



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

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



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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

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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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

Clerk: — Members, I wish to advise the Assembly that Mr. Speaker will not be present to open this day's sitting.

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wish to introduce three special guests seated in your gallery, sir. We are honoured to have with us today Takahiko Watabe, consul general of Japan in Calgary; Madame Motoyo Watabe, spouse of consul general Watabe; and Tomomichi Wakasugi, consul, economics.

This is the consul general's first trip to Saskatchewan since being appointed in September of 2022. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the time today to thank these individuals for their trip to Saskatchewan, thank them as well for the meeting the Premier and I had with them yesterday. And I know they have a very, very busy schedule both yesterday and ahead of them yet today. So I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming these very special guests to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming these guests to the legislature today. I wish you all the best on your tour of Saskatchewan. And I really hope that the weather does not interfere with any of the plans that you have, as it is somewhat representative of what our province looks like all the time. But spring in Saskatchewan is a particularly tumultuous time, so please bear with us. It's not like this all the time, I swear. And best of luck with your meetings.

Thank you for taking the time to visit the province. And I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly today.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Deputy Speaker: — He has asked for leave for extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank all members for granting leave. Mr. Speaker, I am joined today by

members from Access Communications Co-operative. This is a not-for-profit co-operative that's been operating since 1974 in our province. It is 100 per cent Saskatchewan owned, employs over 300 people, has an annual payroll of some \$25 million.

Access delivers leading-edge telecommunication services to 235 communities and over 200,000 square miles of rural areas in Saskatchewan. It includes services in TV, internet, phone, security, and smart home solutions for residential and business customers. Its operations contribute millions of dollars to the local economies of the communities it serves. It shares our goals of connecting all citizens in the province to the internet and to electronics.

Access is participating in a day at the legislature today, talking with elected officials about the organizations and their contribution to Saskatchewan's growth and development. Mr. Speaker, from their board of directors we have Karen Smith, Collin Pullar, Gina McGinn, and Lorna Knudson. We are also joined by several staff from Access. They include Adriana Garcia, Carmela Haines, Fran Moran, Mark Rathwell, Martin Smith, Tracey Mucha, Wade Peterson.

Mr. Speaker, they are also joined by people that need no introduction. They are Dan D'Autremont and Joel Peterson from H+K Strategies. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that all members join us in welcoming these individuals to their Assembly today.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Request leave for an extended introduction.

The Deputy Speaker: — Leave's been requested for extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister to welcome the leadership and the board of Access Communications to their Assembly here today. This is certainly an important and impressive not-for-profit co-operative, Mr. Speaker, that helps connect Saskatchewan. A telecommunications company, Mr. Speaker, that's going the distance as well in helping to bring internet connectivity to many underserved communities. Mr. Speaker, we know how essential this is to our economy and to people and to quality of life, Mr. Speaker, so it's a pleasure to welcome them here today.

Pleasure to welcome Carmela Haines, their new CEO [chief executive officer], Mr. Speaker, and their leadership team and their board that's here, Mr. Speaker, as well as to identify how much they give back to the community. Three million dollars through their children's fund to at-risk communities; so much through community events and initiatives, Mr. Speaker; and all the focus on local programming as well, I thought. Like through AccessNow, all of the community stories that get told, the exceptional job with the Pats this year, Mr. Speaker. We're very proud to have Access here, Mr. Speaker.

And we're proud as well to push the federal government, Mr. Speaker, for the equitable share for Saskatchewan, the fair share of funding through broadband funding, Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan that could be deployed through Access, and importantly through SaskTel, to make connectivity happen here in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I'm on my feet, I also want to welcome some amazing students that have joined us here today from Regina Christian School, along with their teacher Jennifer Kramer. Thank you so much for joining us here today.

These are grade 11 students, 12 students, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to meeting with them here after question period and ask all members of this Assembly to provide these students a very warm welcome.

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

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In your gallery as part of the group from Access Communications today is a good friend of mine from The Battlefords, Martin Smith. And when you talk hockey in Saskatchewan, it's hard to not talk about the Smith family, and Martin was a player with the North Battleford North Stars. His sister Fiona is a good family friend of ours as well. Interesting fact about Martin is his nephew Kian led the North Stars in scoring this year and is leading in the playoffs with 14 goals so far in 11 games.

Something really neat about Kian: my wife and I were in Ottawa in 2005, and Fiona needed a babysitter, so she brought Kian to the hotel. We spent the next two hours in the hallway playing mini sticks. So I'd like to think I had something to do with Kian's success on the ice, but really it belongs to his uncle Martin. His uncle Martin was a terrific hockey player in his own right, and I'd like to welcome him for the first time to his Saskatchewan legislature. Thank you.

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

Mr. Domotor: — To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the minister and my colleague to introduce in your gallery a constituent of mine, Martin Smith. In the short time that I've known Martin, he has proved himself as a personable individual who can easily build working relationships.

A great example of this is his advocacy towards rural Saskatchewan and better connectivity through enhanced partnerships with Access Communications, which is his present employer, to provide a win-win for everyone. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all my colleagues join me in giving him a warm welcome to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I request

leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This morning it was a very special morning over at Government House. I was pleased to be joined by the Provincial Secretary, the member for Lloydminster, the member for Saskatoon Fairview, and the member for Regina University. This morning the Lieutenant Governor presented 11 Saskatchewan residents with the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

One of those recipients joins us in the legislature here today in the west gallery in the front row, Brad S. Sylvester and his wife, Linda. Brad has been a community pillar, a volunteer in Saskatoon for many, many years. His accomplishments are too numerous to mention on the floor of the legislature right now, but indeed he's been known as Mr. Canada Day for his tireless efforts putting on Canada Day in Saskatoon, and now he will tell you all you want to hear about the Optimist Hill and the Optimist Hill park in Saskatoon as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was a great morning. I ask all members to help me welcome Brad and Linda to their Legislative Assembly and help me congratulate all 11 recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to join in with the member opposite in congratulating all of the recipients today at Government House of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal. So overwhelming to see, you know, this crop of folks who have given so much to our province. I know it was a humbling experience for myself and many who were there.

