



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

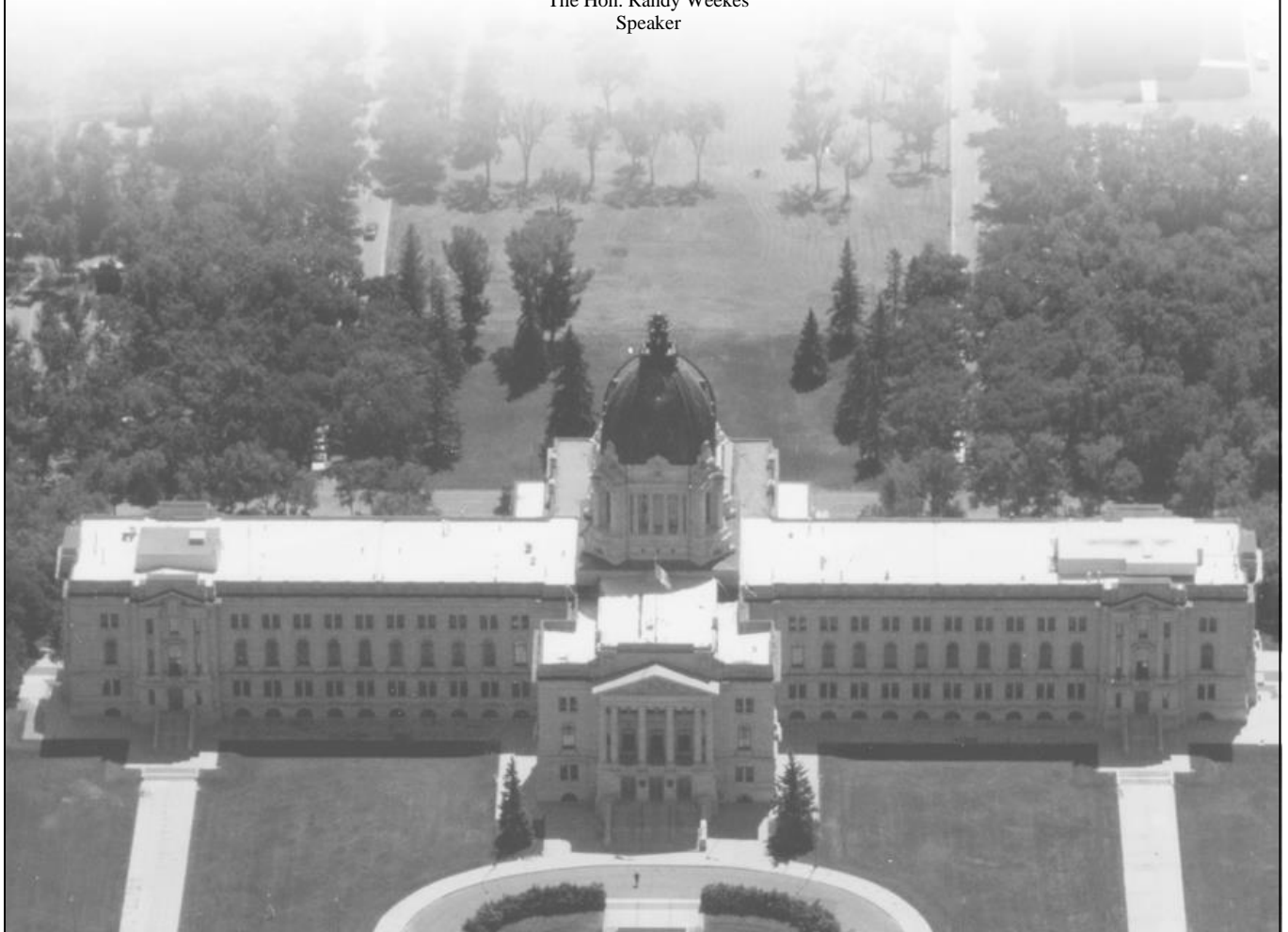
of the

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)

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

Hansard on the internet

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Legislative Assembly are available
within hours after each sitting.

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

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I'd just like to welcome all our guests. We're really glad to have guests here all the time, but I'd just like to caution you not to take part in debate. That means no heckling or talking or taking photos or videotaping anything. Thank you.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I have a guest seated in my gallery. I'd like to introduce John Athanasopoulos who owned John's Place on north Albert for 20 years. Please welcome John to his Legislative Assembly.

I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On the floor of the Assembly we have some very special guests. They are from First Steps Wellness Centre, and they're an organization here in Regina that provides specialized spinal cord and brain injury rehab for patients.

And so from directly that organization, Andy Schmidt and Sandi Marshall. And we also have Chris Lesanko, who's one of the founders of First Steps Wellness Centre. And with Chris is Angela Matthew, who helps Chris.

And we also have Jessica Frotten. She is, many will know, is a Paralympian, who competed at the Tokyo Paralympic Games and my understanding in a month is competing again at the world championships in Paris. So we wish her all the best in that. And Glen Gabel is a client of First Steps Wellness Centre.

