



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

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



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes

Premier — Hon. Scott Moe

Leader of the Opposition — Carla Beck

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Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)

Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)

Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)

Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)

Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)

Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)

Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)

Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)

Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)

Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)

Hargrave, Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)

Harrison, Daryl — Cannington (SP)

Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)

Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)

Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)

Kaeding, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (SP)

Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

McLeod, Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)

McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)

Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)

Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

Skoropad, Hon. Dana — Arm River (SP)

Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Lumsden-Morse

Vacant — Regina Coronation Park

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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Legislative Assembly are available
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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I'd just like to welcome all our guests. It's great to have so many people out to see the proceedings today. I would just like to remind you, you're not to take part in any of the debate. That's no heckling or talking or taking pictures or anything like that. And also, people on the front row right there, please do not hang over the edge.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request 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. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, our government has proclaimed May 1st to 7th as Missing Persons Week in Saskatchewan. And I would like to recognize and welcome, from across the province, family members of missing persons who are with us today. This is the 10th year of this proclamation whose aim every year is to raise awareness, highlight prevention and safety, but above all to honour the 137 current, long-term missing persons in Saskatchewan and support their families.

Mr. Speaker, I met with several family members this morning as I launched the week with the Minister for the Status of Women; the Minister for Corrections, Policing and Public Safety; our Provincial Secretary; and the member for Prince Albert Northcote. There was a walk to the Missing Persons oak tree and a bench dedication and flower ceremony to honour the missing in Wascana Park. And I hope that you, as family members, found some comfort in that.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Missing Persons Partnership is unique to Saskatchewan. Chaired by the Ministry of Justice, the partnership organizes Missing Persons Week every year to raise awareness. It provides public education, works to align policies and legislation, investigates missing persons cases, organizes searches, and offers support services to families. It includes community-based and Indigenous organizations along with police agencies and government ministries.

Saskatchewan was the first Canadian jurisdiction to enact provisions regarding access to information with respect to missing persons, and enables law enforcement agencies to obtain a search order and access the information of a third party who is believed to be in the company of a missing minor or a vulnerable person.

Mr. Speaker, I invite everyone to take a moment to reflect upon the missing this week and keep them in their thoughts throughout the year. Please join me in welcoming our guests this afternoon to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming these individuals, these families to their Legislative Assembly here today in honour of Missing Persons Week.

I think the minister did a very excellent job of describing the importance of the week, the importance of the work that was done today that continues to need to be done each and every single day.

I want to thank you for your advocacy. This is an issue that affects far too many families in this province. And thank you for being here as a reminder to all of us about the work that needs to continue to be done in this province each and every single day.

Thank you again for joining here today. Thank you to the minister for recognizing you folks here today. And I ask all members once again to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request 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.

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege and honour today to introduce Gordon Heidel who is seated in the west gallery this afternoon. So if Gord can give us a quick wave.

When it comes to education in the trades in our province, Gord's name will often come up in the conversation. Starting his career in 1987 in Lucky Lake and taught at Cochrane High School in Regina for 20 years, Gord has also served as the Regina District Industry Education Council executive director for nearly 10 years and now works half-time as a program facilitator with the RDIEC [Regina District Industry Education Council]. And he was also a consultant with the Regina Public School Division and for a time was a practical and applied arts coordinator and a member of the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission for the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, Gord attended his first Skills Canada competition in Red Deer in 1997, and spent the next year promoting and helping organize the first-ever Skills Canada Saskatchewan competition in Regina in 1998. He's also Vice-Chair of Skills Canada for 15 years.

I've known Gord for many, many years, Mr. Speaker, and he's not only a trusted friend of mine, but I'm also proud to say he is my brother-in-law. I think I can speak for my wife and all the family to say that we're very proud of Gord's accomplishments, his professional accomplishments, as well as his motivation and desire to see kids across our province succeed in the trades.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to please join me in welcoming Gordon Heidel to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Request for extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the member from Martensville to welcome Gordon Heidel to his Legislative Assembly. Gord has left an incredible impact on the lives of so many young people in our communities and an incredible leader and educator. He's also an amazing athlete, Mr. Speaker. I've had the privilege of getting to know and working with Gord over the years. He's an amazing kiteboarder, Mr. Speaker, and all sorts of other extreme sports.

We once had the privilege, or I had the privilege of teaching with Gord at Cochrane High School, and together we were on deck to coach the basketball team, Mr. Speaker. And basketball, it wasn't my sport, Mr. Speaker, and Gord, he's a tough guy. So we sort of taught them the Gordie Howe approach to basketball. They were all elbows and a pretty good team, Mr. Speaker. We had a lot of fun coaching that team.

Gord has been a leader in trades education for decades, Mr. Speaker. And on behalf of the official opposition, I ask all to recognize and thank Gord for his immense contributions to his province.

Mr. Speaker, I would be wrong not to identify an amazing teacher to so many of us and a friend to me and a teacher to me that's seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, that's here with the delegation, and that's Elder Lorna Standingready that's here today. This is an amazing, amazing elder and woman in our community, Mr. Speaker, a force for good on so many fronts, a residential school survivor, hails from White Bear First Nations, is a leader in the community, a leader within the United Church, Mr. Speaker. And I ask all members of this Assembly to give Elder Lorna Standingready a very warm welcome.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce a few members sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. We have Carolyn Cyr, who is the director of health policy and systems with the Heart and Stroke Foundation. We have David Innes, who is the president of the Canadian Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists. We also have Jennifer May, who is

the vice-president of health promotion and government relations, who is no stranger to this Assembly and comes in here quite often.