I also want to join in welcoming Brad Sylvester and his wife, Linda, to our Assembly today. It was nice to have a chat with them this morning at Government House. And of course the topic of Optimist Hill came up. And I was talking about bringing my nephews out there and whether Canada Day was going to be happening and all of those things, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to thank Brad for his continued commitment to our community and for helping to bring people together in Saskatoon and across the province. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming him and his wife to their Assembly today.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Policing and Corrections.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Assembly, I wish to introduce to you, seated in the west gallery, 26 École White City students, accompanied by their teacher Holly Bradley. Thank you, Ms. Bradley, for bringing them in today. I look forward to meeting with the students after and getting a photograph, of

course. And I ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to join with the member across the way, Regina Rosemont, in welcoming the RCS [Regina Christian School] grade 12 law students to their Assembly, and just offer to join in just in case there's some questions, make sure that he's okay on the other side. It may get outside of the canoeing and paddling side, but I look forward to joining with them afterwards if that's all right with the member across the way. And just join with me in welcoming the RCS law 30 class to their legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Deputy 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: that the NDP [New Democratic Party]-Liberal federal tax on carbon continues to make life more expensive for Saskatchewan residents; that the federal Liberal-NDP coalition government continues to be disingenuous with the rhetoric surrounding the carbon tax; and according to the parliamentary budget officer's analysis, most households will pay more in fuel charges and GST [goods and services tax], as well as receiving slightly lower income than they will receive in climate action incentive payments. Despite promises from the federal government the tax would remain revenue neutral and that families would benefit, the reality is that families are paying more than they receive.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to call upon the Government of Canada to immediately end the federal carbon tax and support Saskatchewan's development as a global supplier of food, fuel, and fertilizer.

This is signed by the good people of Carrot River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm on my feet to again present a petition calling on the government to instate adequate and equitable SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] rates.

The Saskatchewan assured income for disability program is a program of support for folks with significant and enduring disabilities with barriers to employment. Now this is a program that was announced in 2009 for folks in residential settings, and extended in 2012 to folks living out in the community, but it hasn't seen an increase in over eight years, which represented a 20 per cent cut in benefits.

[13:45]

Now with this 2023 budget we saw an announcement of an extra dollar a day for this program. With the crushing cost of living, inflationary pressures, and this lack of increase for nearly a decade, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a dollar a day was described as a slap in the face.

I will read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to increase SAID rates to account for inflation; to respect the constitutional rights of persons with disability in Saskatchewan by halting discriminatory clawback practices; to index SAID basic amount to inflation going forward; and to provide targeted relief to those in deepest poverty, namely single individuals paying market rent.

The signatories of this petition reside in Warman and Regina, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Today is the beginning of Yom HaShoah, or International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The day is marked on the 27th day of Nisan on the Hebrew calendar. It is also the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Although the Jewish people of Warsaw knew that survival was unlikely and victory impossible, they would not go quietly. In the words of Marek Edelman, the only surviving commander of the Jewish Combat Organization, they would "not allow the Germans to pick the time and place of our deaths."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, more than six million Jewish people were systematically murdered by the Nazi regime. The Holocaust didn't start with a war, and it didn't start with concentration camps. It started in small steps: the slow dehumanization of others, ghettoization, stripping of property rights, scapegoating. It's our duty as human beings to stand up to anti-Semitism, fascism, and Nazism in all its forms. There is no place for hatred in Saskatchewan and in our nation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation has compiled hundreds of interviews with Holocaust survivors. It's so important that these unique stories have been preserved. I recommend that everyone takes the opportunity to visit the Shoah Foundation website, listen to the stories of these survivors, and reflect. Toda raba, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Saskatoon Neurosurgeon Appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the greatest

honour and pride that I extend my warmest congratulations to Dr. Ivar Mendez on his appointment to the Order of Canada for his exceptional contributions to the field of surgical robotics and access to health care for remote communities. His pioneering research and development have been a driving force in the advancement of surgical technology and have played a significant role in improving the lives of patients.

The Order of Canada is the highest civilian honour in the country, and it's a true reflection of the impact that his work has had on our society. This appointment is a testament to his hard work, perseverance, and relentless pursuit of excellence. We are incredibly fortunate to have him in Saskatchewan as the provincial head of the department of surgery at the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

Dr. Mendez's work will be remembered for years to come and will continue to inspire future generations of scientists and engineers. I ask the Assembly to join me in congratulating Dr. Mendez on this well-deserved recognition. He has made Saskatchewan proud, and we are grateful for his contributions to the field of surgical robotics and to the well-being of our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Exchange with Haryana, India

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During Easter break, I joined the Speaker of our legislature; our Clerk, Iris Lang; and the member from Saskatoon Meewasin on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association exchange with the province of Haryana, India. We engaged as legislators in the Haryana Legislative Assembly, strengthened the Saskatchewan-Haryana relationship, and explored areas of potential collaboration.

Haryana, like Saskatchewan, operates a unicameral legislative system. Its Assembly has 90 members, directly elected from single-seat constituencies with five-year office terms. Throughout the week we met with several industry associations which included the Confederation of Indian Industry, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Indian Banks' Association, and many more where we covered everything from malt barley market potential, supply chain issues, pharma and health care, to investment opportunities.

We participated in several round tables with ministers and met with a few Canadian and Saskatchewan consulate and trade office officials. Received a briefing on the current state of play related to politics, the economy, and trade in Haryana. Our exports to India are currently valued at \$1.4 billion in 2022. The round tables allowed us to reiterate Saskatchewan's strengths as a reliable and sustainable global producer of agricultural products, potash, and uranium, and profile Saskatchewan as a long-term strategic partner for India for these products.