So, Mr. Speaker, about a month ago I had opportunity to tour First Steps, and we had . . . Today several members from both sides of the Assembly, including myself, had the opportunity to borrow a wheelchair this morning — from the First Steps Wellness Centre of course — and we were able to experience some of the challenges that those who require a wheelchair deal with each and every day. So it was an experience. I think some members are still participating, and we appreciate that opportunity and all the good work First Steps Wellness does in our province. So we thank them for being here, and I ask all members to help me welcome them.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's such a pleasure to join in with the minister in welcoming this group from First Steps to their legislature. As critic for disability issues, but as well the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Elphinstone-Centre where this amazing organization is located, I want to wish a warm welcome to Andrew Schmidt and Sandi Marshall, the leadership that are here today; Glen Gabel, Jess, long-time clients — I understand Jess was one of the first clients — of course to Chris, the co-founder; and Angela Matthew as well. Welcome to all these folks.

I think myself and one of the members on the other side . . . Most of the other members did just a half day of the challenge, but the member from Saskatoon Riversdale and I are still in the chairs now. And we had an opportunity, the group of us, to kind of get together and talk about the experience. And you know, we were reminded, Mr. Speaker, that the Legislative Assembly is one of the most accessible buildings that we have here in Regina, and we still faced a lot of challenges in navigating the space, things we couldn't even imagine. It was really eye-opening.

I was having a chat with Jess. You know I said, how do you go to the grocery store? She was like I literally find the longest cucumber I can, and then I go around kind of getting stuff off the shelf that way. And I laughed, but she was serious, Mr. Speaker. There's things as able-bodied folks that, you know, we just take for granted.

So I just really want to thank these folks for such an eye-opening experience, making it fun. I think I almost beat the Minister of Health in a race out in the hallways. A little bit of an issue with my wheelchair at the end, I blame that. But, Mr. Speaker, such a joy to have them.

I also want to just wish Jess the best of luck next week in Paris for the world championships and then again in a year. I understand the Olympics will be taking place in Paris as well in about a year from now.

So thank you so much to these folks. Incredible work you're doing. Congratulations also on the kids' program that you started in 2016. I understand that that's been a huge success. So please welcome, join me in welcoming these folks to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce two gentlemen seated in the west gallery. The first is Deep Pandya. Deep is the current president of the Sask Polytechnic Students' Association, Mr. Speaker. He's just graduating from the supply chain and business management course. He'll be graduating this spring, so he's just completing his term as president, Mr. Speaker. It's now come to an end, and I just want to personally thank him for his time and his dedication to the role as president. With him, with Deep is Steven Jose, Mr. Speaker. He's in his first year of business management and he is the incoming president of the Sask Polytechnic Students' Association, Mr. Speaker.

I'm looking forward to meeting both gentlemen after question period to talk about some of the issues, with the member from Moose Jaw North, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank them for their dedication to their students, Mr. Speaker, regarding the student issues that they raise and look forward to their continued role in their leadership, and with all post-secondary students. Mr. Speaker, post-secondary associations are a valuable part of our post-secondary institutions. And I'd like to thank both these gentlemen for joining us in their Assembly today.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to echo the minister's welcome to the student leaders in the west gallery, to Deep and to Steven, both the outgoing and incoming presidents for the Sask Poly Students' Association.

It's just such a pleasure, as the critic for the official opposition for post-secondary education, for Advanced Education, to watch the incredible leadership that is shown by student leaders across our province when they are advocating for more accessible, more affordable, and quality post-secondary in our province. It's a pleasure to work with all of you. And thank you so much for your service.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I would like to introduce, seated in the west gallery, 30 grade 7 students from Langenburg Central School. Go Eagles. They are accompanied by their teacher, Laura Sveinbjornson, who is a good family friend and neighbour of mine, an avid Rider fan, a community volunteer, and a very engaged educator. I am looking forward to their very intriguing and tough questions, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members to welcome Langenburg Central School to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I would like to welcome 35 grade 8 students, seated in the west gallery, from Marion McVeety, from the heart of Regina University in the Hillsdale neighbourhood, as well as their parent chaperone, Carmen Lanigan, here to this Legislative Assembly. These students are grade 8 students from McVeety.

And on behalf of the opposition, I'd really like to take the opportunity to welcome you to your Legislative Assembly, and I look forward to answering whatever tough questions you can throw at me after question period. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these students to this, their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you, I'd like to welcome Ms. Cherish Francis, a community leader from the Southwest. Cherish is here today for a visit, and I'd like to just mention that she's the vice-president of marketing and communications at Makwa Innovations and owner. And she's the daughter of Chief Alvin Francis. I'd like to welcome her to her legislature.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join in the introduction of a couple folks with First Steps Wellness that are here today.

You received wonderful introductions from both members here today, but this is a real life-changing organization, and it would be wrong for me not to give a special warm welcome to my friend, Chris Lesanko, the founder of First Steps Wellness. I've

had the chance to do so before as well, and I've had the chance to be in the wheelchair this morning and learned more. But Chris is an absolutely inspiring guy, Mr. Speaker.

Born and raised in Sturgis, Saskatchewan, he was the best lacrosse player in Saskatchewan. I had met him when he was a young education student, Mr. Speaker, and he was something else. He was rock solid and hard-working and just an incredible athlete. He ended up getting recruited by Bishop's University, Mr. Speaker, where he went on to be the Athlete of the Year for all sports at Bishop's University before his injury that broke his neck, Mr. Speaker.

He was back in nationals back in the day as the captain for Team Saskatchewan. He led the nation in points at nationals, Mr. Speaker, a remarkable guy. But what he did in sport, as remarkable as it is, is really a fraction of what he's done for so many others. He went and pursued exercise therapy, intensive exercise therapy in a model down in California after his accident, Mr. Speaker, not willing to accept his prognosis, and found mobility and movement that no one expected, Mr. Speaker.