I'm very pleased to be able to meet with these individuals to discuss healthy hearts as well as radon, Mr. Speaker, and overall lung safety. I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the Minister of Health in welcoming this delegation to their Assembly today. We also have opportunity to meet often, and today I met with both Jennifer and Carolyn to talk about tobacco and vaping as well. They are very active in their communities, leaders in our community on all of these fronts. And I would ask all members to join us in welcoming all of them to their Assembly today.

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

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce, in the west gallery, a group of home-school students here today from the Fort Qu'Appelle and Regina communities, Mr. Speaker. They are here with parent organizer Vanessa Sebastian — just give a wave, Vanessa; you bet — parents Sara Beth Miller, Kari Verhoog, Mel Olson, Tammy Winters, and Julie Sutor.

So I'm really happy that you guys were able to make it to the Assembly today, take in the proceedings, and looking forward to some stimulating conversation after. So to you and through you, Mr. Speaker, please welcome this group of home-school students to this, their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be on my feet to recognize and welcome a delegation seated in the east gallery, Mr. Speaker. This is a group of summer organizers who have recently joined the party to be doing work right around this province, Mr. Speaker. We couldn't be more excited to have them on board. This is a bright, dedicated group of young people, and we can't wait to see all parts of this province with them.

Today we have with us Shouzab Awan from Regina, Owen Deis from Saskatoon, Kaitlyn Stadnyk from Lumsden, Alex Scidmore from Moose Jaw, and we have Natalie Ofukany from Tisdale. Mr. Speaker. They're joined by Matt Buck. This is a bright, exciting group of young people. We can't wait to see what they get up to this summer, and we are thrilled to be able to work with them. I invite all members to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a lifelong friend of mine, Ken Schneider. If you want to just give a

quick wave, Schneid. Ken grew up in the small town of Colfax just down from Lewvan, and so we became lifelong friends, playing a lot of hockey, a lot of baseball together. Ken went on to play in Brandon with the Wheat Kings and then the Bobcats and did a lot of coaching, had a career in Brandon, but just recently moved back to Saskatchewan, moved back to Regina actually for the last two years.

And what an addition he has been. He has helped a young superstar navigate the world's attention in hockey, Connor Bedard, because Ken is the assistant coach for the Regina Pats for the last two years.

So thank you very much, Kenny, for all that you've done in Manitoba, but more importantly what you're doing for Saskatchewan now. Thanks, buddy.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you, through you to all the members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce 60 students, grade 5 and 6, from St. Kateri School, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, St. Kateri School is a very diverse school and very vibrant kids, very intelligent kids. Looking forward to see them and answering their questions right after this question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Help me welcome these kids in their Legislative Assembly. Thanks.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly for the first time in response to the 2023 provincial budget, calling for adequate funding for education. Those who signed the petition today would like the Assembly to know that education funding included in this year's budget is wholly inadequate and will lead to cuts in the classroom again.

The SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], who represent 27 school divisions in a non-partisan way, have criticized this budget stating that it further erodes education in our province. They note that the increase in school division budgets year to year for school divisions represents 0.7 per cent increase for next school year.

Saskatchewan teachers say that they are baffled by this government's disregard for students. STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] President Samantha Becotte says, "Government either doesn't understand the issues or doesn't think that they're important." Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that this year's failures come after nearly a decade of cuts to per-student funding and divisions already describe a system that's been cut to the bone.

[13:45]

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to provide adequate, sustainable, and predictable operating funds for our 27 public and separate school divisions to ensure that schools, teachers, and other caring professionals are able to meet the needs of every student in Saskatchewan.

The petition today is signed by residents of Weyburn and Moose Jaw. I do so present.

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

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 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 more 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 services tax], as well as receiving slightly lower incomes, than they will receive on 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.

I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take forward 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.

The below undersigned residents are residents of Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition once again to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to act on a suicide prevention strategy. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that *The Saskatchewan Strategy For Suicide Prevention Act* received Royal Assent two years ago, April 30th, 2021; that the ministry is required under the Act to consult with community organizations in the development of a suicide prevention strategy; that suicide remains the second-leading cause of death for young people age 15 to 34 in Canada; and that 1,913 people have died by suicide in Saskatchewan over the last 10 years.

We know that suicide rates for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan are four times higher than non-Indigenous people and that northern Saskatchewan continues to experience high levels of suicide and overdose deaths.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately work with community organizations and leaders in the North to develop Saskatchewan's suicide prevention strategy.

This is signed today by individuals in Regina, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again to present our petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to join with municipalities and provinces and the federal government and codify a ban on conversion therapy. Mr. Speaker, conversion therapy and reparative therapy are a discredited and abusive practice that are opposed by psychological and psychiatric associations across North America and the world. This practice can lead to lifelong trauma and is in direct contravention with *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*.

The undersigned demand action on this file and demand Criminal Code reform concerning the practice of conversion therapy. There is simply no place in our society for this practice.

Mr. Speaker, I will 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 Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always an honour to be on my feet but I take no pleasure at all in again presenting a petition calling on the Saskatchewan government to establish equitable and adequate SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] rates. The SAID program, the Saskatchewan assured income for disability, is a program for individuals with significant and enduring disabilities with barriers to employment.

The program didn't see an increase from the Sask Party government for nearly a decade, Mr. Speaker. That led to folks on this program living in deep poverty which is defined as living well below the poverty line, Mr. Speaker. With this past budget — windfall revenues, Mr. Speaker — folks expected a bump with this program and they got instead a dollar a day, which was described unsurprisingly as a slap in the face by the folks that rely on the SAID program to make ends meet.

So, Mr. Speaker, this petition is:

Calling on the Sask Party government to (1) increase SAID rates to account for inflation; (2) respect the constitutional rights and halt discriminatory clawback practices; (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 Saskatoon Eastview.