My colleague from Saskatoon Meewasin said it well in his tweet: "The exchange focused on and built upon our shared parliamentary heritage, a strong trade relationship, and budding advanced education partnerships." And, Mr. Speaker, I can't agree more.

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

Seventh Annual Eastview Winter Carnival Held in Regina

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize the 2023 winter carnival hosted by the Eastview Community Association which I had the opportunity to attend with my daughter. This will be the seventh annual winter carnival hosted by the Eastview Community Association, and it continues to build on the success of previous carnivals.

The winter carnival is a family event with something for everyone. This year's had balloon sculpting, large inflatable games, snowshoe races, snowperson building competitions, and wagon rides, not to mention some very delicious food. The winter carnival worked in concert with the Sask Health Authority to provide immunizations for COVID and flu shots, as well as other childhood vaccines. My daughter and I had a blast, and she particularly enjoyed the hot dogs and the root beer-flavoured suckers. A chip off the old block, Mr. Speaker.

These events don't happen without the hard work of staff and volunteers, and I want to give a shout-out to Denis and his team as well as the entire board for all that they do for the Eastview community each and every day. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members in joining me to recognize the Eastview Community Centre's staff and volunteers for putting on an amazing winter carnival event. Thank you.

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

100th Anniversary of Lampman Curling Club

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the community of Lampman for the event they recently hosted to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Lampman Curling Club. I was able to attend some of the festivities, and it was, as expected, a perfect example of rural Saskatchewan at its finest.

The club hosted a 64-rink bonspiel from March 29th to April 2nd, with games happening at the town's curling rink and skating arena, which was converted to curling ice. Multiple events filled the days-long celebration. These events heavily supported local businesses and suppliers, Mr. Speaker.

The first curling rink built in Lampman in 1923 was an open-air facility with one sheet of ice and planks for spectators to stand on. In 1953 an indoor rink was built, and the current one opened in 1981.

With this government's help, this was also a celebration of a \$770,000 rink upgrade the club recently received. The upgrade, which started construction in the spring of 2022, included a compressor room and new ice plant which will extend the lifespan of the rink.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important to recognize what a wonderful accomplishment it is for a small, volunteer-based club to last the test of time. One hundred years — bravo.

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

***Flat Out Food* Docuseries Features Unity Salt Plant**

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Compass Minerals in Unity will be featured in the May 3rd Citytv season finale of *Flat Out Food*, in the episode titled “Salt.” *Flat Out Food*, spearheaded by a former Luseland resident and filmmaker Adrian Halter, explores one ingredient from field, garden, lake, or mine on the journey it takes to the kitchen and then to the plate, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The history of the salt mine dates back over 70 years, and the organization is well-known for its community involvement. Compass Minerals plant manager Jack Neil and Compass employee Ashlie Kopp were interviewed for the episode and accompanied host Jenn Sharp on a tour of the mine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Halter wanted to showcase how salt is produced through solution mining and sold throughout the province of Saskatchewan. As stated by Halter himself, he was surprised to learn that, after pulling up the slurry and drying the solution, they can compact it back before breaking it up again to achieve the various sizes of salt.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Halter said that salt is in fact a vital ingredient in cooking. Like all things, salt is best used in moderation. However, everything tastes better with a touch of salt, even some desserts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating HalterMedia Inc. and Compass Minerals of Unity on a job well done. Once again, Saskatchewan has been highlighted for the importance of their essential minerals. Thank you.

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

Record Number of Nurses Practising in Saskatchewan

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to share some good news for our health care system. Now I know that the members opposite view any talk about positive growth occurring in our province as toxic, so they won’t want to hear this. But I know the people of Saskatchewan will.

We currently have more registered nurses practising in Saskatchewan than ever before. The College of Registered Nurses has released their 2022 annual report, which confirms there are now 12,791 registered nurses and 343 nurse practitioners practising in our province. This is an increase of 526 registered nurses and 21 nurse practitioners year over year.

Of the more than 13,100 RNs [registered nurse] and NPs [nurse practitioner] practising in Saskatchewan, CRNS [College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan] reports that 52 per cent are working full-time, 24 per cent are working part-time, and 12.5 per cent are working casual. There are now more than 3,700 registered nurses and more than three times as many nurse practitioners practising in Saskatchewan than there were in 2007.

That is growth that works for everyone, and I look forward to sharing more good news in the future as our government’s four-point health human resources plan continues to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain more health care workers in our province.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Saskatchewan Health Authority Memos to Health Care Facilities

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday we asked the Minister of Rural and Remote Health why he was shutting down local voices in health care. In response to that question, he said, and I quote, “The member opposite could not be more wrong.”

Would the minister like to revisit his answer?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said yesterday, the Minister of Health and myself work very hard to make sure that we are consulting, as do all of our MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] on this side of the House, consulting with rural leaders, with communities, with the front-line health care workers in this province, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Health and I have toured roughly 45 facilities across Saskatchewan since the spring, Mr. Speaker, and have conducted a number of meetings since that point in time, some virtual, some in person. As a matter of fact, I’ve got another one coming up here after the House here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. And we’re going to continue to consult and meet with rural leaders and health care workers across this province as we help to bolster our four-point health human resources action plan to recruit, train, incentivize, retain health care workers in Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we’ve received a copy of a leaked SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] memo that shows in black and white how this tired and out-of-touch government is shutting down local voices in health care. It’s dated February 7th and it says, “Please be advised that we are not to coordinate tours or answer questions about our facilities to any political parties. If any MLAs or members of a political party request information from Lanigan Integrated Hospital, please direct them to the process.”