And then he brought that model back to Saskatchewan where he's continued to train, and brought those benefits back to so many Saskatchewan people, offering them hope and opportunity and independence and quality of life, like so few would have expected at that time. So Chris, I want to thank you for your inspiring life. I know your journey hasn't been easy, and I want to thank you for the incredible difference you've made in the lives of others.

And of course, Jessica, we're all pulling for you as you head into worlds here. You're an inspiration to us all.

And Glen Gabel, a livestock producer just north of Regina here that went through an injury and has had an incredible journey, we send our love and our respect to you and all of you that are involved in this very important work. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with many members in this House in welcoming all the folks from First Steps Wellness Centre and thanking them for what they do in this community and across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly all the way in from Pilot Butte, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we have with us Linda Dornstauder. Linda has lived in Pilot Butte for just over four decades with her husband, Ken, Mr. Speaker. My connection to Linda is through actually Ken's sister, a lady by the name of Marie who married a young man from Parkside many decades ago named Doug, Mr. Speaker. They made their home in Surrey, British Columbia. Doug was my uncle, making Marie my aunt, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately both have passed on now, but that is my connection to Linda and ultimately to Ken.

Marie's daughter is sitting beside her, Karen Gallicano, Mr. Speaker. Karen and her husband, Paul, have joined us here today from Surrey, British Columbia, Karen being one of my many first cousins, but one of two first cousins that we have on the West Coast, the left coast, whatever you want to call it, Mr. Speaker.

Lived their life out there, worked a career in health care alongside her husband, Paul, and their children, Megan and Brittany, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Linda to her Legislative Assembly and welcome Paul and Karen to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly and remind them that it is never too late for Saskatchewan expat families to move back to the province.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

[13:45]

Mr. Grewal: — Petition to the Legislative Assembly 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 tax 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 office'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 in climate action incentive payments; despite promises from the federal government that the tax would remain revenue neutral and that the family 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.

The below undersigned are residents of Paynton, Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet to present a petition to this Assembly calling for adequate funding for education in our province. Those residents of Saskatchewan who signed this petition wish to bring to our attention that the education funding included in this year's budget is wholly inadequate and will lead to cuts in the classroom again.

Those who signed would like us to be reminded that the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, who represent 27 public and Catholic school boards in our province — they deliver education through 625 schools — have criticized this budget, stating that it further erodes education in our province. They note that the increase in school division budgets for the school calendar for their budget cycle is just 0.7 per cent for the 2023-24 school year.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that this year's failures come after nearly a decade, a decade of funding that fails to keep pace

with enrolment increases, fails to keep pace with inflation for years. School divisions have described a system that is already cut down to the bone.

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 schools, teachers, and other caring professionals are able to meet the needs of every child in the province.

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

Mr. Teed: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present our petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to renew its 35-year relationship with Luther Heights in Saskatoon in providing affordable housing units to seniors in my riding of Saskatoon Meewasin.

Thus the undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: the department of Social Services is cancelling the government's subsidy for 50 apartments at Luther Heights, a seniors' residence in Saskatoon; the building contains 120 units providing vital housing for seniors; the decision to eliminate these subsidies reduces the supply of affordable housing to seniors on fixed incomes and creates a burden and stress on us all.

Mr. Speaker, seniors across Saskatchewan are being forced to choose between paying more or leaving their homes and communities. We urge the government to reconsider ending this relationship and renew their partnership with Luther Heights.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully call on the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to urge the government to reverse the decision to eliminate subsidized housing and restore funding for the 50 units affected at Luther Heights.

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 a pleasure to again present a petition calling on the Saskatchewan government to provide adequate and equitable SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] rates. The Saskatchewan assured income for disability program is available to folks with significant and enduring disabilities with barriers to employment. For many people it's their only source of income, Mr. Speaker. This program didn't see an increase in nearly a decade, which represented an overall cut of 20 per cent to the benefits that folks relied on to live, to pay their rent, to get their food, clothing, transportation — all of it, Mr. Speaker. With this past budget, a billion in windfall revenues, folks expected a bump to the SAID

program and instead they got a buck a day. Many described it as a slap in the face.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing this petition calls on this government to do is halt its discriminatory practice of forcing folks on the SAID program to apply for early CPP [Canada Pension Plan] and then clawing it back dollar for dollar. In fact the government has been taken to court by the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry over this practice.

So with that, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly call on the government to (1) increase rates; (2) respect the constitutional rights of folks with disability; (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.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present our petition calling for universal access to birth control here in Saskatchewan. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan has some of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the entire country — that's youth ages 12 to 20 years old; that cost is one of the biggest barriers to accessing contraceptive birth control in Saskatchewan, especially among adolescents; that having consistent and affordable access to contraceptive options is essential for promoting bodily autonomy, preventing unwanted pregnancy, and saving money on sexual and reproductive health care; and that sexual and reproductive health and rights are human rights.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatories today reside in Regina and Saskatoon, one of which is Pat Atkinson, this province's longest-serving female MLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Wheelchair Challenge Highlights Importance of Accessibility

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Understanding someone's challenges requires walking a mile in their shoes or going the distance on their wheels. Wheelchairs are essential to the millions of people with mobility challenges. It offers users the opportunity for movement and independence.

Mr. Speaker, members on both sides of the House spent most of the morning in wheelchairs to understand what using one is like. And I can tell you that, Mr. Speaker, it was challenging. Many of us do not realize how fortunate we are to be able to get out of these chairs as we please. This initiative by First Steps Wellness Centre aims to give visibility to the estimated one in six Canadians living with a physical disability, bringing light to the restriction experienced by wheelchair users and promote accessibility.

