



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

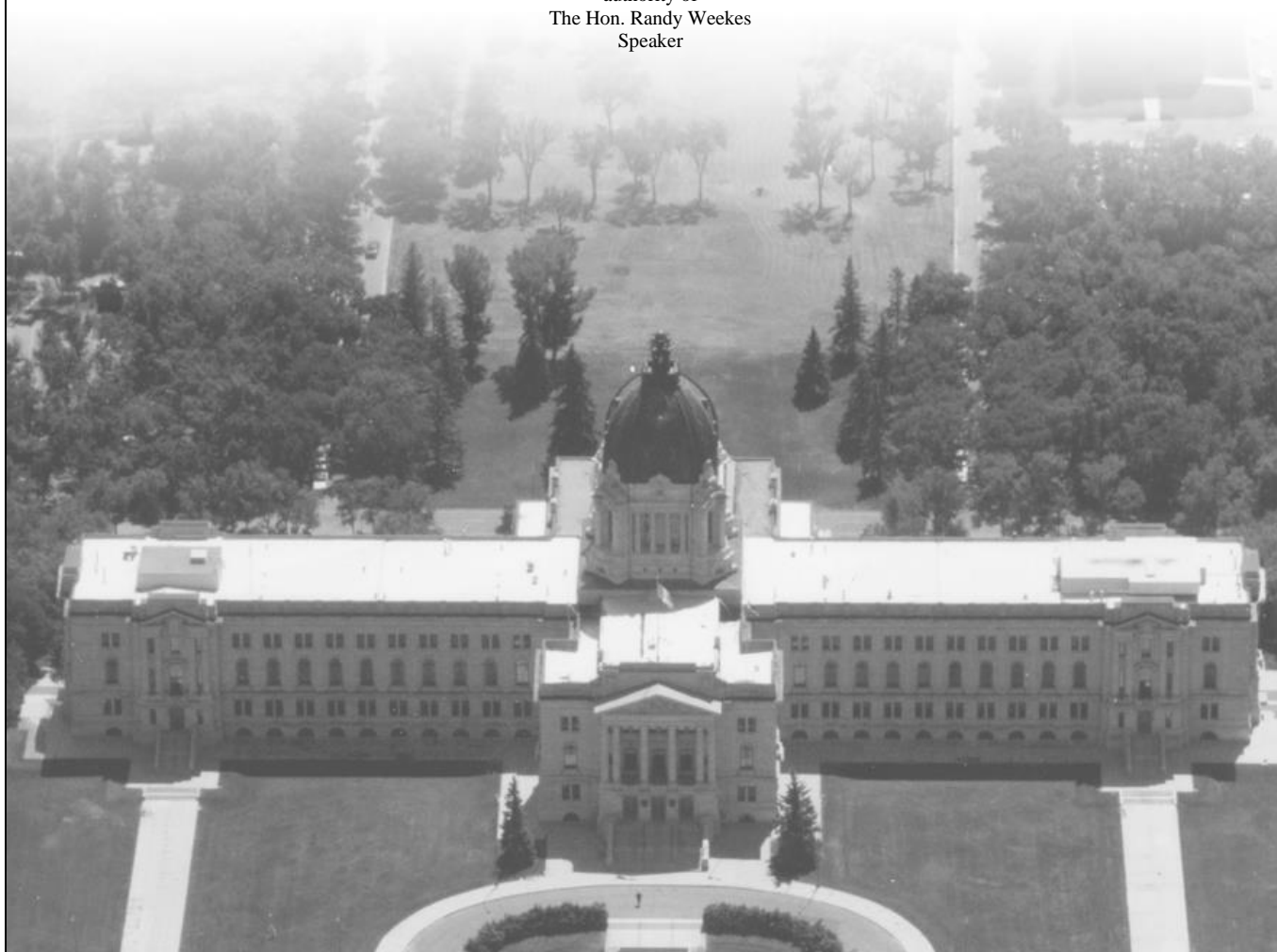
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
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Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)	Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
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Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Harrison, Daryl — Cannington (SP)	Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
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

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Principal Clerk — Robert Park

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today we have seated in your gallery two very special guests. Today we signed a memorandum of co-operation with the Japan overseas infrastructure corporation, or JOIN [Japan Overseas Infrastructure Investment Corporation for Transport & Urban Development]. And we are honoured to have with us today Tatsuhiko Takesada, the president and CEO [chief executive officer] of JOIN, and Kento Tokumaru, the manager with JOIN. They are accompanied by Blair Hudyma, director of international engagement.

Earlier today I had the pleasure of meeting with JOIN. During my last mission to Japan, I had the pleasure of meeting with JOIN in February, where we discussed the memorandum of co-operation. And I would like to take the time today to thank these individuals very sincerely for their visit and express our gratitude for our long-standing relationships with our many partners in Japan, including JOIN.

And I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming our distinguished guests to Saskatchewan's legislature and to our province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's a tremendous honour to welcome these guests from Japan, these leaders, to the Saskatchewan Assembly. We wish them well. We thank them for their presence. We wish them well in their engagement here in the province, and we identify that strong and valued and important relationship with Japan, Mr. Speaker. Thank you so very much.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce Mr. Solomon Ratt who is sitting in your gallery today. Mr. Ratt was a professor of Cree language and

literature at First Nations University of Canada, Mr. Speaker, for 35 years and just retired in December of this last year. His work has inspired thousands of students and community members across this country.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to announce this morning, with the member from Athabasca, at the First Nations University that our government has committed \$50,000 annually to fund new Indigenous language scholarships. We'll hear more about that in an upcoming member statement from the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Speaker, it was a great privilege to announce that one of those scholarships is to be named after Mr. Ratt. Mr. Speaker, the Solomon Ratt Indigenous Language Scholarship was established to support Indigenous language studies. The scholarship offers \$1,500 to full-time students and \$500 to part-time students. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to please help me welcome and thank Solomon for his dedication to keeping Indigenous language alive in Saskatchewan and across Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming Solomon Ratt to his Legislative Assembly and congratulating him on a long and distinguished career, a wonderful legacy ensuring that people have access to their language and the importance of that.

Some time ago, Mr. Speaker, I had opportunity in the trailers out at the University of Regina, when it was SIFC [Saskatchewan Indian Federated College], to take a class, actually two, from Mr. Ratt. Not only was he a fantastic teacher, he actually wrote those blue textbooks as well, Mr. Speaker.

Such an amazing legacy, a well-founded honour. I just, on behalf of the official opposition, would like to welcome you to your Assembly, wish you well in your retirement, and thank you so much for your service to the people of this province.

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

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

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

Solomon Ratt, I just said I am grateful that you have joined us here in this Legislative Assembly. As you know, that language, our Indigenous language, our mother tongue, is what connects us to who we are as a people. And it is with honour and gratitude that we have folks like you that are keeping our languages alive, our nêhiyaw language, our nakawê language.