Why did the SHA memo telling health care workers not to answer questions, happen on the same day of our health care solutions tour being in town?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the SHA does have a process in place to make sure that these tours are coordinated in a safe way. MLAs can’t just roll up to a facility

and walk through and have a tour. We have patient safety. We have integrity. We have HIPA [*The Health Information Protection Act*] restrictions, Mr. Speaker.

If they wanted to be able to tour a facility, Mr. Speaker, they can go tour that facility. And I'll outline the tour of the facilities that the members opposite did have: Watrous in February; Lanigan, February 8th; Humboldt, February 8th; Warman. I wonder how they got in there. Because they coordinated the tours, Mr. Speaker. Fort Qu'Appelle, February 21st; Shellbrook on March 1st; Prince Albert, March 1st; Delisle, March 3rd.

Mr. Speaker, they've been on tours. We are not restricting their access in any way, shape, or form. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

Ms. Mowat: — No, you're just silencing health care workers from talking to us when we're around, Mr. Speaker. It's shameful. Mr. Speaker, the health care system does not belong to the Sask Party; it belongs to the people of this province.

And when health care workers have concerns that they want to share, they should feel free to speak their mind. This memo sends the exact opposite message and it's crystal clear: don't answer any questions; don't share any information; sit down; shut up; keep doing what you're paid to do. That is the message from this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

Why are they sending memos to silence health care workers from speaking out?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the member opposite could torque that any more. We didn't send the memo. It was sent by the SHA. Never directed from my office, never directed from this building, Mr. Speaker.

But I can tell you what the memo that did go out the day before said, Mr. Speaker. It said:

At times during the year, the SHA gets a high number of requests for tours of our facilities from elected members of the Legislative Assembly. They can create clinical and operational challenges if not coordinated properly. There are also opportunities for efficiencies when coordinating approach to taking these types of tours by helping avoid as much as possible multiple requests by our team.

That is why we ask that should a political party and/or office or a member of the legislative reach out to the facility or individual directly, please contact the SHA for coordination prior to their arrival.

This is the memo that went out to all SHA facilities, Mr. Speaker, and I hope the members opposite would abide by it.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, this was Lanigan the morning we were there. Let's be very clear about the fact that this is not a coincidence. This wasn't the whole SHA. This is a targeted decision of interference with the . . . with the minister's office, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time we've seen this kind of hush memo by this minister. In 2019 the SHA sent out a memo telling doctors not to put anything in the minutes they wouldn't want to see in the newspaper, to avoid discordant messaging at all costs. Mr. Speaker, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour.

Why is this government again sending memos to silence health care workers? And how many other memos like this have been sent?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is very animated about this. I read out in the record what the SHA memo that went from head office out to all the facilities, to make sure that our facilities coordinate this, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of patient safety, to make sure we're protecting their dignity. I have to do that myself, Mr. Speaker. So does the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

When we go tour a facility, we coordinate. We contact the SHA. They contact the local management to tell them that we're coming, and if it works for them, Mr. Speaker. We make sure that we're not inconveniencing any of the staff or any of the operational systems, to make sure that we are touring the facility when it's not just convenient for us, but it's also convenient for them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we're following that process. What he's talking about here is silencing health care workers. That is what this memo indicates: don't talk to the opposition, Mr. Speaker.

This tired and out-of-touch government has a record of shutting out local voices and silencing health care workers, full stop.

But Lanigan wasn't the only part of the province that we've been to on our health care solutions tour. And thanks to the minister for keeping notes and keeping tabs on us. This spring we've been to Delisle, North Battleford, Saskatoon, Watrous, Humboldt, Southey, Cupar, Fort Qu'Appelle, Regina, Prince Albert, Shellbrook, Mr. Speaker. I might be forgetting some.

How many of these hospitals have received hush memos telling health care workers not to answer our questions or give out any information? How many?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, I read into the record . . . I know the member opposite has her four or five prepared questions that she has to read, but I read into the record exactly what the SHA said. This is the same process that I have to follow

as Minister of Health. The Minister of Rural and Remote Health, any member on this side of the House or on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, has to coordinate.

We are not muzzling any health care workers. Mr. Speaker, there are health care workers all across this province that communicate with us on a daily basis, everybody from EMS [emergency medical services] to doctors in ER [emergency room] rooms. Mr. Speaker, we meet with nurses. We talk to them. Nobody has been muzzled. For them to do these accusations is absolutely ridiculous. You didn't . . .

[Interjections]

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this government's power grab and centralization isn't limited to health care. It extends right across this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government. They make sure every message, every comment, every scrap of information is painstakingly coordinated out of that Premier's office. It's no way to run a government, and it's no way to treat Saskatchewan people.

Why does the Health minister think that he has the right to tell Saskatchewan health workers to shut up and keep quiet about the problems they see every day?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, if the member's aware of something, she should table it so I can look into it. We've never said that. Not once. They're torquing it. They're using language that was not in the memo, Mr. Speaker. They're taking everything and they're multiplying it by 10. It is absolutely ridiculous.

I met with two doctors yesterday. I'm meeting with another doctor later on this afternoon. I'm meeting with nine nurses later on this week. We are sitting down at the tables in the coffee rooms of the health care facilities. We're talking to nurses. We're engaging with them virtually . . .

An Hon. Member: — They're not allowed to talk to anyone else, right?

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Well they certainly had no problem talking to you on all the other tours you went to, didn't they? Didn't they?

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Let's finish the question and move on.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've had the opportunity to engage with health care workers. The members opposite have had opportunities to engage with health care workers. Absolutely ridiculous to say we're muzzling them.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, it's an insult to the intelligence of Saskatchewan people to suggest that it was a coincidence that the day we had planned outreach in Lanigan, that those health care workers got this hush memo.

The health care system doesn't belong to the Sask Party government. It belongs to the people of Saskatchewan. Members of the public, members of this Assembly, and members of the media should be able to get straightforward answers to their questions. That's how democracy works.