This government was proud to introduce *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act* on November 15th, 2022. The bill further highlights the importance of an accessible and barrier-free environment. We are committed to building strong, inclusive communities for people experiencing disabilities.

I ask all the members to join me in thanking First Steps Wellness Centre for arranging this opportunity and to also thank the many organizations serving Saskatchewan residents by providing therapy and mobility assistance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Well Represented in *Canada's Ultimate Challenge*

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize a remarkable Regina University resident, Lori Campbell. Lori is well known throughout this city as an outspoken mover and shaker. She is the vice-president of Indigenization at the U of R [University of Regina], proud Indigiqueer and two-spirit speaker and activist, and Sixties Scoop survivor. Lori spent years of her life finding her birth mother and siblings who live across Canada.

Lori was also one of two Saskatchewan contestants on CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] *Canada's Ultimate Challenge*. *Canada's Ultimate Challenge* was a new reality TV show that brought together 24 athletic Canadians for an *Amazing Race* meets *Ultimate Ninja* warrior-style competition that transformed the country into an epic obstacle course. We had a strong showing with another contestant, Kimber Bernhard from Saskatoon and a co-host known to this Assembly, Craig McMorris.

As one of the self-identified older contestants on the show, Lori spoke about her desire to represent fellow Indigenous, queer, and two-spirit people of all ages. Under the guidance of Coach Donovan Bailey, she and her Team Red competed for Saskatchewan. As a strong, determined competitor, she pushed her limits on the national stage.

I would ask all members to join me in celebrating all participants in *Canada's Ultimate Challenge*, and congratulate Lori on her achievement and for making Saskatchewan proud.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Early Childhood Education Month

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today and recognize and celebrate the month of May as the Early

Childhood Education Month. Mr. Speaker, learning starts at birth, and though parents are the first and most important teachers for our kids, those wanting to partner with them in the process are an absolute godsend. So this month, we are glad to highlight and acknowledge those among us who work to deliver a nurturing and play-based environment encouraging our children to learn, explore and grow.

Early childhood education aims to provide a holistic approach to enhancing five elements of our child's development including linguistic, social, emotional, cognitive, fine and gross motor skills. Supporting our youngest learners and their families continues to be a top priority for this government and we do this by investing in programs such as KidsFirst and early childhood intervention and early years family resource centres. Programs like these make a difference for our families and help ensure our children's future success.

Mr. Speaker, later this month on the 10th of May, Saskatchewan will also celebrate Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. Early childhood educators provide an essential role working with the parents to lay the foundation of lifelong learning for children. The work they do has a profound impact and influence on our next generation.

So to the thousands of early childhood educators working in child care centres, homes, and early learning programs across our province, we want to say thank you. And I invite all the members to celebrate their commitment to our children and the important work that they do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Donations to Regina Food Bank

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I rise today to recognize some invaluable donations to the Regina Food Bank. Ken Tatarliov farms near Minton, operating as Surprise Valley Farms. He recently donated 25 tonnes of peas to the food bank, roughly 20 per cent of his crop. Ken said this: "We shouldn't be hungry here in Canada in this day and age." This is an inspiring story of a producer giving back to those less fortunate. I also want to thank Murad Al-Katib and AGT Foods for stepping up to process the peas.

The local owners and staff of Tim Hortons deserve a special shout-out. From their Smile Cookie campaign last fall, they donated \$193,000, securing over 550,000 meals. It will now be an annual spring event. It's on this week, so go out and get some Smile Cookies. One hundred per cent of the proceeds go to the Regina Food Bank.

The Regina Food Bank is addressing record food insecurity. They feed over 12,000 people a month in Regina without any government funding. They rely on community, which is why I ask all to join with me in thanking all of the donors and to recognize all those selfless acts of compassion and humanity. And I ask all in this Assembly to step up and prioritize addressing food insecurity in Saskatchewan with lasting solutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mental Health Week and Maternal Mental Health Day

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House today to recognize Mental Health Week. About one in five Canadians experience mental illness. We all know someone who has and continues to struggle with their mental health. But I'd also like to acknowledge that May 3rd is Maternal Mental Health Day, which our province has recognized for the last 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, 20 per cent of new mothers in Saskatchewan experience some type of maternal mental health illness, including depression and/or anxiety during their pregnancy or within the first 12 months following childbirth. Mr. Speaker, we are building on recent investments to ensure mothers and anyone else experiencing mental health challenges has timely access to the health services and support that they need.

I want to emphasize the importance of reaching out for help if you need it. Some of the services available to residents are walk-in counselling services through Family Service Saskatchewan and access to registered psychiatric nurses and social workers through Saskatchewan HealthLine 811. Mr. Speaker, residents can also access the Kids Help Phone and Mobile Crisis phone lines, and of course in cases of emergency, Sask911.

I ask that fellow members join me in recognizing this week as Mental Health Week in Saskatchewan. During this important week, I want to remind my colleagues that we all have a responsibility to awareness on mental health issues and work to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Fills Medical Residency Seats

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great day in Saskatoon Willowgrove. I am pleased to announce that the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine saw the best-in-Canada success with the Canadian resident matching service's national residency selection process. Saskatchewan is the only jurisdiction in Canada to have all family medicine residency seats filled in the first round of the match this year.