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

Thank you on behalf of the official opposition, and also the critic for First Nation, Métis relations, and also a residential school survivor myself. gichi-miigwech and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much. In the west gallery there's a group of 27 grade 12 students from F.W. Johnson Collegiate. They're accompanied by their teacher, Mr. McKillop. He's been here many times. I look forward to having a chance to chat with them after the proceedings here today. I ask all members to help me welcome them.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to join in briefly with the Minister of Advanced Education and with the Leader of the Opposition and my colleague, the critic for First Nations and Métis Relations, to say welcome, Mr. Ratt, to your legislature. It's a real honour to have you here today.

As the critic for Advanced Education, well aware of your distinguished career and the contributions you have made across our province to preserving Indigenous languages. I also want to say congratulations on your well-deserved retirement and thank you so much for your 35 years of service with the First Nations University of Canada. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you, 27 grade 5 students in the west gallery from MacNeill School. And they are accompanied by their teacher, Miranda Fraser. I'll be meeting with these students after. Looking forward to some really good questions. Thank you very much for coming out today.

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

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to this Assembly, it is my privilege to introduce, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, a grade 12 class from Rocanville, Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, they're accompanied by their teacher, Mike Gowan, and chaperone, Jennifer Kingdon.

Mr. Speaker, late this morning I had the opportunity, along with our deputy minister and the Minister of Finance, to have a chat with the students. We had a great discussion. One of the things, Mr. Speaker, to highlight I would just point out, is I understand that the vast majority of the students after graduation are planning on staying in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to please give a warm welcome to the grade 12 class from Rocanville to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following: we need to protect mother earth in this month. Mother earth takes care of us when we protect mother earth.

The Saskatchewan total greenhouse gas emissions were 75 million metric tons in 2019, representing more than 10 per cent of Canada's overall emissions inventory despite comprising only 3 per cent of the national population, and the highest GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions intensity of all of Canadian provinces. Climate change is causing significant harm to our province's agricultural sector. The folks who signed this petition . . .

Oh, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the provincial government to enact a credible climate action plan and allocate appropriate funding to ensure real reductions in Saskatchewan greenhouse gas emissions that are consistent with the scientific consensus to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The folks who signed this petition reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Mr. Domotor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present this petition on behalf of residents of Saskatchewan.

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

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

Signed by residents from Maidstone and Neilburg. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the crisis in our classrooms. The Sask Party government's cuts to education mean less per-student funding, directly impacting student learning. Years of cuts leave educators and support staff without the resources they need to support students. Cuts have serious consequences today and will continue to have serious consequences moving forward thanks to this government's

inadequate education budget.

I'll read the prayer.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately fix the crisis in our classrooms by providing stable and adequate funding for public education in Saskatchewan.

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

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again to present our petition calling on the government to join municipalities and provinces across Canada and codify a ban on conversion therapy. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention: that conversion therapy is a discredited and abusive practice which attempts to actively change the sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; the practice of conversion therapy or reparative therapy is seriously harmful to individuals and is opposed by psychological and psychiatric associations across North America and the world; there is simply no place in our society for this prejudiced practice.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

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

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

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet to present a petition calling on the Saskatchewan government to make SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] rates equitable and adequate, Mr. Speaker, because currently they are not. There's not a day that goes by that our office doesn't hear from someone who's on the SAID program who simply can't make ends meet.

And that's because this program hadn't seen an increase in about a decade before they were offered a measly dollar a day in this past budget, Mr. Speaker. That represents about a 20 per cent cut in overall benefits to people with significant and enduring disabilities with barriers to employment, folks who often have no other option but to try to live off these meagre rates, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

This petition is also asking the government to stop their discriminatory clawback practices, including requiring people to dip into their CPP [Canada Pension Plan], leaving them less after they turn 65.

So with that, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to: (1) increase SAID rates to account for inflation; (2) respect the constitutional rights of folks with disabilities in this province; (3) index SAID rates going forward; and (4) provide targeted relief to those in deepest poverty, namely single individuals paying market rent.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Grand Opening of Early Years Family Resource Centre

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today to recognize the grand opening of the Regina Early Years Family Resource Centre on 5th Avenue in the heart of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. It's now administered by the resource centre, Mr. Speaker, and I attended this exciting event this last fall with colleagues from Douglas Park and Regina University.

I've been wanting to talk about this event for a while. The centre underwent extensive renovations, adding a large program room, outdoor space, and a community garden to offer families a welcoming and engaging environment. The centre comes with access to speech and language pathologists, nutritionists, barrier-free programming for families. All of this will lead to healthier kids, stronger families, and a more vibrant community. KidsFirst is in the building and referrals are just a phone call or drop-in away.

Mr. Speaker, the first five years of life are incredibly important. Sadly we continue to hear about the lack of spaces at child care centres leading to wait-lists across our province. I was concerned to hear that we've only achieved 17 per cent of our targeted child care spaces under the federal agreement. Seventeen per cent are operational; we hope to get that number to 38 per cent but it's simply not good enough, Mr. Speaker.

Affordable, secure, and well-delivered child care programs are instrumental to the health of our province and our economy and these opportunities that all children in our province should have access to and that parents should be able to count on. So with that, I'd ask members to join me in congratulating the centre. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

New Scholarships at First Nations University of Canada

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to reclaiming and preserving Indigenous languages in Saskatchewan. Today I was happy to attend the announcement of \$50,000 in funding towards new scholarships for students studying Indigenous languages at the First Nations University of Canada.

The Solomon Ratt Indigenous Language and Language Literacy Scholarship honours Solomon Ratt, a recently retired First Nations University of Canada Indigenous language and linguistics faculty member. The Indigenous Language Revitalization Entrance Scholarship is the first Indigenous language entrance scholarship being offered by the First Nations University of Canada. And lastly, the First Nation Language Instructor Certificate Scholarship will support learners enrolled in the First Nations language instructor certificate program encouraging careers in teaching Indigenous language.

Mr. Speaker, the First Nations University of Canada is a leader in providing Indigenous language education. It offers programs for five Indigenous languages, ranges from certificate to graduate programs. These programs not only protect and promote Indigenous languages, they are also helping train Indigenous language teachers in our province. And these students will help reclaim and preserve Indigenous languages in our province.

Mr. Speaker, the funding will benefit approximately 40 students each year. That's growth that works for everyone.

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

University of Saskatchewan Professor Awarded Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Terence Clark is an assistant professor in the department of archaeology and anthropology at the University of Saskatchewan. I had the pleasure of nominating Dr. Clark for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal. Dr. Clark does research in the areas of northwest coast archaeology, hunter-fisher-gatherers, computational archaeology, and landscape archaeology.

He worked with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to develop a plan for locating the remains of missing children at residential school sites across Canada. In Saskatoon, Dr. Clark worked with a team of students at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], providing hands-on training and experience locating unmarked gravesites at the Nutana Pioneer Cemetery in my riding. They used multiple non-evasive techniques to identify the graves without disturbing them. This work constructs a clearer picture of Saskatoon's first cemetery and is valuable learnings as the search continues for more unmarked graves at residential school sites across Canada.

Dr. Clark has collaborated with archaeologists and students at residential school sites across Canada in the very important work of searching for remains of residential school children. I sincerely thank Dr. Clark for the very important work that he does and congratulate him on receiving a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal.