But the Sask Party has no respect for that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They send memos to staff telling them not to answer any questions. They attack and undermine the media. And they deny, deny, deny anything that contradicts their narrative that everything is fine. Why is this Sask Party government resorting to such heavy-handed power grabs to silence health care workers?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All we've asked in the memo that went out to all SHA facilities, if anybody from this Legislative Assembly needed to go and tour a facility that they coordinate it, so we can make sure that it is done in a safe way, that we have the right people there to be able to answer their questions, to be able to tour the health care facility.

We have never, ever muzzled health care workers, Mr. Speaker. We will not do that. Health workers are very open and engaging with us, sometimes brutally honestly, Mr. Speaker, and that's okay. They have their frustrations, Mr. Speaker. And it's my responsibility and the Minister of Rural and Remote Health and everybody on this side of the Assembly to go out and talk to our health care workers to see how we can improve our system and make sure that it's the best for the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no greater sign that this is a tired and out-of-touch government than this pattern of behaviour shutting down any critical voices. This Health minister and this whole government think that they are accountable to no one, that their majority somehow makes them above reproach and immune from scrutiny.

What role does the Ministry of Health have in this central coordination process in the memo? And when will this government start acting with the transparency that Saskatchewan people expect?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — The answer to the question, does the Minister of Health engage in any of the operational tours that are going on by media or the opposition? Answer is no.

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

Ms. Conway: — That wasn't the question, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Hundreds of thousands of people in this province didn't vote for the Sask Party. They sent us here to hold this government to account. We're their voice, the loyal opposition, and it's our job to ask hard questions of that minister.

But when this tired and out-of-touch government sends memos to stop health care workers from speaking out, they're not silencing us. They're silencing Saskatchewan people — Saskatchewan people who rely on health care, Saskatchewan health care workers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They're stifling our democracy.

Does the minister even realize that there's a difference between the public interest and the Sask Party's interest?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The memo said nothing like that. All the memo said is we want to make sure that it is coordinated properly. I've read it into the record multiple times. I know they have their set questions that they need to ask, Mr. Speaker.

But we abide by the rules on this side of the Assembly, as we expect the members opposite to do when touring any of our facilities, whether those be health care facilities, whether they be education facilities.

Mr. Speaker, we have openly said if health care workers want to reach out and communicate with myself, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health, any of the members on this side of the House, we are available. We go home every weekend to all of those communities to be able to engage with our health care workers to find out what the solutions are and how we can support them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I'll ask again: what role does the Ministry of Health have in the central coordination process referred to in the hush memo?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. None.

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

Affordability and Cost of Living

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver on the cost of living, the crushing cost that families are facing. The 52 per cent of Saskatchewan people who are in bad shape or terrible shape and barely getting by financially certainly know it. And today the readers of the *Regina Leader-Post* know it, too. The headline from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation op-ed: "Provincial budget failed to make life more affordable."

Why did the Finance minister fail to deliver any cost-of-living relief for families, and instead just keep adding more costs on to families that are already struggling with so many expenses?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Again I think this is a question that's been answered, you know, numerous days while we've been in session, Mr. Speaker. In this budget it reflects among the most . . . lowest personal income tax in the country. And it's indexed, which is something that the taxpayers federation applauded was when we indexed the personal income tax. So in this budget the income tax for everyone went down yet again.

Mr. Speaker, it includes seniors' income plan increase. We're among the highest for subsidies for seniors in the country. It includes the active families benefit, the first-time homebuyers tax credit. It includes the children's drug plan that was introduced by our government. It includes funding for \$10-a-day daycare which helps families within our province. For students, there's the graduate retention program, the best program in the country, Mr. Speaker. It has the Sask Advantage Scholarship in this budget. And for the next recycled question, I will have the same answer.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — That out-of-touch is just on full display as is the arrogance there, Mr. Speaker. So out of touch with families and people who are struggling with the cost of living, and of course that minister knows better than them. And of course she knows better than the Canadian Taxpayers Federation as well, who raised some good points in their op-ed. The minister should take some notes:

The Saskatchewan government could have helped taxpayers. It could have made a plan to pay off the debt. It didn't do any of that. Despite near record revenues, the Saskatchewan budget fails to provide any tax relief for Saskatchewanians and the debt will keep increasing after 2024.

How is it that this government managed to increase the debt, sit on windfall revenues, all while failing to provide any relief for families struggling more than anywhere else in Canada to pay their bills?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I find it rather interesting that the members opposite are supporting what the Canadian Taxpayers Federation have to say, considering each and every year they're saying we need to cut our spending when the members opposite are saying spend more for health care, spend more for social safety nets, spend more for education, and the list goes on and on and on.

[14:15]

And now all of a sudden, even though that's what the Canadian Taxpayers Federation stands for and says every year, they start to support them. Mr. Speaker, we did write down the debt this year by \$1 billion is our intention throughout the year. That is on

top of the 1 billion that it was written down last year.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — No, Mr. Speaker, this isn't from us; this is the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. And you bet we've been calling on that government to cut their mismanagement and waste year after year after year, Mr. Speaker, but instead they're now making Saskatchewan families and people pay the price for that historic mismanagement. And it's long past time that that minister, instead, give those families a break.

Again all from the op-ed:

Other provinces have been cutting taxes and saving residents real money, but Saskatchewan is failing to provide relief that families need. Alberta, Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador all recently cut gas taxes . . . Manitoba, Quebec, and New Brunswick all recently cut income taxes . . . All while Saskatchewanians get nothing.

Why is it that this Finance minister is giving Saskatchewan people nothing when it comes to cost-of-living relief that's so desperately needed?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite maybe needs a little bit of time to do some research because the provinces that he listed that cut their income tax, we're lower than those provinces even with the cut.

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

Sales Tax and the Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — More research? We're talking about Alberta here, Mr. Speaker, with no PST [provincial sales tax], while that government brought forward the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history that Saskatchewan people are now paying the price for.