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Rally for Public Education

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation rally for public education that took place right here on Saturday afternoon. More than 3,000 educators, students, and parents and so many more attended the rally, and they attended for one reason: our education system is in crisis.

Now that Sask Party government can claim to be investing in education all they like, but the teachers in our schools, they know what's really happening. Our system is being eroded. We're not keeping pace with inflation. We're not keeping pace with enrolment. And teachers are being cut. Supports are being cut. Families and students are left to pay the price.

Samantha Becotte, president of the STF, had this to say: "Parents, students, teachers all want what's best for our students, for kids, and this government needs to listen. Teachers are angry. The public are angry. Kids are angry." Asked about education in this province, a grade 11 student at the rally said, "How can students be expected to take it seriously when the government doesn't even take it seriously?"

Mr. Speaker, our teachers deserve better. Our children deserve better. And if the Sask Party government won't listen to us, I hope they'll listen to the thousands of people who shared their voices on their steps Saturday afternoon.

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

Saskatchewan Missing Persons Week

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize the 10th anniversary of Missing Persons Week, which will be held from today, May 1st to May 7th with the theme Never Forgotten: Honouring the Missing and Supporting Their Families. This year's theme is of importance because over the years, the families of missing persons have expressed the need for improved public awareness about what to do and how to help in situations involving missing persons. The Saskatchewan Missing Persons Week will provide that opportunity to offer families increased awareness on this topic.

As of April 2023 there are 137 long-term missing persons listed on the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police website. Earlier today the Saskatchewan Missing Persons Partnership, or SMPP, invited family members of the missing and the public to take part in a walk to the Missing Persons tree in Wascana Park

where a bench dedication ceremony occurred to honour and recognize the missing persons of the province. The SMPP includes police, Indigenous and non-Indigenous community organizations, search and rescue, and government ministries.

Since 2013 this government has proclaimed Missing Persons Week in Saskatchewan, which is organized by the SMPP to raise awareness about prevention, honour missing persons, and support families, and we will continue to do so into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

May Day

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the annual May Day celebrations hosted by both the Saskatoon and District Labour Council and the Regina & District Labour Council. This important day has a long and rich history that dates back to the late 19th century when workers across the world came together to demand fair wages, better working conditions, and greater social justice.

In Saskatchewan we have a strong and active labour movement that has made significant contributions to our province. Our labour unions have fought tirelessly to improve the lives of workers and their families and to promote the values of solidarity, equality, and democracy.

This year's May Day celebration in Saskatoon promises to be a fantastic event with the presentation from St. Thomas More college's Charles Smith, and musical performances by Wilma Groenen, Ray Elliott, and Tristen Durocher that are sure to bring down the house.

Meanwhile here in Regina, my colleagues and I are excited to attend the May Day parade which will begin at the union centre here in Regina and make its way here to the Legislative Assembly. I want to give my congratulations to all labour councils on their May Day celebrations, and I look forward to continuing to work together with our labour movement to build a more just and equitable society for all workers.

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

Heart Failure Awareness Week

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week is Heart Failure Awareness Week. Heart failure is a serious and growing problem in Canada that affects hundreds of thousands of people and their caregivers. In Saskatchewan an estimated 25,000 people are currently living with heart failure, and over 3,000 people every year are diagnosed with this condition.

Despite these staggering numbers, many people don't understand what heart failure is. It is a chronic condition caused by the heart not functioning as it should. This can lead to fatigue, swelling in the legs and abdomen, and shortness of breath from the fluid in the lungs.

Heart failure is on the rise, and we need to do more to raise

awareness of this complex and incurable condition about the signs and symptoms, and how to reduce the risk, and better support those with this condition so they can live a longer and more fulfilling life.

So this Heart Failure Awareness Week, Mr. Speaker, I am sharing this message to raise awareness among my colleagues and everyone across Saskatchewan so we may all do better at understanding heart failure. I encourage everyone to visit the Heart and Stroke's website at heartandstroke.ca to find out more. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Skills Canada Saskatchewan Competition

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's computer animation or information technology or aesthetics, baking, aerospace technology, automobile technology, or welding or carpentry, skilled trades offer rewarding careers. And, Mr. Speaker, nowhere is that more evident than at the 2023 Skills Canada Saskatchewan competition held at Sask Polytech in Saskatoon on Friday, April 28th.

Over 200 competitors took part in the competition in 49 different secondary and post-secondary disciplines, and medals were presented to the top three in each category. Mr. Speaker, over 1,700 student visitors from high schools across the province attended the Skills Canada Saskatchewan competition and were able to experience first-hand the wide variety of trades that await them in the year ahead.

The trades, Mr. Speaker, are and always have been a great career option in this province. With multiple private sector agriculture processing facilities, resource development projects, more housing and more infrastructure investments, there is and will continue to be high demand for skilled tradespeople in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, each Skills Canada Saskatchewan competitor deserves recognition for their achievements at this provincial event, and we wish all of those who are moving on to the Skills Canada National Competition in Winnipeg from May 24th to 27th all the best as they display their knowledge and talents on the national stage. Go Team Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Canora-Pelly.

Kamsack Hospital Service Expansion

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday was a sad day for Boston Bruins fans, but today's a great day for Canora-Pelly, especially Kamsack. I'm very pleased to be able to tell my constituents and the residents of Kamsack that three more beds at the Kamsack Hospital are reopened for today's admission. An emergency room service will expand from five to seven days per week, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. effective today. Primary health care, lab service, X-ray, long-term care, EMS [emergency medical services] services continue to be available in Kamsack, serving the area.

This government recognizes the importance of having safe, accessible acute care and emergency service in rural Saskatchewan. And unlike the members opposite, we will navigate our health care challenges without permanently shutting down their health care facilities.