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

Small Towns Help Stranded Buses in Winter Storm

Mr. Keisig: — What a storm we had last week. Mother nature is acting like a word I will not use in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. Last week the weather made for treacherous driving conditions with several school buses facing challenges. On the No. 1

Highway, a bus was involved in an accident. Only the driver was hurt. He's doing fine, Mr. Speaker, but almost 100 students needed assistance.

The communities of Indian Head and Wolseley stepped up to the plate. They provided food and shelter for all students helped by local businesses. Wolseley principal, Connie Baumgartner, involved local students and went above and beyond to make passengers feel at home.

Another bus travelling on Highway 11 between Saskatoon and Regina went into a skid and pulled into the first town available to wait out the storm. The community they pulled into was Craik. A large bus pulling into a small town attracts attention, Mr. Speaker, and the mayor, Mark Wagner, went to investigate. He contacted the school principal, Charla Edwards. The school was promptly opened for all stranded students. The community came together to look after everyone involved.

There's a simple saying prevalent across Saskatchewan: be neighbourly. And it was on full display last week. Thank you to all those helping stranded students in a very bad spring storm. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Remembering Lee Bellows

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with a heavy heart that I stand today to give my condolences to the family and the many friends of local celebrity, Lee Bellows. Lee passed away on March 23rd of this year.

Bellows, who was from Moose Jaw, was a long-time rodeo clown, barrel man, cowboy poet, and an absolute fan favourite. If you are a fan of rodeos, there is a good chance you may have been entertained by a Mr. Lee Bellows. His obituary shares a beautiful reflection, Mr. Speaker, and reads as follows:

Though he was perhaps best known as a beloved rodeo clown and cowboy poet, first and foremost Lee was a dedicated husband, father, and grandfather, and a friend. Before he met the love of his life, Teresa, he was a proud single parent at a time when single dads were few and far between. He spent his weekdays working as a livestock inspector for the Ministry of Agriculture while cooking Crock-Pot suppers, sewing badges on Brownie uniforms, and driving back and forth between baseball and hockey practices.

On the weekends, Lee, a self-declared rodeo addict, spent his time rodeoing every chance he got, and his accomplishments and contributions to the rodeo community were immeasurable. Lee never hesitated to lend a helping hand where one was needed.

Good ride, cowboy. Good ride.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer in 26th Year

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, this year Brayden Ottenbreit

Close Cuts for Cancer will celebrate its 26th year. What started out supporting a brave young boy's fight with cancer through our community raising funds for research through head shaves has grown through the years into multiple events. Birdhouse sales, Yorkton Hyundai's Close Cuts bucks, Tim Horton cookie sales, barbecues, and pancake breakfasts contribute to local initiatives supporting patients and families.

The annual head shaver is successful every year, raising funds for research through the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan. Last year was a record year, largely due to the help of Quick Dick McDick raising 60,000 alone. Over the years, over a million dollars has been raised for research and local cancer initiatives.

This year an exciting opportunity has arisen due to the generosity of philanthropists Knight Auto Group, Rowlco Radio, Broda Construction, Original 16 brewing, RBC [Royal Bank of Canada], and Brad Wall of Flying W Consulting who contacted Close Cuts with the offer of \$180,000 restomod 1970 Charger for the use of a fundraiser of choice.

Close Cuts has a great relationship with the cancer foundation so a partnership was formed, a raffle was developed, and is now under way. The car will tour Saskatchewan car shows until August 20th when it will go to a lucky new owner at the Saskatoon Cruise Weekend. This will be an amazing addition to the head-shave event scheduled for May 27th at Yorkton's Parkland Mall.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing the great work of the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan and the outstanding philanthropy of the Close Cuts charity Charger sponsors.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Reaches New Population Record

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, this past weekend Saskatchewan hit yet another record. Our population reached 1.22 million people. That puts us well on our way to achieving our growth plan target of 1.4 million people by 2030. As our Premier has previously said, this province's growing economy, job opportunities, and great quality of life are all reasons for the huge jump in population. In fact our very own Minister of Highways and his wife, Meagan, contributed to this population growth when they welcomed their newborn baby son to their family and our province just last week.

Mr. Speaker, this population growth is confirming what we already know to be true: Saskatchewan is the best place to live, work, and raise a family. And you know, Mr. Speaker, while the members opposite continue to talk down our economy, on this side of the House we are certainly proud of the growth that we are seeing.

When the NDP were in charge, we saw investments flee, population decrease, and our best and brightest settled elsewhere. But under this government we are seeing limitless potential in the form of jobs, economic growth, and opportunities, Mr. Speaker. And that is why 1.22 million people now call Saskatchewan

home.

We are proud that under this government we are seeing record investments and population growth. And, Mr. Speaker, we can truly say that this is growth that works for everyone.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Management of Health Care System

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver on front after front. Nowhere is it more clear than in health care. Hush memos sent to health care workers, hundreds of people told no when they called for an ambulance, and blanket forts in hospital hallways instead of the beds that patients desperately need. After 16 years in office, this is their record on health care.

When will this tired and out-of-touch Premier finally take some responsibility for the mess that they've made in our health care system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There is no doubt that there is required investment, Mr. Speaker, not just in health care delivery of service here in this province of Saskatchewan but across the nation.

That's why premiers have addressed the national transfer, Mr. Speaker, from the federal government to the provinces, of which we were happy to see an increase in that transfer. And that's why you are seeing all provinces, but in particular I would say the province of Saskatchewan, coming forward with initiatives that are focused on hiring, bringing people, bringing people to our front lines to assist those that are there today offering services in community after community across this province, Mr. Speaker.

That's why you've seen the ministers of Health and this government come forward with the most ambitious health human resource plan in the nation, a plan that continues to focus on immigration, Mr. Speaker, bringing folks in, recruiting folks from around the world. It focuses on the retention of the folks that we have in those health care facilities today, Mr. Speaker.

We're training more nurses, more doctors, more health care workers across the province with 700 more spaces, Mr. Speaker, announced by the Minister of Advanced Education. And we are incentivizing a number of positions in hard-to-recruit locations and designations within the health care system, Mr. Speaker.

The most ambitious health human resource plan in the nation of Canada, it's happening right here in the province of Saskatchewan. And in the next question, I'm going to get into some of the numbers that are being hired, Mr. Speaker, real people that are coming to the front lines to provide that assistance.

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

Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we have a premier incapable of taking any responsibility, and it's not a very good look. But it's not just in health care where he's failing to deliver. Let's look at public education.

School divisions in Regina are raising the alarm about his failure to support kids in our classroom, and the School Boards Association has been crystal clear about what this means: "School boards need to consider options that might include staffing and programming cuts."

Why is this out-of-touch Premier forcing even more cuts on our classrooms while they're sitting on windfall revenues?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[14:00]

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as you saw last year, there was a number of investments that were made mid-year that will take our school divisions through this particular classroom. As you saw in the budget that was delivered by the Deputy Premier here just under a month ago, Mr. Speaker, you saw unprecedented investment in education, an increase of 6.7 per cent year over year into the education system, ensuring that those funds are available, Mr. Speaker.