Since 2007 the number of residency seats in the province has more than doubled from 60 to 128. And it's not just family medicine residency seats, Mr. Speaker. All of the 128 medical residency seats posted in Saskatchewan this year have been filled.

[14:00]

Of these 128 seats, 54 were filled by medical students graduating from the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine and an additional 43 seats have been filled by international medical graduates. On average nearly 80 per cent of family medicine residents who train in Saskatchewan stay and practise in the province once their residency is complete. The other thing that has increased since 2007 is the number of physicians in Saskatchewan. There are over 1,000 more physicians practising in the province than there were in 2007.

Our government is very pleased with the success of this year's CaRMS [Canadian resident matching service] match, and we look forward to our newest medical graduates joining Saskatchewan's health care workforce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Opposition Statements on New Liquor Laws

Ms. C. Young: — Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder no one can take the NDP opposition seriously. They can't keep a consistent position on important issues like the carbon tax and provincial control over our natural resources. Mr. Speaker, our government recently introduced Bill 124, giving municipalities the ability to allow liquor consumption in municipal parks. On March 21st the NDP SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] critic said he supports this change. He said, and I quote:

Bill 124 is indeed a welcome modernization of liquor laws in Saskatchewan . . . the bill moves to allow municipalities . . . the discretion to designate spaces where public consumption of alcohol can be allowed . . . This is a welcome modernization and a quality-of-life booster for the people of Saskatchewan.

Seems like a very reasonable and clear position for the opposition to take. Crystal clear, one might even say, but hold on. All of a sudden the member for Saskatoon Nutana is saying exactly the opposite. In a Facebook post last Friday, she's now saying her colleague, the NDP critic for this area, is dead wrong, and she opposes municipalities being able to allow alcohol consumption in parks.

Kind of reminds me of the time the NDP condemned all the unmasked people enjoying a beer in Pil Country, and then posted a selfie for themselves unmasked enjoying a beer in Pil Country. I think you could say the same thing about the NDP's . . .

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — On Saturday, Mr. Speaker, thousands of teachers and their supporters came to this building to raise their voices in support of public education, but no one from that tired and out-of-touch government even bothered to show up.

Yesterday the Premier said that they had been heard. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that's the case, the Premier needs to put his money where his mouth is. When will the Premier ensure that public education has the support that teachers, parents, and the students are asking for?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would first and foremost say that it is not my money; it is the people's money that is invested in our children's education.

Mr. Speaker, and I would also say that the people of Saskatchewan on a per capita basis invest more into K to 12

[kindergarten to grade 12] education than anywhere else in the nation of Canada, an investment we most surely, assuredly are proud of.

Mr. Speaker, yes, I would say that if you attended the rally this past Saturday that yes, this is a government that did listen to you not only on Saturday but in the lead-up to that event. This is a government that most certainly listens to parents, listens to educators, listens to school board trustees across the province. And that is why this is a government that increased the education budget in the budget, Mr. Speaker, by some 6.7 per cent.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, we made the commitment yesterday as a government to engage with the school divisions over the course of the next number of weeks. And when there's . . . and there is a need due to the population growth that our province is experiencing, Mr. Speaker, the student population growth that is appearing in our schools. We provided interim funding last year and we are going to provide that interim funding again this year.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, it shouldn't take thousands and thousands of people to come to this building to shame that Premier into funding our kids' classrooms, and certainly not when they're sitting on a billion dollars of windfall revenue.

For a decade this government has served up year after year of declining per-student funding, forcing teachers in this province to do more and more with less and less. Now why is this tired and out-of-touch government again forcing cuts onto school divisions, especially when their budget is in the black?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, not only were those voices heard at the rally this past Saturday but long prior to that, from parents, from teachers, from trustees. And I would just say this: last year, Mr. Speaker, when there was fifteen and a half million dollars added to the education budget, there was no rally. That was through conversations that the Minister of Education and other members on this side had with folks and parents and teachers across this province.

Last year when there was \$20 million added mid-year, Mr. Speaker, there was no rally that precipitated that. That came from conversations that were happening between the people of this province — not a couple thousand that arrived here alone, but thousands and tens of thousands of people across this province.

Through the pandemic, when there was \$155 million provided to school divisions, there was no rally, Mr. Speaker. That was there to support our kids' future, to support our K to 12 education system.

In fact one of the first, one of the first policies that I moved on when I was provided with the honour of this office, Mr. Speaker, was to provide \$30 million to increase the educational assistants in our classrooms in community after community across this province. We'll stand on our record. We'll stand on the record of the people of this province with their largest-in-the-nation per capita funding in our K to 12 education system in this province.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I hate to break it to the Premier, but those people didn't show up for a thank you parade. They showed up because this government is failing to deliver when it comes to public education. This budget, the budget that he speaks of, gave a 0.7 per cent increase to public education that is forcing cuts to school divisions across the province, Mr. Speaker.

But don't expect cuts in qualified independent schools — no. Because those schools received an increase of 25 per cent from this tired and out-of-touch government even after, even after we heard stories of abuse in some of those schools.

To the Premier: how is it fair that qualified independent schools are receiving a 25 per cent increase while public schools got 0.7?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to be clear, a 6.7 per cent increase in the education budget from last year. Mr. Speaker, as well, I'll say this in terms of the qualified independent schools, we went from 18 to 20 qualified independent schools that are funded now through the qualified independent category.