Recent recruitment success supports expansion of ER [emergency room] hours and more acute beds. Recruitment is still ongoing, but I'd like to personally thank the health care providers in Kamsack, my constituency, and throughout the province. Expanding our health care services maintains high level of care and having the most ambitious health care plan in the nation. And that's growth that works for everyone.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Saskatchewan Leads in Gross Domestic Product Growth

Mr. Francis: — Mr. Speaker, it's another great day in Saskatchewan. We're once again leading the nation in one of Canada's key economic growth indicators. Our economy grew by 5.7 per cent last year. That is the largest GDP [gross domestic product] growth in Canada.

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, and it's no surprise our economic growth leads the nation. With significant private sector investment, record population growth, record exports, and nearly 20,000 new jobs, it's crystal clear that Saskatchewan's economy will remain strong and growing. Mr. Speaker, as we have said many times before, these indicators are further proof that we have the food, fuel, and fertilizer the world needs. And there is plenty to be positive about here.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the limitless potential that continues to make Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and raise a family. Recently we saw a 53 per cent increase in housing starts in March 2023 compared to March 2022. Wholesale trade increased by more than 30 per cent in February 2023 compared to February 2022. And merchandise exports were up nearly 44 per cent for the first two months of 2023 as compared to the same period in 2022. And, Mr. Speaker, this truly is growth that works for everyone.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, on Saturday there were thousands of teachers making noise about the lack of funding for public education in Saskatchewan. Thousands of teachers, supporters, seven opposition NDP MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly], but zero support from that Sask Party government. Why didn't the Premier, his Education minister, or anyone from the Sask Party have the courage to show up and listen?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, MLAs on this side of the House, the Minister of Education have been engaging with not only

school divisions and teachers across the province but engaging with parents as well, Mr. Speaker, parents of school-aged children. And we understand that in a province where we have the highest-in-the-nation GDP growth, it's resulting in the record population growth in this province. It only stands to reason that many of those families that are moving here are bringing their children, Mr. Speaker. They're entering into our K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education is engaging over the course of the next number of weeks with a number of school divisions here in the province, Mr. Speaker. We came forward with mid-year funding last year to address the record population growth that our province and our schools are experiencing, Mr. Speaker, and we'll be coming forward with something similar this year.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Education minister had the time to fly all the way to Washington to attend a summit that apparently focused on, and I quote: "The power of dialogue between teacher organizations and governments working together to advance education policies to meet the needs of all students." Mr. Speaker, you can't make this stuff up.

If they were serious about dialogue with teachers, Mr. Speaker, they would have shown up to the rally. And if they need a map, it's right out through the front doors. Why didn't the Premier or his Education minister have the courage to show up to hear about the cuts that his government is forcing on our kids' classrooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — There are no cuts. Education funding this year is up 6.7 per cent. That builds on \$65 million that were provided last year, investment into that budget, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Education was in Washington last week representing CMEC [Council of Ministers of Education, Canada] and representing Canada, Mr. Speaker. And I think the Minister of Education from this province would have much to add, Mr. Speaker, to not only the conversations that he's had with school divisions across this board, the 6.7 per cent increase in funding that we've had this year, that has been provided this year to address the population growth, the student population growth that was put forward to us by the school divisions, Mr. Speaker.

But what we are seeing in this province — and this is what the Minister of Education in a growing province like this can bring to that national and international conversation, Mr. Speaker — is how you sometimes have to look at the processes that you have because your population is growing faster than it has in over a century, Mr. Speaker, that you're going to have to revisit your funding mechanisms more than once a year. We did that last year, Mr. Speaker, to support our K to 12 education system. We're going to do it again this year.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, that Premier could not be more out of touch. Last week, teachers in this province found out that they don't have a job next year right in that Education minister's own

school division. And they'd know this, Mr. Speaker, if they bothered to show up.

Mr. Speaker, we see teachers who continue to see more students with complex needs. We see teachers who are doing more and more with less and less, and who are completely demoralized by this next round of cuts, Mr. Speaker, and who are completely demoralized by the lack of respect by those members opposite.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Premier would know that if he had bothered to show up, but of course he doesn't know because he didn't bother. Why didn't the Premier have the courage to show up and hear these concerns from educators themselves?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, most certainly as I said, members on this side of the House, myself included, the Minister of Education included, Mr. Speaker, hear each and every one of those individuals that was here on Saturday, Mr. Speaker. Not just on Saturday, but up to and including on Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, the conversations that have happened with teachers across this province, conversations that have happened between members of the government and their local school divisions, and, Mr. Speaker, most importantly the conversations that have occurred between the members of the government and parents of school-age kids, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is in this province is we have, as just identified, the highest GDP growth in the nation of Canada. That is attracting people here, Mr. Speaker. We have the highest population growth in over a century. That is pressuring, bringing in students as well, into our K to 12 system, Mr. Speaker. That's why we came forward with a mid-year funding announcement last year, Mr. Speaker. That's why we came forward with a 6.7 per cent increase in our education investment in this province at the budget that was just released a number of weeks ago, Mr. Speaker. And that's why the Minister of Education is engaging with our school divisions to determine what is that population growth going to look like coming into this fall semester, Mr. Speaker.

And we're going to be there to provide . . . And we're going to be there, Mr. Speaker. Unlike the members opposite, we're going to be there to provide that mid-year funding. Because the members opposite not once — not once in the history of the NDP — did they ever put forward their budgetary investment in education on projections that were provided from the school division, because those projections were always less students in our system.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier forgets that he's the Premier for all of Saskatchewan, and he is responsible for more than just delivering those lines. Not just the people who voted for him, not just the donors, not just the right wing of his base — the whole of this province, Mr. Speaker.