And the fact of the matter is, according to Stats Canada — Statistics Canada, Mr. Speaker, who doesn't lie — we have in this province the highest per capita invested in primary and secondary schooling among all of the provinces in the nation. That's an investment metric that we most certainly are proud of, Mr. Speaker.

But in saying that, in saying that, as we find our way through this spring into the fall with population numbers that are coming into our schools due to record growth, record growth of our population, the highest population growth in 108 years, over a century, Mr. Speaker, unheard of under the members opposite when they were in government.

The Minister of Education, he's meeting with a number of school divisions later this week, next week, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Education is consistently meeting with our school divisions to ensure that where there are challenges, those are being met with proper and appropriate investment from this government time and time again.

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

Cost of Living

Ms. Beck: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I dare the Premier to use that 6.7 per cent number or those lines when he meets with school boards because they know the reality. And the reality is that the funding provided by this government is not keeping up with the rising costs the boards are facing.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's not just school boards, it's not just kids, but families are falling behind too. And this budget does nothing to help people with the cost-of-living crisis. Mr. Speaker, those

aren't my words. Those are also the words of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. And despite windfall revenues and while 52 per cent of people are struggling to pay their bills in this province, there was nothing in this budget for families.

Does this tired and out-of-touch Premier even understand how much people are struggling right now just to pay their bills?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I think the best way to answer that question is just to do a comparison. Here in this province for a family household that may have about \$100,000 gross income into that family household, after paying all their federal and provincial income tax, their sales tax, their utility bills, their housing costs, there's about, in Saskatchewan, about \$58,815 remaining in that Saskatchewan family. That's the highest number in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Let's by comparison's sake go to a place like NDP BC [British Columbia], Mr. Speaker. That same family with that same \$100,000 of income that might reside in Vancouver, after paying all of their taxes, their utilities, and their housing costs, what would they have available as disposable income? 11,968, not 58,000 like they would in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And this is why you are seeing, Mr. Speaker, in this province more people, more people that are moving into our communities. You're seeing more opportunities for those families, and you're seeing a government that understands that we are investing that growth. We're investing that growth, Mr. Speaker, in everyone across the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Provincial Economy and Job Creation

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch Premier does not have a clue when it comes to the challenges that people in this province are facing every day, and it shows. It shows in that answer and it shows in that attitude day after day. Since that Premier came to office, he has the worst job creation record in the country. Mr. Speaker, it isn't even close: 3.9 per cent. And his terrible record on jobs is a direct result of his failure to invest in education, in health care, and it's a direct result of his choice to drive up costs for businesses and drive down our ability to compete.

To the Premier: do you have any idea . . . Do you accept any responsibility for the fact that you have the worst job creation record in the country?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, in this province we are very much reliant on exports, producing food and fuel and fertilizer for folks all around the world, delivering to over 150 countries around the world. And I'm happy to report that those exports year over year are up some 32 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And in producing those products — the cleanest agri-food products in the world, the cleanest potash in the world, providing it around the world, Mr. Speaker — we year over year have

10,000 more people working in this province. They're part of the 20,000 people that have moved here in the last four and a half months, population growth that is exceeding any rate of population growth in over a century here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite may refer to the Saskatchewan economy as a dumpster fire. They may refer to the Saskatchewan economy as there's nothing here to be proud of, as they continually run down what hard-working Saskatchewan residents do each and every day, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we tend to agree, we tend to agree with The Conference Board of Canada that refers to what's happening in Saskatchewan and our labour mark . . . as being scorching hot in 2022.

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

Provincial Economy and Jurisdiction over Natural Resources

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the only thing scorching hot is that Premier's rhetoric, probably described as a flaming pile of spin. But Saskatchewan people know that this government's decision to impose the PST [provincial sales tax] on construction labour by that Premier, that government, was a mistake from day one. It's the epitome of a job-killing tax, a tax on jobs and a tax on investment. That decision combined with that government's power and energy hikes, Mr. Speaker, it drives away jobs and investment.

When will this tired and out-of-touch government and that Premier acknowledge the real damage their PST and power and energy hikes are doing to people and our economy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, such a short memory my tired and out-of-touch friend has. It is in this province that under an NDP administration, there was a 9 per cent PST charged across the board to residents in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is the NDP government that is propping up Justin Trudeau in the most inefficient and silly carbon tax that is being charged not only to the people of Saskatchewan but people across the nation of Canada.

Most certainly, most certainly in this province, the largest threat that we have to economic growth and the opportunity that is available for all, Mr. Speaker, is continuing to prop up that federal Liberal administration in advancing the carbon tax, advancing the clean electricity standard, or advocating — as members of the NDP have been — the removal of the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement in this province. That agreement is in place to ensure that we are able to advance and accelerate the economy here so that all can ultimately benefit, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite have stood that that Natural Resources Transfer Agreement should be removed, Mr. Speaker. Most certainly that is the largest threat to growth and opportunity for all Saskatchewan people, whether you be Indigenous,

non-Indigenous, Mr. Speaker, or on your way here.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, that's the Premier of Saskatchewan over there. He should have responsibility to the people of this province. This side has been crystal clear on our opposition to the federal carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. We've been crystal clear when it comes to the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history brought to you by that government, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to the NRTA [Natural Resources Transfer Agreement], our leader said this last week:

From our perspective, it's very clear that the provinces do have jurisdiction over our natural resources, something that was enshrined in the Constitution in 1982 by Allan Blakeney and Peter Lougheed.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP recognizes the jurisdiction. That guy spins and deflects.

But the question's back to the competitive disadvantage he's placing Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, at a time when we're fighting for capital and for labour. From rare earth processing to manufacturing to new building investments, Saskatchewan should be a place where projects get built not shelved.

All too often under . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . When will the Premier accept some responsibility and make sure projects move forward? Scrap the . . .

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well I hear about 12 different statements in there, Mr. Speaker. But what these members opposite need to be crystal clear on, this government is absolutely crystal clear that the natural resources of this province belong to the people of Saskatchewan because of the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, that that is the operative constitutional law.

They have been very equivocal on this. That member says one thing; the member for Saskatoon Centre says something entirely different, Mr. Speaker. These members, these members need to stand up — the member for Saskatoon Centre — and be unequivocal that the NRTA is the law of the land. The NRTA is fully supported by this side of the House. We have not had any equivocation. There is an open question, Mr. Speaker, as to what their position is. They need to stand up right now — all of those members — and make clear what their position is.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — That minister has trouble keeping up, Mr. Speaker. I was just clear about where we stood on this, Mr. Speaker. Natural resources are the jurisdiction of our province.

But that tired and out-of-touch government and Premier can deny reality all he wants, but the facts remain. The PST, the revenue agency, the power and energy hikes — all those costs add up. This is a government choosing to make us less competitive, not

more competitive, and at a time where we see large incentives rolled out south of the border with the *Inflation Reduction Act*, Mr. Speaker.