You know, one thing that government could do, Mr. Speaker, to make life more affordable and jump-start this economy is scrapping the PST on construction labour — you know, the one that that government stuck on construction labour in 2017; the one that's driven away jobs, people, and investment from Saskatchewan; the one that's the epitome of a job-killing tax, Mr. Speaker. And they should do this, especially when we see new incentives like the *Inflation Reduction Act* in the US [United States] that hurt our ability to compete and attract investment.

Why won't that Sask Party finally do the right thing and scrap this tax to help fire up our economy and create the good jobs and opportunity that Saskatchewan people and businesses deserve?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, glad to see that the member has circled back to the 2017-18 budget decisions that we admit were very difficult decisions to make at that time in order

to stabilize our budget and make sure that it was sustainable going into the future.

But I would just like you to have this quote from the president of the P.A. [Prince Albert] Construction Association . . . Talk about out of touch. He had this to say:

We've been hit hard with inflation, a war in Europe, supply chain delays, material costs increasing, overhead costs increasing, and certainly, a labour supply issue. We've been hit by a number of things that have negatively affected our industry . . .

He admits, and I do too, that PST has an impact, “. . . but it hasn't stalled work on projects.”

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Construction Association has called for the PST on construction labour — that's been so damaging — to be scrapped from the moment it's imposed. Why would that minister pretend otherwise? And why won't she do the right thing and scrap it today?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the same people that will ask for that also want to see more health care workers and they want to see the revenue in order to hire those health care workers, Mr. Speaker. They want to see more money for education. They want to see more money for the social safety nets, Mr. Speaker.

It's a balance that we have to choose on revenue and the expenses, and we felt that where we have invested dollars was important. But we need the revenue to pay for it, unlike the members opposite who just ask for more spending and more spending and more spending and more spending, and have absolutely no plan — zero plan — on where they'd find the money.

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

Availability of Naloxone for Harm Reduction

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, the overdose crisis in our province continues to take lives; 152 people this year have lost their lives. That's more overdoses than in 2016 and more overdose deaths than all of 2017. We're only three months into the year.

Will the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions listen to local voices who are calling for intranasal naloxone?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is investing in a number of initiatives in previous years, and as well as some new initiatives in this year's record budget for mental health and addictions, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to naloxone, we now have free take-home naloxone kits available in 93 communities in 326 locations, Mr. Speaker. And as part of that, we actually have these free naloxone kits available at 117 pharmacies across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And that is expanding. Now that is the intramuscular naloxone.

As I have said previously in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, we're currently under way with a pilot project with nasal naloxone at 4 fixed and 14 mobile sites across this province, and I've asked our officials and our staff to be consulting with those on this particular issue, to look at the efficacy of that and some possible uses of that. But a decision is yet to be made and will be discussed at a future time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, people are dying as we speak, right here. The efficacy is not in question. The minister has had weeks to make this decision.

Will he listen to local voices who are calling for intranasal naloxone, yes or no?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue. But on one hand the members opposite will ask for us to consult and do our proper due diligence, and on the other hand they are asking that decisions be made immediately, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to continue to do the work that needs to be done on this very important file, whether it includes the expansion of drug-checking strips, of mass spectrometers for drug checking across this province, Mr. Speaker, a number of other harm reduction initiatives.

And the expansion of treatment capacity, Mr. Speaker, more treatment beds and more treatment spaces. Just yesterday announcing 36 virtual treatment spaces through EHN Canada, a division of Edgewood, which is a leader in addictions treatment and recovery in our country, and we're going to continue to do that work with these organizations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Ms. C. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee of the Economy to report Bill No. 116, *The Plant Health Act* without amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in the Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I request

leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and that the bill be now read the third time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bills for Bill No. 116, *The Plant Health Act* and that bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move to third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 116 — *The Plant Health Act*

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the Bill No. 116 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 128

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 128 — *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act, 2023*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in on Bill 128, *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act, 2023*. Initially, like everything else, you know, it's important for government and all levels of government to have incentives to try to get good-paying jobs and making sure that we make money for our province to help us cover costs for our province. And those are in different ways, whether you have incentive plans that get industry to invest, to spend some of their money and, you know, get an incentive whether it's a tax break or some kind of incentive. And that's important.

And in this case, we see that government's making some amendments when it comes to a 10 per cent to 30 per cent. And I know at the end of the day, you know, our critics are going to have some questions on some of the changes that are being proposed.

But I'd like to just use an example. You know, our province, different areas, jurisdictions — we have First Nations, our Métis, our northern leaders, our people — those people that are impacted, when we see industry coming in and our First Nations, our Métis leaders, our citizens, they want a partner, and they do. They want to create jobs, they want to make sure there's good jobs for Indigenous people, northern people. But whether you live in the South, the urban centres, wherever you are, you want to make sure that government has done the right work, the right consulting with industry but also with individuals that will be impacted.

In our province we have lots of people rely . . . And I think about resources and I think about a place. The North is abundant with resources and the northern people want to share those resources. But they want to be partners. They want to make sure the government understands that they're talking. And so many times when we see this government, the way they operate, they don't consult with First Nations, Métis leaders. They don't consult with our Métis leaders, our citizens, and it's sad that we see that.

In this thing you're having a little bit of a change, and there's an incentive. And like I said earlier, we're supporting that and that's good incentive. We want our province to do well. We want the people to do good, to have good-paying jobs. But we want to make sure we hold this government to account, because I see time and time again First Nations and Métis are left out of consulting by this government.

And they like to, oh, manipulate. Oh, we sent a letter, we did this, we did that. And that's not meaningful consultation. And my colleague from Saskatoon Centre, the critic for First Nations and Métis relations, has made it very clear.