And when we see people who have concerns, like the teachers who were here on Saturday, show up to tell him what their concerns are, it's his job to listen. Mr. Speaker, one of the surest

signs of a tired and out-of-touch government that is on its . . . is past its best-before date is one that stops listening.

Mr. Speaker, why does the Premier think that he can continue to ignore the concerns of Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, most certainly each and every member that attended the union-organized rally this weekend, Mr. Speaker, each or every member . . . Each or every member of this province that has reached out to a government member to discuss any concerns that they may have with our K to 12 education system, Mr. Speaker, can be assured that this is a government that is listening, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that is listening. That is why we have provided 6.7 per cent increase to our education budget in this most recent budget, Mr. Speaker. This is why this government invested in 18 additional schools which opened in 2019 in our largest urban centres. Those are not replacement schools, Mr. Speaker. Those are not 176 schools that were closed under the members opposite when they had the opportunity. Eighteen additional schools added into our urban centres, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that listened and provided \$155 million in transitional financial support to our school divisions through a global pandemic in this province. This is a government that provided mid-year allocation funding last year, Mr. Speaker, to support record population growth in our province, in our schools. And this is a government that is still listening and going to do it again this year.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, that Premier should have shown up at the rally on Saturday. His Education minister should have been there too. And my guess is, had they shown up, they probably would've been booed all the way back to Washington. But at least they would've heard from teachers who have faced years of cuts under this government, teachers who have seen supports for students cut, just as the number of EAL [English as an additional language] students is increasing, just as complex needs grow in our classrooms.

Why didn't that minister have the courage to show up and to hear from the thousands of teachers and supporters that gathered here on their steps Saturday afternoon?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do engage with teachers across the province as well as school board trustees, Mr. Speaker. I did that just as recently as this morning, Mr. Speaker. I've organized meetings; I sit down with teachers after a school day to hear directly from them. And that's work I'm going to continue to do, Mr. Speaker. I also hear from parents, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of listening to what the sector is looking for, Mr. Speaker, that's why in July of last year we put in \$20 million in additional funding to deal with inflation, Mr.

Speaker. That's why in November we put additional money, \$15.5 million, to deal with a record level of enrolment growth that we're seeing in this province. As the Premier indicated, Mr. Speaker, we'll do that again.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, in listening to parents and students, Mr. Speaker, we formed the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation that is going to see savings in the public school division of at least \$12 million, compared to the way that they have funded it before, Mr. Speaker. And that's going to see teachers redeployed right back into the classroom.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government needs to take responsibility for the damage that they're causing to our kids' classrooms today. We don't see any of that responsibility from that minister this morning. He blamed everyone but himself for the problems caused by his choices and his government. He blamed the committee that he created. And then he went on and he blamed teachers for working with other education workers. And then he blamed the negotiations that are due to start this summer.

But he didn't admit that Saskatoon Public Schools and our other biggest divisions in this province has blamed his government for the problems that they're facing today. They're facing cuts that will be needed to balance this year's budget. When will that minister take any responsibility for the mess that he's making in public education today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, clearly I wasn't blaming anyone in the remarks that I made this morning. What I pointed out is that former Education minister, who was in place over two years ago, Mr. Speaker, put in place a class size and composition committee to bring forward with recommendations. And, Mr. Speaker, the recommendations are not complete.

I'm expecting those by the end of the month, Mr. Speaker, which then at that time I will inform my colleagues in terms of what those recommendations look like, Mr. Speaker. That's not blaming anyone. That's just saying the work is not complete, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the budgets have been allocated, Saskatoon Public School Division, 3.9 per cent is their budget, Mr. Speaker, to fund the portion of their budget that doesn't have anything to do with teacher contracts because that's not been negotiated yet, Mr. Speaker.

So when we do get a contract . . . Because we can't even start talking yet, Mr. Speaker. That'll happen at the end of this month. When we do have a contract, Mr. Speaker, we'll look to fund that as well.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this Education minister is completely

out of touch with teachers, parents, divisions — you name it. Out of touch. Thousands came to their legislature on Saturday because of this government's failure to invest in education. But according to the minister, everything's fine and it's all someone else's fault. When times are tough, they ask divisions to make cuts. But right now they're sitting on windfall revenues, and they're still asking divisions to make cuts. How does this make any sense to that minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I was pleased in this budget that was presented by the Finance minister: 6.7 per cent education lift, Mr. Speaker, \$2.04 billion to the K to 12, 27 school divisions, Mr. Speaker. On top of that, \$50 million for preventative maintenance and renewal, Mr. Speaker. \$7 million to fully fund the EA [educational assistant] fund, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

\$147 million in capital that's going to see five new capital projects, on top of the 15 brand new schools that we're building and the five renovations that we're doing as well. \$23 million to the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre, Mr. Speaker, that's going to see more opportunity for students regardless of what school they live in, Mr. Speaker . . . or which school division that they are residing in, Mr. Speaker. That is going to save direct dollars to public school divisions that will no longer have that cost but will keep the funding for those students.

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

Management of Provincial Economy

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's true — ignorance must clearly be bliss over there, Mr. Speaker. And while it's great to be back in the Assembly, it is a shame to be talking about the dire state of public education funding in this province, and it is a shame to be talking about the dire state of the economy under this Premier. Because, Mr. Speaker, the two are related, education and the economy, because when you underfund, you starve public education. Kids don't get the skills they need to go out and get good jobs.

Mr. Speaker, does the Sask Party understand that when they starve the education sector, it hurts our economy?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Oh my goodness. I'd welcome the member back, Mr. Speaker, but she obviously missed some very, very good news this morning as enunciated by the member for Kindersley and as reported by the good folks at Statistics Canada. It showed the economy's not being in a dire state, Mr. Speaker, but the economy being leading Canada. Five point seven per cent GDP growth last year, Mr. Speaker — first in the country. Second closest was at 5.1 per cent, and not one other province in the entirety of the Dominion of Canada was over 4 per cent.