This government should be laser focused on making Saskatchewan the place where people and businesses choose to be. Why won't this tired Premier scrap the PST on construction labour to help fire up jobs and investment?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — The members opposite have a problem, Mr. Speaker, because they are speaking out of both sides of their mouth on this issue. They attended . . . The NDP spoke in support at the launching of a lawsuit against the Government of Saskatchewan that asserts that the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement is not constitutional. That is what they did, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite have an obligation and a responsibility because this is something that is absolutely central to the future of this province. This government has been unequivocal. The people of Saskatchewan own their natural resources not Justin Trudeau. They have been saying different things, Mr. Speaker. They need to clarify.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the question was about the PST on construction labour and about projects like rare earth minerals that are being shelved. And certainly that PST on construction labour and all the power and energy bill hikes of that government are hurting people and our province.

And the damage done to our economy is laid bare in the latest numbers on retail sales. Saskatchewan's growth in retail sales was below the national average in February, way below — just 4.1 per cent year over year — 8th out of 10 provinces, eighth place, Mr. Speaker.

Does this tired and out-of-touch Premier recognize the damage of their economic policies, and the toll that they're taking on retail sales, small businesses, and households across Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — He refused to answer the question, Mr. Speaker. He refused to address the issue. The NDP, the NDP have a completely . . . They don't have an ambiguous position. The NDP spoke at and in support of a lawsuit against the Government of Saskatchewan that asserts that the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, transferring resource ownership to the people of this province, is invalid. They took the position that natural resources belong to Justin Trudeau and the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, this is a direct threat to the economy of this province. For over 100 years, natural resources have been a central component of why our economy has moved forward. And

in the last 16 years, Mr. Speaker, they have been incredibly important, and this government has worked very hard to see those resources developed in a responsible way. Those members though have taken a position now that Justin Trudeau owns those natural resources — entirely irresponsible. They need to stand up and make clear what their position is.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we'll be crystal clear as we have day after day. The natural resources are the jurisdiction of the province. We stand in support of the NRTA, Mr. Speaker, which is in our Constitution. But that minister there, he wants to deflect from his failures — economically dead last, cost of living making things worse, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

Fifty-two per cent of Saskatchewan people are in bad shape or terrible shape financially, barely getting by. You know, and from that government, not a stitch of relief, just more taxes and hikes, Mr. Speaker. We see that failure on every metric: job creation, the number of people leaving our province, and now, with respect to retail sales, 8th out of 10, Mr. Speaker.

When will that Premier accept any responsibility for the damage of his choices, and when will he step up and offer some action and relief to make things better?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again the member opposite refuses to answer the question. They're going to have to do so afterwards in scrums after question period, so I will leave that there.

Mr. Speaker, though, what is clear is the economic record of this government: 9,500 jobs created over the course of the last year; 1.22 million population, something just announced today; a government that is absolutely focused on growing our exports around the world, as reflected today in a very significant memorandum of co-operation signed with the Japan overseas investment corporation, the president and CEO who we had the honour of sitting with us here in the Chamber today, Mr. Speaker.

This government will continue to be focused on growing those exports, up 32 per cent over the course of the last year. Wholesale trade up 30 per cent, Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last year. Nearly 20,000 jobs listed on SaskJobs.ca. And all the NDP can do is talk down the economy every chance they get.

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

Increased Enrolment and Funding for Education

Mr. Love: — Oh boy, Mr. Speaker. Let's be crystal clear here about one thing: school divisions in this province know that this government isn't supporting education. And last week the boards here in Regina made their concerns known, and they're calling for more supports.

Darren Boldt, the director and CEO of Regina Public Schools, said:

We've seen 600 students come to our schools since September 30th, when we would've received our funding adjustment. We have not been able to add staff because of not receiving funding for those students.

Simple question for the minister: will you use windfall revenues to fund those students in Regina schools today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member will know that in November of last year, because of the unanticipated by school divisions increase in enrolment, we did provide in-year money for this school year. That has been provided to those school divisions, Mr. Speaker.

We are seeing enrolment growth the greatest it's been in at least 20 years, Mr. Speaker, which runs a little bit counter to what the members opposite say, because they want to say that people are leaving the province. But apparently they're leaving their kids behind when they leave the province, Mr. Speaker, because enrolment is the highest it's been in at least 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be meeting with the school divisions in the coming weeks. They have written to me, and I'll be happy to discuss that with them. But I will say this, Mr. Speaker: Regina Catholic School Division has an increase of 4.4 per cent this year; Saskatoon Catholic, 4.6 per cent; Saskatoon Public, 3.9 per cent; Regina Public, 2.6 per cent; Lloydminster, 5.3 per cent. And that's without having a negotiated collective bargaining agreement. The teachers' contract ends in August, and we look forward to beginning those negotiations.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, that minister should know the funding adjustment he's talking about was based on September numbers. These numbers today are since that time, and he should know that. But since he brought up Regina Catholic, let's have a look at what they said. Shauna Weninger, the board Chair for Regina Catholic Schools, said this:

It's a huge celebration to have immigration of any kind or enrolment growth of any kind. But it isn't fair to anyone arriving or anyone that's currently here to not be funded.

I couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister, who didn't step up with the funding that was needed at budget time, make sure that these new students are funded so they can get the supports that they need? Yes or no?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I've indicated to the school boards, and I will be indicating to these school boards when I meet with them in the next couple of weeks, Mr. Speaker, is that the way that we have done budgeting in the past when school divisions present their projections in January . . . And what we've seen in the last two years is that

enrolment that we do receive in September has . . . Essentially we have, the school divisions have undercounted their enrolment based on January, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — You shortchanged them.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — But we do know . . . Well no, Mr. Speaker. What we did was we provided additional money at the end of last calendar year that did provide additional millions of dollars in additional money, Mr. Speaker.

What I've said is we would be looking to discuss with school divisions whether or not this is temporary as we move through the backlog of immigration delays that have been caused by COVID, or is this going to be the new norm, that school divisions will continue to receive additional enrolment after September, after October, into November, December, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and so I'm looking forward to having those conversations in the next couple of weeks.

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

Workplace Fatalities and Injuries

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, last week the Workers' Compensation Board released its annual report. That report included the number of worker fatalities in Saskatchewan last year. The provincial average since 1990 has been 34 deaths a year. Last year the number was 39. Five more deaths, Mr. Speaker.

People in this province go to work to make a living. They trust that their employer and their government will keep them alive until it's time to go home. When it comes to those workers, even one death is completely unacceptable, but we're moving in the wrong direction.

What is the minister going to do to stop the rise of workplace fatalities in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. This is something that can and should be taken seriously, not just as a political issue on the floor of the Assembly but by every workplace across the province.

The member opposite is absolutely correct: every worker deserves to be employed in a safe workplace. And our government is taking action to ensure that that happens. We released a three-year provincial fatalities and serious injuries strategy in 2019, and a new five-year strategy has been developed to replace the previous one. Since our government took office in 2007, the total injury rate has fallen by 56 per cent and the time-loss injury rate has fallen by some 40 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, there's still a lot of work left to do. We're making progress, but I would say this to every worker in this province: it's taken seriously by employers; it's taken seriously by

Workers' Compensation Board; and I think it's taken seriously by every MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] in this House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 134 — *The Education Amendment Act, 2023* *Loi modificative de 2023 sur l'éducation*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to move second reading of Bill No. 134, *The Education Amendment Act, 2023* which proposes several amendments to *The Education Act, 1995* and other related Education statutes to establish requirements for the provision of online learning in the province.