One of those was previously funded under a different envelope, Mr. Speaker. That's Saskatoon Christian School. So that's not new funding. And there is an additional, a brand new qualified independent school that receives 50 per cent of what the average is, Mr. Speaker, across the piece for public education.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the question though is, to the members opposite, would they not provide choice in education? Would they not provide parents the choice to be able to choose where they want to educate their children based on the needs of that family, Mr. Speaker? Is that the position opposite, that all of that funding would be lost and that choice wouldn't be provided?

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

Mr. Love: — I'll tell you what we'd choose. We would choose adequate, sustainable, predictable funding for our publicly funded education system.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's right here in the orders in council recommended by that minister, one signed last week giving 11.8 million to qualified independent schools, and one signed one year ago, almost to the day, authoring 9.4 million. That's a 25 per cent increase for qualified independent schools, including Legacy Christian Academy, where students are suing that government and the school over allegations of violence and abuse.

Why is the Education minister giving a 25 per cent increase to these schools while public education faces cuts?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, the order in council does stipulate \$11.7 million for qualified independent schools as a part of the overall \$17.6 million

provided to all independent schools, including historical high schools, which that member used to teach at. So I think he would even see that there is a role for independent schools in the province. I hope that role doesn't end when he stops collecting a paycheck from them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I will say it again: qualified independent schools receive 50 per cent of the provincial average based on enrolment. We went from 18 to 20 funded qualified independent schools, one of those — he will know that school — Saskatoon Christian School, which was grandfathered as a previous associate school. So that's not new funding. In fact they went from 80 per cent down to 75 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And the other is a brand new school, which parents have decided that that's what they want to choose for their own families, Mr. Speaker. Would the member opposite say that he knows better than those families?

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, we've got a tired and out-of-touch minister. We can now add "desperate" as he stoops to personal attacks. Absolutely on this side we do . . . I did work in a historical high school. I did work there. And on this side we're proud of those historical high schools. Don't let him muddy the waters.

Now what he should be working at, what that minister should be working at is making sure that our teachers have the resources that they need, making sure that our students have the supports that they need. But he's doing the exact opposite. He's only giving public education 0.7 per cent, while he's giving qualified independent schools — he knows the category we're talking about, qualified independent schools — 25 per cent. How is that fair?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're giving public education in this province \$2.04 billion to educate people right across this province. On top of that, \$50 million for preventative maintenance and renewal. On top of that, \$150 million to build brand new public schools right across this province. And, Mr. Speaker, we're giving independent schools in this province \$17 million to be able to allow for parents to have a choice, that would see those schools funded at 50 per cent of what the public system receives.

We think that that's a good balance, Mr. Speaker, between providing education, publicly funded education in this province, and yes, where parents want, to giving them the choice. And to give teachers a choice, like that very member — not a personal attack — like that very member chose to take that choice that was provided to him and to teach in an independent school, Mr. Speaker. We think that that's appropriate.

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

Oversight of Qualified Independent Schools

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, if he was proud of that spin he's

bringing here, he would've showed up on Saturday and shared that with the thousands gathered here.

Now we've received copies of the reports compiled by the administrators that this government sent into qualified independent schools. They're heavily redacted, but they do raise serious concerns about how these schools and this government failed to protect kids. The report found that in one school, they found a person who wasn't a teacher who had for years been acting as a principal, and that students with special needs would not be admitted to the school. They were being forced out through their admission process.

At another school there were multiple concerns raised with curriculum and with teaching materials. Does the Minister of Education take any responsibility for the fact that all of this happened under his watch?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I would invite the member opposite to look pretty closely at the lawsuit that has been filed because I would say that much of the time that covers that lawsuit, this government wasn't in place. It was an NDP government. So I don't think we should be . . . Mr. Speaker, I think we need to be very careful about casting aspersions, Mr. Speaker, in terms of who did what, when.

But I'll say this. The member will know that the ADM [assistant deputy minister], Mike Walter, who is a very accomplished educator in this province, Mr. Speaker . . . He heard from this assistant deputy minister in committee just a couple of weeks ago, and said, and I quote, overall I was confident that what the students were receiving was instruction that was in line with Saskatchewan curriculum. During my time I was to go through all the resources and see if there were resources that were considered significantly inappropriate. "And I never did find one that I removed or asked to be removed from the school."

Mr. Speaker, that comes from a highly, highly respected educator in this province.

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

[14:15]

Mr. Love: — Then I'm going to challenge the minister to make those reports public. Put that information out there. Should be transparent. What we have is heavily redacted information. Although we did find out that another report found the Legacy Christian Academy had so much taxpayer money left over that they actually created a reserve fund with the public dollars that they weren't using on education — extra money.

At another school the government-appointed administrator noted that there was need for the school to "transition to more effective teaching practices." All the recommendations for that school are redacted.

Make them public, Minister. Both of these schools received public funds. This is about transparency. It's about safety of kids. It's about learning. Why won't the minister release all the

recommendations from their reports in full?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In terms of reserves, Mr. Speaker, our public school divisions do that on a regular basis. Does he think that it's inappropriate for public and separate school divisions to have reserves that were funded by the people of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Speaker, in terms of redacted, in terms of redacted reports . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I can't hear the minister speak. Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, in terms of redacted reports and the member opposite asking me to unredact those reports, first and foremost, I don't know how it worked under the NDP, but that's not how it works. I, as a minister, don't choose what gets redacted and what doesn't get redacted, Mr. Speaker. That would be highly inappropriate.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, these reports that the member opposite refers to, they may contain information related to personal information of a student. As an educator, does he think that that's appropriate that I, as a minister, would unredact that information?