You would have to be a New Democrat, Mr. Speaker, to find that to be dire. You would have to be a New Democrat, Mr. Speaker,

to call that a dumpster fire. You could only imagine what those members would consider to be good news if they were in government, Mr. Speaker. It would be last in Canada, and we know that to be the case because that is their record.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. “Dumpster fire” — that member’s words, not mine. Because the GDP numbers, Mr. Speaker, released today do in fact show what the member opposite is saying. But what the numbers released by StatsCan today show is that this Premier has the second-worst economic growth of all provinces.

In fact, in fact, Mr. Speaker, since 2018, under this Premier’s watch, the economy has shrunk by 0.7 per cent — negative growth, Mr. Speaker. And deep cuts in health care and education make this problem worse. Does the minister really think his Premier’s record of economic shrinkage is something he should be showing off?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well, highly, highly appropriate from the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. What I would say though is that 5.7 per cent GDP growth, Mr. Speaker, is first in the country. I’m not sure what numbers these members are looking at opposite.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we created 9,500 jobs in this province over the course of the last year. Urban housing starts are up 34 per cent, Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last year, and 53 per cent over the first three months of this. Wholesale trade up over 30 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Merchandise trade over 40 per cent growth, Mr. Speaker. Building construction investment over 22 per cent, Mr. Speaker. This economy is leading the country, manifested again through Statistics Canada’s numbers just this morning showing our GDP growth being the highest of any province in the country.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Second-worst economic growth of all provinces under that Premier.

And, Mr. Speaker, I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again. We are in an international competition for talent and capital, and we need to have quality health care and education if we’re going to ask people to make Saskatchewan their home. And when this government makes deep cuts in education and kids can’t get the support they need when they’re learning in hallways, families are more likely to pack up and head to a province that provides those supports. So, Mr. Speaker, does the minister not understand that when kids are learning in desks in hallways, parents are going to be looking elsewhere?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well the NDP would certainly know

about people packing up and leaving the province, Mr. Speaker. In their 16 years in government, their population of this province, Mr. Speaker, it didn’t go up. It didn’t go up 100,000; it didn’t go up 10,000. It actually went down over 16 years. In one quarter, the last quarter, Mr. Speaker, we had more growth than they had in their entire 16 years. That is nearly 200,000 newcomers that have made Saskatchewan their home over the course of our last 16 years in government, Mr. Speaker. I will put that record up against theirs any day of the week.

And GDP growth, Mr. Speaker, leading the country; more than double any province west of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, including the province of Quebec at 2.6 per cent, something that they like to compare Saskatchewan to. I’m not sure why, Mr. Speaker. 5.7 per cent GDP growth in this province, Mr. Speaker, leading Canada.

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

Information Systems in Health and Social Services Ministries

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is failing to make the investments we need in health care and education, but they’re not shy about wasting money hand over fist on costly software projects that don’t work.

Just look at the AIMS [administrative information management system] fiasco in health care, which has cost 138 million for a system that was only online for a matter of days. But it’s not the only waste we’ve seen from the Sask Party government. The Linkin system at Social Services was supposed to cost 15 million, but the costs have ballooned to nearly 80.

Why is this tired and out-of-touch government blowing tens of millions on costly IT [information technology] overruns when those dollars should be going to support our kids?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as we did have to temporarily pause the AIMS system because it wasn’t meeting the needs of the people within the health care system, I’ve identified this, I’ve identified this in the House before, Mr. Speaker. There was over 80 systems with six health care provider unions, Mr. Speaker. This is a very complex system, and we want to make sure that we get it right. We have paused that. And as I have said before, Mr. Speaker, we will get that up and running as soon as we possibly can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — That’s not all, Mr. Speaker. To make up for the shortcomings of the \$80 million Linkin program, we learned last week that the Sask Party spent over 25 million on a new IT program to support the universally panned SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program.

They’re cutting supports to kids in classrooms. Hallway health care, hallway education have become mainstays across Saskatchewan; meanwhile they’ve wasted more than 80 million

on Linkin, 138 million on AIMS, over 25 million on MiCase. That's more than 225 million public dollars wasted, Mr. Speaker, almost a quarter of a billion in public money spent on their IT failures instead of supporting kids. Why should parents and teachers accept cuts to the classroom when the Sask Party government is wasting so much of our public money?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Linkin and SWIN [Social Work Information Network] system, Mr. Speaker, these are investments that help caseworkers not have to do so much filing. And back to the old way it's . . . I believe under the NDP, they didn't know where all their children was at any given time, Mr. Speaker. So these are important investments, Mr. Speaker.

And for the member opposite to say that it was a cost overrun, Mr. Speaker, we've added on to this program and we've added on to other things that have added to the cost, yes, but also the functionality, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, we've added things — PRIDE [parent resources for information, development, and education] levels of pay — into the Linkin system, Mr. Speaker. We want to make sure our children in care and families are supported as best we can, and that's why we've made these investments.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver when it comes to supports for kids in our schools. That's why thousands came to the legislature this weekend. At the rally I talked to teachers, students, parents, concerned members of the public who want to see investments in English as a second language, in mental health and addictions, in class size — the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear from a single person who wanted to see a quarter of a billion dollars spent on their IT boondoggles.

What does this tired and out-of-touch government have to say to parents facing cuts to supports while this government wastes so much public money?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — You know, Mr. Speaker, I was the minister responsible for initiating Linkin, and you want to talk about a boondoggle? A boondoggle in this province was the fact that we had a file system to track the children in this province. We could track a library book easier than we could track children in care under the NDP. It was disgraceful. It was irresponsible, and that is why the Linkin system was brought in.