We've had leaders coming forward, people making challenges saying . . . Our leaders, First Nations, Métis, making it very clear it's not on anymore, not to disrespect First Nations and Métis. It's no longer easy for you to just make up as you go along. We want to work, we want to see our province do well, we want our companies to do well. But we want a partner, and we do.

And I've heard our leaders say that, and I've heard our citizens say it, our trappers say that. We're not trying to stop industry, we want to encourage them, but we want to have meaningful consultation. We want to make sure we're at the table. We don't want to be told, oh well, we sent them a letter. We give them a little bit of money for this and now we'll do whatever we want. Thank you very much but we'll go off over here in a room and make our decision. And that has to stop.

So I don't want to take up more time on this bill, because I know there's other work to be done, but I wanted to make it very clear that northern people, First Nations, Métis leaders, I know throughout our province whether you live in the urban centres, the rural, you want to make sure our province does well, industry does well because then all of us as a province do well. And there are areas where we see many people in our province struggling

to make ends meet.

So having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know my colleague will have more questions in committee when it goes there, this bill goes through the next process. But I want to make it very clear: yes, we support incentives, but you have to make sure you're not forgetting about our First Nations, our Métis people, our northern people, and those citizens that own those resources, that they have to be consulted.

It doesn't matter, you can go make your little plans where you want, but at the end of the day, let's do some meaningful consultation to make sure people's feelings . . . And when industry and government wants to come together that they're working together in a positive way for our province, so that we all do have a beautiful province, and we can take care of our citizens as we can.

On that note, I'll adjourn debate on Bill No. 128. I'm prepared to do that right now.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 129

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Merriman that **Bill No. 129 — *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good to enter into adjourned debate with respect to Bill No. 129, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023*.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, with this bill, physician assistants, which is a new designation here in Saskatchewan, will have the same rights and obligations as physicians and surgeons. Physician assistants, however, will not have the same sign-off authority on legal certificates such as death certificates.

Mr. Speaker, this proposed legislation would present an opportunity for medical graduates without residencies to become meaningfully employed in our province while they continue to pursue options for residencies. So as I understand it, there are approximately 300 of these medical graduates in Saskatchewan without residencies, which is a significant number of health care workers who are looking to fill some of the gaping holes that exist in our health care system under this government.

As I also understand it, however, Mr. Speaker, this proposed legislation will only be allowing for a maximum of 12 individuals to work as physician assistants, so really not more than a drop in the bucket here, Mr. Speaker. It's a pretty insignificant number

when you look at the actual need in our province. So yeah, while the addition of these assistants will provide some degree of useful support, it is not in any way an adequate solution to the serious lack of physicians here in our province.

And it's furthermore not a solution to the dire shortage of nurses here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, which we've seen the president of the Sask Union of Nurses, Tracy Zambory, speak to very clearly in her calls for a nursing task force which this government continues to ignore, Mr. Speaker, or for that matter the many, many other health care professions that exist in our province where we continue to see serious and chronic shortages.

And we've been seeing those shortages for years and years to the point where, you know, our health care system has reached this crescendo point. You know, it's been described as on the brink of collapse, Mr. Speaker, and that is not hyperbole, as any of us who have had to enter a hospital, a health care clinic in recent months in this province will know, or who have had friends or family members who have had to access that system. It's at a dire point.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is . . . And we know this from the Provincial Auditor's report that that report was clear that the Sask Party government's plan to add 1,000 health care workers into our system really only represents half of what is needed to meet the true need in terms of staffing in Saskatchewan. The auditor's report reflected that 2,000 workers would be needed in the health care system within the next five years to keep up with the demand that exists.

So obviously as we can see, these 12 additional positions we will see from this bill as a maximum do not even come close to meeting the true need that exists in our province when it comes to our crumbling health care system, Mr. Speaker, a system that this Sask Party government has mismanaged to the brink of collapse.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to reiterate some of our critic's, one of her comments in particular on this bill. The critic for Health has said that team-based care is what has been identified as a need here in this province by professionals, by the workers, and the experts in this province on our health care system. A reform to the system is what is needed, and in fact the inclusion of physician assistants does not equate to team-based care.

And so, Mr. Speaker, our critic, in addition to her comments which she's entered on the record, will be continuing to consult thoroughly with stakeholders around this bill throughout the province. And so at this point with that, Mr. Speaker, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 129, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 130

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 130 — *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet and enter into debate on Bill No. 130, *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act*. I understand that this is a bill that will create a new Crown corporation, the Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corp., and that they will oversee lotteries and gaming policy and management in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Once the LGS [Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan] is fully operational they'll oversee all casinos in Saskatchewan, online gaming and lotteries, as well as operating the video lottery terminal program.

As it stands, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority will transition to becoming more of a gaming regulator while the Sask Housing . . . Sorry, not Sask Housing. Sask Gaming Corp. will become a subsidiary of this new Crown. I have estimates later tonight, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think that's creeping into my words here.

This legislation provides for a continuation of the First Nations and Métis, Inuit gaming agreements, and in terms of feedback and commentary from the opposition at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be brief. The opposition supports the modernization of legal online gaming, but we will be ensuring that there is robust protection, consumer protection as this legislation is rolled out. That should be of paramount consideration. With the creation of this new Crown, we will be keeping a very close eye on that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We know this government's record when it comes to privatization of Crown corporations, particularly its ill-conceived and really devastating decision in the end of 2022 to privatize the Sask Liquor Board, Mr. Speaker. We will be looking, watching the treatment of the gaming industry very closely, particularly in light of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I know that our critic, the member for Saskatoon Meewasin, will have more to say on this bill. And with that I'm happy to move to adjourn debate on Bill 130.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 131

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **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*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to be on my feet once again to enter into debate on Bill No. 131, *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*. Now we know that this is simply an Act that outlines the details of *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act* in terms of the changes that need to take place to the nitty-gritty of the legislation, so I'm happy to have the comments I entered into the record on Bill 130 stand with respect to this bill. And with that, I am pleased to move to adjourn debate on Bill 131.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 132

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 132 — *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel (Automation and Remote Supervision Pilot) Amendment Act, 2023*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate on Bill No. 123, *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel (Automation and Remote Supervision Pilot) Amendment Act, 2023*. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the minister for providing some detailed remarks with respect to this legislation in his second reading speech. It provides a strong outline as to the amendments that are included in the legislation and the reasons for those amendments, Mr. Speaker.