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

Utility Rates

Ms. A. Young: — Mr. Speaker, it has been many a year since a school division in Saskatchewan had more than a few dimes to rub together to build up a reserve.

And now, Mr. Speaker, in the middle, in the middle of a generational affordability crisis, Saskatchewan people can't afford for their bills to go up any further. For months we've been calling for the government to scrap their rate hikes at SaskEnergy and SaskPower, and last week they finally announced they were cancelling their 5 per cent increase planned for SaskEnergy. And that's great news, Mr. Speaker, but it's not enough.

Will this minister commit to walking back the SaskPower rate hike that he put into effect last month?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I think everybody shares concerns about affordability, concerns about energy rates. And if the members opposite were concerned, and genuinely concerned, they would reach out. They would reach out to their co-leader Jagmeet Singh and suggest to Jagmeet Singh that he work to have that carbon tax removed, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if you were living in a home that uses a SaskEnergy bill of \$85.14, on that bill, you will have carbon tax of some \$60 — nearly three-quarters as much as what the actual energy

consumption is.

And, Mr. Speaker, with regard to SaskPower, Mr. Speaker, stand up for your province. Do what's right. Do the same thing there. SaskPower is largely dependent on energy that attracts carbon tax, energy that comes from coal, energy that comes from natural gas. It's subject to the same carbon tax that their co-leader and that those people support.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Mr. Speaker, that incoherence would be funny if it wasn't just so sad. People are facing cost-of-living crises and this government is sitting on windfall revenues. This government that has taken millions out of the Crowns that they control, out of the monopoly that they control, they are sitting on windfall revenues, Mr. Speaker.

And they're not providing any relief for families on their power bills. Four power increases in just a few months, and all the while Saskatchewan families are struggling more than anywhere else in the country to pay their bills. How does this make sense to that tired and out-of-touch minister? And when is he finally going to offer some relief?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, federal standards require SaskPower to pay a carbon tax. SaskPower has no choice on whether it pays a carbon tax or not. Do you want to know who has a choice with regard to carbon tax? Those members opposite. They can talk to Jagmeet Singh. They can talk to their other co-leader, Justin Trudeau. And they can say this is something that the citizens of Canada don't want; this is something the citizens of Canada don't need. And, Mr. Speaker, it is counterproductive to moving our economy forward.

I would urge those people opposite to take some responsibility for what they're doing, to take responsibility for what the member for Saskatoon Nutana is saying, what their other members are saying. Because individually they'll go to a rally, they'll stand up and say, we are against this; we want to have a carbon tax. Well, Mr. Speaker, the people on this seat are all opposed to having a carbon tax. Look at what those members opposite over there are saying individually and what the collective voice of the NDP are in this province, Mr. Speaker. It's wrong and it's counterproductive.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have one leader in the Saskatchewan NDP, and that is the Leader of the Opposition. And it is beneath the minister to not refer to her by her proper title. And, Mr. Speaker, that tired and out-of-touch minister is raising costs for families and businesses.

And it's not just the opposition saying that, Mr. Speaker. Fifty-two per cent of people, 52 per cent of people told Angus Reid they can't afford to pay their bills, Saskatchewan people. The CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] reports

that power and energy bills are the top cost concern for small businesses.

Why, Mr. Speaker, is this minister choosing to drive up the costs for families and small businesses? Why is he so opposed to providing any relief on power bills?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite want to pick and choose what position they want to take. It varies from day to day, place to place.

According to the member for Saskatoon Nutana, the need for a carbon tax is "not up for debate any longer." She said that, and I quote, "We know it's time for ambitious climate action using all of the tools at our disposal, including the most cost-effective regulatory and market-based approaches such as placing a price on carbon." The member for Saskatoon Nutana did not stop there. She also said, "We don't think of carbon tax as a tax. The price on pollution is a necessary one."

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not how it works. The carbon tax is something that's throttling our province. It is making it difficult for our citizens to pay their bills. The members opposite sit in their place, they laugh and they think it's a joke. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not a joke. They roll their eyes; they think it's a joke. It's not, Mr. Speaker.

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

Information Management Systems in Ministry of Social Services

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I can see why this government doesn't want to talk about education when we ask a question about education. They don't want to talk about utility rates when we ask a question about utility rates. Every time they keep coming back to this. It's desperate, Mr. Speaker. Our leader has been clear about our position on the carbon tax.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are paying more and more every year for this tired and out-of-touch government. But those dollars aren't going to education. They're not going to better health care. They're not going for better supports for kids in our classrooms. They're being wasted on costly IT [information technology] boondoggles that keep growing year after year — 138 million for AIMS [administrative information management system], which isn't even live, Mr. Speaker; almost 80 million for Linkin; and as we learned in committee just days ago, more than 25 million for MiCase to support the failed rollout of the SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program.

What does the Minister of Social Services have to show for this latest . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, as a government and I guess as society, we rely more and more on computers it seems for efficiencies. And as we talked about yesterday, the Linkin

system, it has increased in scope. There's maintenance fees that go along with that.

I'm not sure if the member opposite thinks we should go back to the days when the NDP didn't know where their children in care were, Mr. Speaker, old filing systems that took days and days and a lot of paperwork to be able to look after those files adequately. It frees up time for our caseworkers to deal more directly with children in care. Again, Mr. Speaker, we're working hard to ensure our kids are looked after. Part of that is the Linkin system.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the minister knows well that his government's record when it comes to the Ministry of Social Services is not one of success. A higher number of kids in care, more injuries and deaths than ever before, larger percentage of Indigenous kids in care, and Linkin is doing nothing to fix that, Mr. Speaker.