It's expanded in a lot of ways. We've added onto what Linkin system now manages. But it was brought in because there was a paper filing system, so if a child was moved from one area to another area, nobody knew. The paper didn't necessarily follow. That's a boondoggle, and that was negligence under the NDP.

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

Overdose Deaths in Saskatchewan

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, between January and March of this year 152 people died of drug overdose — 152. At this rate we're on track to lose more than 500 people this year. Five hundred overdose deaths in a year. It's more than a tragedy; it's a crisis. Something needs to be done, and what we're doing now isn't enough.

To the minister: when will he commit to meaningful action and put an end to the addictions crisis in Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a challenge being faced not just here in Saskatchewan, but right across the country, Mr. Speaker. Rising overdose death numbers are right across Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Here in Saskatchewan we continue to work with other partners across Canada when it comes to some of the initiatives that are being undertaken here in this province, Mr. Speaker — expanding access to treatment to create more treatment spaces across this province, enhancing a number of different initiatives such as the overdose outreach teams, the opioid stewardship program, Mr. Speaker.

More work will continue to be done through the Saskatchewan drug task force and its leadership as we do everything we can to help stem the tide on this tragedy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having followed closely the good discussion, second readings that has been happening with this bill and looking to continue this conversation with the minister, happy to allow this bill to proceed to its next stages.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 128 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to be on my feet for Bill No. 132, *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Amendment Act, 2023*. This is a bill that makes important changes to the manner in which supervision is provided for boilers and pressure vessels. It includes a pilot program allowing for the chief boiler inspector to exempt boiler owners from needing licensed power engineers on site at all times that a boiler or pressure vessel is being operated. And I will be taking the opportunity, once this bill goes to committee, to ask the minister questions about these amendments and how they arose.

[14:30]

But before I do that, I do want to make a couple remarks and just point out that of course boilers and pressure vessels are energized systems and inherently risky. It is absolutely necessary that this legislation gets it right in terms of the measures that are taken to ensure that workers and others are protected, that safeguards are robust, and that there are many lines of defence and redundancy to ensure that workers go home safely and people are protected.

I did have the honour and privilege of attending the service at city hall in Saskatoon this past Friday, where we mourned the death of 39 workers here in Saskatchewan in the past year to causes related to job-related illness and injuries. And certainly any changes that we make to this bill need to ensure that all workers go home safely at the end of their shifts.

So certainly I do understand that, you know, we need to support innovation, and in particular when that comes to things like measures that improve boiler efficiency that, you know, we are providing opportunities for alternative fuels and safe operation at all times.

Certainly I appreciate that there are needs for greater automation and remote monitoring, but certainly want to make sure that that happens in a way that upholds safety and improves it, that our chief boiler inspector can continue to operate in an unfettered manner without due influence or pressure from government, and that we're taking full account of human factors and other risk factors that can contribute to the loss of integrity of boiler pressure systems. All of these are important matters particularly

when it comes to, as I mentioned, energized systems that are inherently risky and that have the potential to cause loss of life.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss these matters with the minister when it enters into committee. I have been speaking with many stakeholders on this bill. I will continue to do so in preparation for that. And until such time, I am prepared to let this bill go to committee.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 132 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour today to be on my feet speaking to Bill 133, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2023*, Mr. Speaker, legislation that we expected, as it moves forward, some announcements made in the '23-24 provincial budget.

It's an extension, another year of the manufacturing and processing incentive. What we're seeing is legislation that's furthering the program, offering refundable tax cuts to eligible corporations that increase the number of employees over their numbers set in 2014. We're seeing 3,000 in non-refundable tax credits for each extra employee, full-time employee. We're seeing a \$10,000 non-refundable tax credit for every new head office employee.

So important, important tax incentives for these industries, and this is an important, important industry for Saskatchewan. Manufacturing and processing provide important jobs. It's an important aspect, an important part of our economy here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we always welcome incentives for businesses to continue to grow, employ more folks in our province. We know how important these incentives are. But what we would really like to see, Mr. Speaker, as we review this legislation, as we

extend this program, we'd really like to see some of the numbers that show how effective this incentive is in creating new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, it's important. We need to see this information because we've really been struggling in this province job-wise. Now the government will cherry-pick some best job records figures, but when you really look at a five-year look under this Premier you actually see some of the worst full-time job growth in the country. I believe at the time PEI [Prince Edward Island] had the largest percentage of new job growth in the country, and we were very near back of the pack.

So yes, I think it's important for Saskatchewan people who are watching today, seeing these incentives for businesses that they see some of the numbers of how these plans are working. Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned, we need more plans. We need more incentives for full-time job growth.

We also need to see a government that will stop hollowing out and losing jobs as we've recently seen with SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] and the hollow out of more jobs in our Crown corporations. It seems like more and more contract employees are coming in from other provinces. This is not how you build job growth.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I won't talk for too much longer, but incentives like this that may or may not work — we haven't seen the numbers — it really gives no solace to the families struggling under a cost-of-living crisis. Mr. Speaker, we saw a budget with absolutely no measures for families, completely tone-deaf to the realities that Saskatchewan people are facing. We have more and more and more families using the food bank than ever before. We have a budget with tax breaks for corporations and manufacturing, but we see over the last couple of years, budgets that have continued to increase regressive PST [provincial sales tax] taxes on absolutely almost everything. I saw some figures that we actually are collecting far more taxes than our industries are even creating or producing at this point.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll end off. You know, we've been very clear. We wanted to see cost-of-living relief in this budget. These are great incentives. We want to see how they're working, if they're working at all. So, Mr. Speaker, at this time, like I said, love to see some numbers but I will be hearing what the rest of my colleagues have to say, and I'm sure the critic will have a lot of good questions when this bill moves to committee. But I will move to adjourn debate at this time.