From what I understand, this bill will amend *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act* of 1999 which governs the safe operation requirements for boilers and pressure vessels, as well as the requirements around licensing of the individuals who construct, repair, and operate boilers and pressure vessels in Saskatchewan. This is all with the goal of ensuring safety, Mr. Speaker, for the residents and the workers in Saskatchewan.

The boiler and pressure vessel safety is overseen by the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The chief boiler inspector, an official of TSASK [Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan], is the one who's responsible for licensing permits and inspections of boilers and pressure vessels. Mr. Speaker, this is very important work that's done to ensure the safety of the operation of this work and the workers involved.

I know that the critic is doing good work reaching out to stakeholders and garnering their feedback, and I'm looking forward to seeing the outcome of that consultation, Mr. Speaker. I think at this time I am now prepared to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 132.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 133

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 133 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2023*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join on Bill No. 133, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2023*. Initially the two bills that I've gotten a chance to enter in adjourned debates, which is nice to get in and have a discussion about them, the importance of the opposition's ability to ask questions. Making sure, who did the government consult with? Who did they have a little talk with? Who pushed them? Who's asked them to do these kind of amendments that they're doing, incentives that they're doing?

And I think about this, and I'm going to take a little time on this one for the simple reason that I like hearing when government says it wants to have incentives to make sure there's good-paying jobs for Saskatchewan people. That's very important. We want that.

As the loyal opposition, we want to make sure that we're reminding government, you know, the reasons why they need to make sure they consult, make sure incentives are there so that Saskatchewan people have good-paying jobs, can have a mortgage, can pay their bills, can take care of their children. There are all those incentives there to make sure Saskatchewan people benefit as well.

We want our companies to benefit. We want corporations to benefit in this province. We want to see incentives. You know, the member for Saskatoon Rosemont, the critic for Finance, I like how he always tries to tell the government, here's an incentive you can do. Drop the PST on construction, and it'll be an amazing incentive to get that industry going and moving in a very strong direction. So there's an incentive we could agree on, to say, let's move it. So we'd even work as opposition, and I know the critic would work with opposition, with the government as opposition, to say, let's scrap the PST on construction. We'll start there. What an initiative we can do as a province to say, hey, this was the wrong thing to do. It hurt the industry. We've consulted. We've heard people saying, here's a time when that industry needs help. Here's an initiative that the government can do in a meaningful way to say, hey, we know that we needed to do that for a reason. We did it, but you know what, we're seeing now it's hurt your industry and we're willing to go back on that.

I mean there's different times, and I think about that, you know, different initiatives we can do. People trying to buy . . . I'll give you another initiative. People trying to buy used cars. You know, they're now being charged PST on used cars. And now just trying to make . . . They can't afford a brand new car but they might buy

a used one. But here's an initiative. You could get the industry going good, too, for people out there if you would drop the PST. So there's another initiative we could work with the government to get rid of.

So when I think about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's nice to have these initiatives, and I think they're good and I hope they consulted with industry and whoever, but at the end of the day, I go back to saying, make sure citizens that are going to be impacted are consulted.

But make sure some of the initiatives you have for the cost of living. Here's an initiative you could do for cost of living. Our seniors, the most vulnerable, are struggling to make ends meet. And you know, we don't have to pass the buck to, oh, blame the federal government, blame I don't care who. It seems like the government of the day wants to blame everybody, but they never want to take some of the responsibility to say, we created this. You know, like I think about last time there was 31 fees and taxes that they charged last budget — the previous budget, not just the new one that came out.

So really at the end of the day, when I think about there's some initiatives they could do to get our economy going, to get people be able to breathe. We talk about the challenges when you can't pay your bills. You talk about the mental health. You talk about the struggles families are doing. I hear those struggles. I see those struggles. People saying, Doyle, I'm struggling to make ends meet.

Here's an opportunity. Why doesn't the government use some of its dollars? We've done well as a province this last year. Why don't you use some of the . . . Here's an initiative you could use. Use some of those surplus dollars to help people struggling back home, you know. Instead of giving them a dollar a day for the SAID program, why don't you give them what the SAID people and the advocates have been saying that they need to make ends meet, so that their mental health and the challenges that they're feeling would give them less problems? So there's an incentive they could do if the government really wanted to help out when it comes to mental health and areas.

[14:45]

So there's a lot of different incentives we could do, and we could work together with the government. And I know we would work together. I would work with my colleagues to say, hey, we've got to work with the government to make life better for Saskatchewan people. Isn't that what we're supposed to . . . we're elected to do? To make sure they have the best health care, to make sure they have the best services when they need it, that they have the best quality of life.

Our province is so rich with resources, with everything, and we can do great incentives to make sure jobs . . . But at the end of the day, don't forget who owns the resources and who owns this province is the people of the province. Make sure we're taking care of them. And that's so important, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I don't want to go on much more. I know there's more work and there's committee work that has to be done — I understand that — and estimates. But I just wanted for the record to make sure the government knows that this loyal opposition is willing to

work with government when there's issues to help Saskatchewan people, and that we'll support them.

But sometimes I think the government loses its way. Well I understand my colleagues keep saying they're tired and out of touch in Saskatchewan. And I'd probably buy some of that, but you know, at the end of the day, let's just make sure we're taking care of Saskatchewan people.

So on that note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to move adjournment of debate on Bill No. 133.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:47.]

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