Last fiscal year our government established a new treasury board Crown, the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation, to deliver centralized online education in the province. Starting in 2023-24 school year, all Saskatchewan students will have access to the Sask DLC [Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre]. As with in-class learning in Saskatchewan, the new provincial online school will provide free education for its students up to the age of 22.

The new model of delivering online education in the province will provide greater choice and more opportunities for all students in the province, while ensuring that all students accessing online learning are receiving a consistent, high-quality education experience.

The proposed amendments in *The Education Amendment Act, 2023* establishes the requirement for providing online learning in the province and ensure the authority for the Sask DLC [Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation] to deliver online learning provincially.

The bill will be amended to include a definition of online learning education and approved online learning providers in the province. The definition for online learning is consistent with legislation in other provinces such as British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments in the bill will also enable the establishment of new provisions to provide the minister with oversight and regulatory powers related to online learning education in the province, including the Sask DLC. This section will also enable separate school divisions, the Conseil des écoles fransaskoises, and independent schools to provide online learning, contingent upon approval from the Minister of Education.

A new section will be included in the bill to provide the Sask DLC with similar duties and responsibilities to boards of education and the conseil scolaire as it relates to managing education affairs, supervision of pupils, internal organization of schools, administrative procedures, maintenance of equipment and facilities, employment of teachers and other personnel, and

their reporting requirements.

I propose amendments to section 141 in *The Education Act, 1995* on the right to education to provide similar requirements to the Sask DLC for students' rights to education at the cost of the school division or the Sask DLC.

Mr. Speaker, the bill proposes amendments to establish similar collective bargaining, teacher contracts, and supervision requirements for the Sask DLC as school divisions. Furthermore, proposed amendments in the bill include the authority for the minister to provide capital and operating grants to the Sask DLC for its operation. Proposed amendments in the bill will reflect the terms and conditions of employment of teachers to ensure a smooth transition of operations starting May 1st, 2023.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of Bill 134, *The Education Amendment Act, 2023*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 134 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter comments into the record on behalf of the official opposition with regards to Bill 134, *The Education Amendment Act, 2023*.

The minister's just provided an overview of the bill. This bill would create the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre and give it the same scope as boards of education and the conseil scolaire in *The Education Act*. Students will be permitted to be absent from board or conseil scolaire schools to attend online school.

I'll cut to the chase, Mr. Speaker. The opposition . . . We don't support the further centralization of power and resource into the Ministry of Education. We've seen how this has gone before. We've spoken to teachers on the front line. This isn't what they're asking for. This isn't what they need right now.

You know, it's really spectacular how this government is getting it so wrong on the education file. Coming out of the pandemic, when things are harder than ever, we have students with more intensive needs than ever. Since 2007 we've seen the needs around intensive supports go up by 38 per cent.

And this Minister of Education has seen fit to pass a budget that doesn't cut it. For some school divisions it's going to mean cuts. We used to be leading the nation when it came to per-student funding, Mr. Speaker. We used to be leading the nation, and now we are eighth. We have fallen to the back of the pack coming out of a pandemic. Why?

We have windfall resource revenues, Mr. Speaker. This government is deciding to prioritize things like collecting our own taxes, something that no one asked for, creating an American-style marshal service, while our students and our classrooms go without. Let's be clear about that. Let's be clear about that. There are resources. There is money in the bank. It's just not going to students.

And we have the worst jobs growth in the country. We have labour crises. Where do we think we're going to get that skilled

labour pool, Mr. Speaker? By investing in education. And the most important facet of education is those per-student dollars, the amount of resources and supports that they have in the classroom. Mr. Speaker, there is no wonder that folks, as we speak, are planning to protest this government out there this weekend, this coming weekend. They've had enough. They've had enough, Mr. Speaker.

The issues are worse than ever. Our classrooms are literally bursting at the seams. We have more newcomers than ever, which is great, but we know that with that comes more need for language supports, EAL [English as an additional language], Mr. Speaker. We know that classrooms have never been this complex. They've never been this complex.

[14:30]

Like I said, a 38 per cent in the need for intensive supports since that Sask Party took government in 2007. We have one psychologist for every 2,822 students. We have one speech pathologist for every 1,345 students. We have one social worker for every 2,900 students. These students need more supports. Teachers on the ground, education workers on the ground need more supports, Mr. Speaker. The lack of prioritization of our children is going to cost us for generations. It will.

Mr. Speaker, this is not what we should be prioritizing right now. The Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre, no one asked for it. It's not what we need right now. We should be taking those resources and reorienting them to the classroom. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. We need to support the good folks on the ground right now, Mr. Speaker.

Twenty-seven school boards have spoken out. They've been very clear that this budget doesn't cut it. And I suspect we'll be hearing more and more about that, Mr. Speaker, in the days and weeks and months ahead, because this government is trying to spin this education budget. But it doesn't cut it. And in many cases not only does it not keep up with ongoing costs. It's going to represent cuts, cuts to the classroom, again coming out of a pandemic, coming out of some of the most challenging times that our teachers and our education workers and our families and our students have experienced in this province around education in decades.

We on this side, we've been calling on this government for investments. We really thought that we would see, with this budget, this government taking these concerns seriously, investing in our future generation, investing in kids, investing in the classrooms. Instead we see the complete opposite, and it's a shame, Mr. Speaker.

So I know that our critic, the critic for Education has been engaging already. I mean, teachers have been pretty vocal already about the fact that they don't think that this is where we need to be going right now, Mr. Speaker. And for the life of me, I don't understand why this government keeps prioritizing things that no one asked for: a Saskatchewan revenue agency, an American-style marshal service. These are not what we need to be investing in right now, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, I look forward to hearing more from my colleagues. I know that everyone on our team has a lot to say about this,

because we all have individuals in our constituencies that are very concerned about where this government is headed with respect to not only K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education, but with respect to post-secondary education, Mr. Speaker. And I know that our critic will have a lot to say about this bill. So with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 134, *The Education Amendment Act, 2023*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 135 — *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on Bill No. 135, *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*. I'll keep it very brief, Mr. Speaker.

Amendments to a number of education-related statutes are being made to reflect the changes in the bill. The main purpose of these amendments is to add and define the SDLC [Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation] as an employer in these statutes. And so with that I will move that Bill No. 135, *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023* be now read a second time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 135 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet and enter initial remarks on Bill 135, *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*. I understand this is a bill that contains amendments to reflect this government's change in terms of adding the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to let the remarks I entered into the record on Bill No. 34 stand with respect to Bill No. 135. So with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 135, *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to be on my feet and enter into debate on Bill No. 128, *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act, 2023*. As has already been indicated by my colleague and caucus members, this essentially is a bill that has one unique feature, and that is striking out 10 per cent and replacing it with 30 per cent as the tax credit for this sector.

So of course, you know, we are very supportive of our world-class minerals industry and want to see them remain competitive, particularly when neighbouring jurisdictions such as Manitoba are creating an environment that may incline investors to that jurisdiction instead.

