able to work alongside.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to conclude using the same remarks that I actually concluded when I gave the budget address, and that is that Saskatchewan's population is growing at its fastest pace in more than a century. More people are working in the province than ever before. And this budget is about more people, more jobs, more opportunities. It's about more doctors, more nurses, and more surgeries. It's about more students, more schools, and more affordable child care. It's about safer families and safer communities. It demonstrates strong fiscal management, a brighter future, and a better quality of life for all of Saskatchewan people. That is what this budget is about, and that is growth that works for everyone.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to move the budget motion and have it seconded by the member from Kindersley. I will not be supporting the amendment moved by the opposition.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment moved by the member for Regina Rosemont and seconded by the member for Saskatoon Eastview:

That all the words after "Assembly" be omitted and inserted with the following:

does not approve the budgetary policy of the government because it fails to provide cost-of-living relief for families, fails to make needed investments in health care and education; and further, that the Assembly has lost confidence in the government.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the amendment?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the amendment please say yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Yea.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed please say no.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

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

[The division bells rang from 11:26 to 11:28.]

**The Speaker:** — All those in favour of the amendment please stand.

[Yeas — 9]

Beck	Nippi-Albright	Vermette
Mowat	Wotherspoon	Love
Teed	Sarauer	Ritchie

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

[11:30]

**[Nays — 44]**

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

**Procedural Clerk (Ms. Humble-Selinger):** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 9; those opposed to the amendment, 44.

**The Speaker:** — I declare the amendment lost. The question before the Assembly is the main motion, moved by the Minister of Finance and seconded by the member for Kindersley:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the motion please say yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Yea.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed please say no.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

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

[The division bells rang from 11:34 to 11:35.]

**The Speaker:** — All those in favour of the motion please stand.

**[Yeas — 44]**

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

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

**[Nays — 9]**

Beck	Nippi-Albright	Vermette
Mowat	Wotherspoon	Love
Teed	Sarauer	Ritchie

**Procedural Clerk (Ms. Humble-Selinger):** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 44; those opposed to the motion, 9.

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — The 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 Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 11:41.]



# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation  
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