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. 134

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 134 — *The Education Amendment Act, 2023/Loi modificative de 2023 sur l'éducation*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll weigh in briefly this afternoon with respect to Bill No. 134, *The Education Amendment Act*.

Mr. Speaker, now I wish we were talking about education in a substantial way that addressed the needs of children in Saskatchewan, of students and classrooms in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, of educators, of teachers, of parents, and of communities. But you know, that's just not what we see from this Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

We see a bill here that's been brought forward to, you know, build out a new learning platform, Mr. Speaker, that no one was calling for. That should be no surprise, Mr. Speaker, because this is a government that has, you know, a really poor record of listening to the school boards, listening to parents, listening to teachers, listening to students, Mr. Speaker. I know the school boards certainly have tremendous expertise and leadership and investment that's been made with respect to distance learning, Mr. Speaker, but this is the thin gruel that we see from this government.

A government that sits on, you know, a billion dollars of windfall surplus, Mr. Speaker, but can't step up to invest in our future, Mr. Speaker: our future economy, our future society, the future of young people across our province. Instead, you know, defying economic sense and common sense, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that's actually forcing cuts to kids' classrooms across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

You know, this is a government with a real poor record when it comes to education, with a real poor record when it comes to setting up kids for success through their education, because it's a government that's really walked away from that responsibility, Mr. Speaker, that's forced cuts across our education system and across classrooms in this province, and that has, through those cuts, walked back the funding per student — now we're eighth in Canada, Mr. Speaker. We were once leaders on this front, Mr. Speaker, making investments in the future of young people.

Now we've got to remember, Mr. Speaker, when a government underfunds education, when they deny and shortchange young people of the education that they so deserve, they shortchange their future, Mr. Speaker. They prevent those young people from living up to their full potential, Mr. Speaker, and in so doing, they prevent our province from living up to its full potential as well.

We have a real short-sighted bunch, Mr. Speaker, that are operating over there these days. No more is that more evident than in education, Mr. Speaker, and the inadequate budget, their treatment and disrespect of those that deliver education in classrooms all across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And it was awfully disappointing as well, Mr. Speaker, to see that government, the big majority, simply not show up to listen to those expressing themselves on education this weekend, Mr. Speaker. You know, several thousand people showed up out front. They were parents, they were students, they were teachers, they were educators, Mr. Speaker, who value education and that were calling for a better path forward. But we didn't see a single MLA find it in themselves to show up and listen with those

concerned Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

So I'll leave this bill to our very able critic, Mr. Speaker. But when it comes to education, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people deserve so much better than what they're getting from this Sask Party government. As the official opposition, we'll keep fighting for them and that very important future. With that being said, at this time I'll move to adjourn debate.

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 Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 135 — *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Now I heard something from the back there when I was speaking to Bill 134. Now I'll speak to Bill 135. And now I see what the noisemaker was in the back, Mr. Speaker. It was the member from Canora-Pelly, Mr. Speaker. Now of course him and I are both dismayed here today and disappointed. We're both big Boston Bruins fans, and that was tough, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, to the matter of debate here today, it is good to hear the member for Canora-Pelly speak, Mr. Speaker. I think that the people he represents would rather him use his voice to fight for health care and to fight for our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, than make a bunch of noise from the back of the Assembly. You know, this is the guy that made the Kamsack shuffle famous this past summer, Mr. Speaker, while his constituents were rallying for health care, Mr. Speaker.

But it's good to hear the member in here. We know the side opposite doesn't offer him many chances to speak in this Assembly, so we can feel the pent-up energy that he has here, Mr. Speaker. And I would say to my friend, the member for Canora-Pelly, just let it out. Just let it out, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to hear him. I wish the other side would listen to him though, with respect to the needs in his riding. I wish the other side would let him stand on his feet and speak into a lit microphone, Mr. Speaker, but you know . . . That's just not the treatment that member deserves. And unfortunately, the good people of his riding get, you know, shut out, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

And we met with . . . There was actually some teachers from Pelly and throughout the member's riding here this weekend, Mr. Speaker. Now they were looking to speak with their MLA, but he was nowhere to be found, Mr. Speaker. He had no interest in hearing about the needs of education in his constituency. Here he is though, Mr. Speaker. He shows up on Monday, misses the big

gathering, Mr. Speaker, and you know, he hollers from his seat here on Monday, Mr. Speaker.

But so be it, Mr. Speaker. This official opposition will keep fighting for education in Saskatchewan, the kind of budget that students deserve and need, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I used to teach, Mr. Speaker. I had a few students like that one over there, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we would've tuned him in, in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. So we'll tune him in, in here as well. But what I think he needs to do is tune into the needs of his constituents, Mr. Speaker, the importance of education, Mr. Speaker, not to disrespect those that work day in and day out in those classrooms, extending opportunity and hope and learning to young people across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

But to my buddy who also cheers for the Boston Bruins, Mr. Speaker, it's good to hear his voice, Mr. Speaker. To the rest of the side over there, give the guy a chance to speak, Mr. Speaker. You can see that pent-up energy that he has, Mr. Speaker. He wants to let it out. He wants a chance to use his voice, Mr. Speaker.

But this official opposition, we'll never shy away from the chance to fight for education in this province, Mr. Speaker, and against a government that's shortchanging education and students, Mr. Speaker. At this point in time though, with respect to Bill No. 135, I will move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — Well thank you for that exchange. I was starting to get bored. The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:47.]

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