But I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that investors look for overall, you know, benefits when looking to where they're going to make investments. And that's certainly what we've seen from this out-of-touch government is a failure to create an environment that is going to be welcoming and supportive of world-class investments in our jurisdiction.

Certainly we've heard already today talk about the labour shortage, the lack of investments in education to create that labour pool and provide those good, mortgage-paying jobs here in Saskatchewan, and that simply this government is not doing enough to overall incentivize the creation of this sector here in Saskatchewan.

You know, it's interesting that in a year when we had record resource revenues that this government could not find a single dime to provide financial relief to regular people here in the province. And yet, you know, if we're going to see an overall climate for investment and a climate for attracting and keeping workers here in Saskatchewan, that we need to have more well-rounded approaches than what this government is doing with this particular Act. And by offering no tax relief in this current budget, you know, it's created a lot of economic hardship and difficulty for Saskatchewan people.

I would further note that it is disappointing that the members opposite did not vote in favour of the meaningful duty-to-consult bill that was brought forward by my colleague, the member for Saskatoon Centre, last week. The lack of support for that bill and the lack of certainty in that duty-to-consult framework, I would submit, is going to create further regulatory uncertainty that will further, further discourage investment here in Saskatchewan and in particular within the critical minerals sector.

Of course we know that having a lead and a foothold in that industry is essential at this time, as we see what is happening south of the border with the IRA [*Inflation Reduction Act*], that our government has come forward to attract investment. We are competing on an international stage, and the means by which we need to stay competitive need to be comprehensive.

I find it interesting that when we had mining executives come to our legislature last spring, that their family members are declining to join their spouses in coming to Saskatchewan. What does that tell us? That tells us that we are not doing a good enough job attracting talent and attracting families to this province. And it's not enough just to strike out a number in an

Act, and it's too narrow-minded.

We need a government that can be more visionary and wide-ranging in its thinking about how we continue to grow this important sector, this sector that is going to be critically important as we move forward to . . . you know, and the emerging economy, one that has great potential to provide for jobs, good mortgage-paying jobs moving forward.

But we need to get that strategy right, and I would say this government is failing on many fronts, many fronts. Whether it's with the crisis in our health care sector, whether it's in our education sector, whether it's with our relationships with First Nation and Métis rights holders here in the province, and on so many fronts, when we're ignoring that bigger picture, we're not creating a climate for investment that is going to attract companies here to Saskatchewan. They will have very strong reservations, and it needs to be a more comprehensive picture.

Now we know that there are many critical minerals that are important as this new sector emerges, whether that be lithium, cobalt, copper, nickel, zinc, and other rare earth metals. And these are important for things such as batteries and solar panels, computer chips, and electrical transmission lines. I mean the uses are endless; the need is great.

We want to see investments be attracted to Saskatchewan so that we can be part of that economy moving forward. And I have to say that it's a shame that this government isn't doing enough to make certain that that happens. And certainly the news coming out about the pause by vital minerals is also a discouraging sign to see that they haven't been able to attract investment. I hope that this government is staying engaged and looking at ways that we can ensure that that important facility that's employing many people here in the province will continue to go forward.

I know that our critic for this bill will have a lot to say and is engaging widely and seeking the feedback, as well as the rest of my colleagues, and I'll leave them to do that important work. So with that, I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 128.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — miigwech, Mr. Speaker. It's good to be entering my remarks on Bill No. 129, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023*. So it's my understanding that physician assistants will have those same rights and obligations as physicians and so on, and physician assistants will be the legally

protected title.

You know, when we're thinking about enhancing our health sector and the health care that we provide, it's always good to be innovative, you know. And when I think of providing health care for the people in this province, that it's always important to have somebody there that will do the care and the good quality care that we need in this province.

So this brought me back to the work that I did when I used to work in the health sector and in primary health care. And we had nurse practitioners that were hired back then that would work alongside physicians and would have the ability to carry out the duties that they carried out. And in Saskatoon where I worked, there were a number of nurse practitioners that worked in many primary health sites, and they worked in a very interdisciplinary, intersectoral way, and it brought a lot to the community. And that was refreshing to have the privilege of working with nurse practitioners in there.

[14:45]

And so when I think about the work back when I was doing that work, it was always good, very good, to be working and communicating and working collaboratively with those front-line care workers that were providing those services. Because we viewed them as the experts in those areas, that they're the ones delivering that care, and it was essential for them to be engaged in those conversations. And from there, they advised many of us on how to work more in an interdisciplinary manner and more in a collaborative manner.

And with this announcement of having 12 medical professionals working, I just . . . I am thinking we live in a province, in this province — it's a huge province — and I think 12 people. You know, it brings me back to the work that I have done as . . . working in those areas and often being the lone Indigenous person. That's a lot to ask for 12 people.

You know, all the work that . . . You know, I just had a recent experience with the health care system and I was so grateful, so grateful for the nurses, the physicians at the emergency room who took exceptional care for my husband.

Going back, it was a very different experience. Going back . . . Working in that hospital years ago to now going back as an elected official, my husband getting care, it was astonishing to see how many others that were in the emergency room waiting area were being treated in there and not in the emergency room ward. And in spite of that, the nurses, the doctors, the specialists were wonderful. And these emergency rooms are bursting, have been bursting at the seams.

And when I think about meaningfully engaging those that are delivering those services and those that are going to be impacted, especially in health, I think about the nurses, I think about the physicians, because they're the ones that are taking care of the people in this province when it comes to health care. And it's important that those voices are heard.

We have medical grads. And I remember when I worked in the health sector, taking medical students out to the First Nation communities and taking them out there to speak with the

community folks and driving around in the community and working with them, and them asking me questions, they were surprised with how big some of these communities were. And they had many questions when it came to health care.

And one of the things that I remember when I was working with medical grads, and we conversed quite a bit, was the experience. Many wanted to do their residencies out in the rural communities. And some of them that had the opportunity to do their work out in northern Saskatchewan, they found it was very enriching for them.

And I think there would be a really good opportunity, with over 300 medical grads . . . It would be an opportunity to seize that, to give them the skills, the experience of working in our vast province, in our rural communities. And it also would be an opportunity to immerse them in our communities so that they will choose to be here in our communities.

And when I was doing my own studies, I looked at physician retention in this province and looking at better ways of delivering health care with the people that were delivering those services. You know, I think about those individuals, those 12 individuals, the enormous expectation that will be put on them to deliver. I worry about burnout. We have many of our nurses, doctors, that have burnt-out.

It's important that we look at innovative ways. And it's essentially important to engage those that are going to be delivering those services, like the nurses, the physicians, because they're the ones that have a pulse of the community, the communities that they work in.

I'm sure, I know, my colleagues have all weighed in on this. And I just wanted to enter my remarks and have on record here, from my experience working in the health sector, the importance of engaging those that are delivering those services in a meaningful way because they are the experts.

And the critic for this area I'm sure will have many, many more questions to ask on this. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I adjourn debate on Bill No. 129, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief in my comments on Bill 130 and even more brief following on the next

piece before the Assembly.

But as far as *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act* of 2023, you know, I took time to review the legislation, comments already on the record from my colleagues and from the minister, to look at the implications of the creation of a new Crown corporation, Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan, or LGS as it's referred to in *Hansard*, and some of the consequences for this.

First of all, you know, we certainly support modernization of legal online gaming. I think that's a significant and important change that we have seen in our province and across the country to ensure that those revenues are staying here and to ensure that there is robust consumer protection and a plan that creates a culture of safe play. We know that there are many risks for individuals and thereby risks for our society if this is not done in a safe way.

I also want to take a moment to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, you know, we've got to look at the history here of this Sask Party government's attacks on the liquor side of SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] and those hundreds of workers who lost their jobs just before the holidays when this announcement was made in a Throne Speech, and how that caught so many folks off guard. You know, that's the history that we have with this government. And certainly we want to make sure that there is not privatization in the future here that will threaten those good-paying jobs in Saskatchewan.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just affirm the good work that's done with some of the revenue from gaming that goes to folks like the Community Initiatives Fund, culture and sport organizations in our province, and all those good folks that are using some of the revenue that comes here towards culture and sport and community programs that strengthen our communities. We want to make sure that that is intact. I understand from my colleague, our current critic for Parks, Culture and Sport, that that will be maintained, that that won't be touched. Certainly we'll be keeping a close eye on that as we watch this Act and these amendments come to force.

But with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll move that we adjourn debate on Bill 130. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — 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 Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be very brief on Bill 131. I've put a number of comments on the record with the previous piece of legislation, and I believe they spoke to things that I would say for Bill 131. So at this time I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 131, *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — 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 Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour today to rise and speak to Bill No. 132, *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Amendment Act*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just first want to thank the honourable minister opposite for the wholesome comments that he put on the record in regards to this bill. And I want to thank my colleagues who have also made thoughtful remarks. I know that our critic has been examining this bill and will have further questions in committee.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to put a few comments on the record today. You know, boilers, as this legislation goes over, are complex machines. It's important that legislation like this gets it right for the safety of the workers who interact with these highly complex machines.

So I should also make a quick thank you to all the folks in this province who do that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's important when we look at legislation like this, as it does represent so many highly trained individuals. These are good jobs that folks in Saskatchewan, you know, studied a long time to engage in this kind of work, learning how to repair, how to fix, how to install these units in buildings.

You know, I think everybody . . . I don't know. Maybe I'm the only one. I think everyone has a boiler story. I know my partner used to live in an old brick building in downtown Saskatoon where, all winter long, the rads would just hiss and run. And they were so old that you could no longer turn off those boilers, and so the hot water would just pump all the time. And you'd have your windows wide open in the middle of winter, trying to get some cold air because your whole apartment was just absolutely boiling. As a boiler . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, we have

a lot of folks who also live in similar buildings like that in Regina.

And then I remember we moved into another older brick-style building that used to be a nurses' residence in downtown Saskatoon, and the bedroom we had chosen was directly above the boilers. And here and there, the boiler system would just start going bonanza in the basement and making all sorts of noise. And we'd text and have to run down and get instructions on pressing buttons on the panel. But you know, suffice it to say that these boilers provide the important warmth we all need through the long, cold Saskatchewan winters.

[15:00]

And I have to say that the one thing I do really miss was the endless hot water that you could get out of living in an apartment with a boiler. You could just have those hot showers just running. Nothing like that anymore when you have those small hot-water tanks. Too much information, possibly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the legislature here today.

In short, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this bill looks at some new regulations in regards to the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan or TSASK, as well as brings in some new regulations around up and coming automation of those boiler systems. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we're seeing is the opportunity for technology to play a role in monitoring the boiler systems in situations where they would have to have an employee or someone monitoring that boiler system 24 hours just because of the complexity of the situation.

So what we're seeing in this Act is legislation that's allowing the chief boiler inspector to go in, green-light boilers, and allow those boilers, once they've been inspected, to run with this automation system. And you know, from what I understand from the minister's comments, is that this will have a really positive implication on ag producers who will be using these machines. I know the minister mentioned that they use them for feed production or different things in their businesses. So what we'll see is that it will offer an efficiency and affordability measure for folks running those businesses to have these automated boilers, as opposed to boilers that need to be managed 24 hours a day by a person.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have stood in this House and I have talked about, you know, how I personally and our party is always in support of the elimination of red tape where maybe red tape is causing more costs to businesses, small businesses, farmers. Important but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we have to stress in any situation is, like I mentioned before, balanced safety. You know, I think the public deserves to know that the boiler systems that are being autonomously operated are going to not just explode or injure or harm anybody.

You know, the member from Regina Douglas Park today stood and brought a very emotional, important question to this House. She talked about incidents of workplace deaths, and I thank the minister opposite for his response to that question. There's always more we can do around ensuring that fatalities in the workplace don't happen, and so there is some concern around loosening regulation around boilers. You know, you want to make sure that an accident isn't going to happen when you're loosening restrictions and cutting red tape.

And lastly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just raise the concerns of the folks who are doing these jobs currently. If you're seeing folks who are doing those inspections, seeing those inspections lessen through automation, of course, or you're seeing people lose jobs who have previously been supervising those boilers, you know, of course we're going to start seeing a shift towards automation in so many sectors. What is our plan? What is our government . . . As a province, how are we addressing shifts towards automation and job loss?

You know, we're not seeing a fantastic five-year jobs numbers here in the province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so certainly something to think about. Automation will be affecting everyone, and how are we going to see . . . In the future, how are we going to continue to support folks who have to transition into new jobs as jobs continue to change?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I have really covered off so much about boilers and pressure vessels today. I appreciate this opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and so I will now move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 132, *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Amendment Act, 2023*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — 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 Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to enter into adjourned debate with respect to Bill 133, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this bill will extend the manufacturing and processing exporter incentive for one additional year, up until December 31st, 2023. This incentive provides non-refundable tax credits to eligible corporations that increase the number of manufacturing- and processing-related full-time employees above the number of those who were employed in 2014.

Mr. Speaker, certainly we do support on this side of the House incentivizing good employment for folks here in Saskatchewan, particularly when it comes to the creation of full-time jobs as opposed to precarious, low-wage employment which is a growing issue in our society that is negatively impacting workers, and particularly in Saskatchewan where we maintain the lowest minimum wage in the entire country — a poverty wage, Mr. Speaker.

However the opposition certainly does expect to see evidence presented by the Sask Party government to show that these incentives are actually working as intended. Seeing as the government is looking to extend these incentives further to

corporations, you would think that there must be evidence to support this, Mr. Speaker, but we can never be too sure with this government. We didn't see any comments to that effect presented by the minister in her remarks, which would seem rather relevant here, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, the fact is that we're the only province with negative full-time job growth last year, and so we do have to question just how scorching hot our economy actually is here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, despite what the Premier is so fond of claiming. And similarly we do have to question this government's methods when they claim to be strengthening employment, and whether or not those methods truly have the impact that this government might represent.

So, Mr. Speaker, our critic will be checking in with stakeholders to ensure that this legislation is actually effective and that an extension of the incentives contemplated here are warranted. And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I will now move that we adjourn debate on Bill 133, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committee this afternoon and this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The Government House Leader moved the motion to adjourn this House. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — This House is now adjourned until tomorrow, 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:08.]

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