And as we learned in committee, more than 25 million for a program that people warned this government would fail, and lo and behold it has — the SIS program. It boggles the mind, Mr. Speaker. This government is refusing to listen to municipalities, to community-based organizations who are calling for increased supports, not more IT boondoggles. Increased supports going to families, something more than a buck a day.

But they can afford, this government can afford to waste more than \$25 million on an IT system to support the failed SIS program. How does this make any sense to the Minister of Social Services?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, we've been able to support our workers and our children with some IT solutions, but we've also increased in this budget by \$26.6 million on the income assistance side. The SIS program, the SAID program, all received increases, 60 or \$90 over the past two years. I'm talking about the SIS program, Mr. Speaker, \$145 increase on top of the exemptions we gave for the affordability tax credit. One of the highest rates of support we have in the country of Canada. So we're working hard on that, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the SAID program, \$70 on average increase per month for individuals and, Mr. Speaker, under the members opposite there simply wasn't a disability stream for income assistance.

So, Mr. Speaker, again because of a strong, growing economy we've been able to invest in some of our most vulnerable people, and that will continue.

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

Overdose Deaths in Saskatchewan and Provision of Care for Mental Health and Addictions

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, those wasted dollars could be going to classrooms, to hospitals, and to struggling families who

need to make ends meet.

More than 150 people in this province have died from overdose so far this year, many of those people in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. At this rate, 2023 will be the worst year for overdose deaths ever. It's unacceptable and this government needs to do more.

When will the Minister for Mental Health and Addictions act to bring forward the evidence-based solutions we know are needed to save lives?

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

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this year's budget we continue to build upon investments into addictions treatment. Mr. Speaker, \$12.4 million into a number of targeted initiatives such as here in Regina, housing supports to the Phoenix Residential Society; in Saskatoon, to the Saskatoon Tribal Council mobile services that are offered there.

And as well, Mr. Speaker, expanding more treatment capacity such as the expansion of 36 more virtual treatment spaces in this province offered by EHN, a division of Edgewood Health Network out of British Columbia to provide some innovative treatments for those in rural and remote areas of this province, and I would argue, Mr. Speaker, virtual spaces that can provide treatment to those that have difficulty accessing treatment for their addictions challenges.

That is some of the important work that we are doing in this province and will continue to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I seek leave to move a motion regarding committee membership.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has asked leave to make a motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

MOTIONS

Committee Membership

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you for the leave, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That the name of Doyle Vermette be substituted for the name of Nathaniel Teed on the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Speaker: — Motion moved by the Opposition House Leader:

That the name of Doyle Vermette be substituted for the name of Nathaniel Teed on the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[14:30]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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 Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet today on Bill No. 133, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2023*.

This is a bill that's rather short and features mainly the extension of the deadline of the manufacturing and processing exporter hiring incentive, and the manufacturing and processing exporter head office incentive. That has been extended by a year, from December 31st, 2022 to December 31st, 2023.

This is offering a non-refundable tax credit to eligible corporations that expand the number of manufacturing- and processing-related full-time employees above the number that were employed in 2014. The hiring incentive is 3,000 for each new employee hired between 2013 and 2023, and a head office incentive for companies' head offices based in Saskatchewan with at least 10 employees and a payroll over 1 million and 20 per cent increase in employment since 2014.

Obviously on this side of the House we support incentivizing employment here in Saskatchewan, particularly now with the abysmal record by this government and in particular by this Premier since elected five years ago. We know that according to Statistics Canada, between February '18 and December 2022, that Saskatchewan ranked dead last. Our jobs record is the lowest in the country at just 3 per cent. That compares to a high of 10 per cent by the province of Prince Edward Island.

It's an absolute disgrace, and we have implored the government again and again to take more constructive action. They continue to fail and provide that value proposition to attract and retain employees and their families to make Saskatchewan their home, a province that we are very proud to call home, and yet so many people have not made that choice.

And because of the regressive policies of this Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, not only do we have the lowest jobs growth record in the country, we also have the second-lowest

out-migration rate. There was a net loss of 35,856 people in the province between 2018-19 and '21-22. Second last, Mr. Speaker; that is such an abysmal record.

We know that, you know, a lot of resources and effort are going into attracting employees. And yet because of the failures of this government to address such things as our health care system, making important investments in education, and ensuring that cost-of-living concerns are addressed, that their policies are failing.

And so while of course we welcome the amendments and the extension of these tax credits in the manufacturing and processing sector, clearly more needs to be done. And we will continue to call on this tired and old, out-of-touch government to do more to create an environment that will both be attractive to new people to the province, to businesses to invest, and for their employees to come and live and experience all the great things that Saskatchewan has to offer.

And so I guess the only last thing I'll also mention is that we are certainly looking to see evidence that these tax incentives and these other initiatives are actually working, and that we continue to see growth in this province and to move our ranking from dead last to one that is more reflective of the great opportunity and promise that Saskatchewan offers here in the province.

So with that I will conclude my remarks and adjourn debate on Bill No. . . . adjourn debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate on Bill No. 134, *The Education Amendment Act*. Now my understanding of this lengthy bill, Mr. Speaker, is that it will amend the legislation to set up the legislative parameters for the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation, the learning centre, and further the work that the government has been doing on this distance learning project that they have been focused on.

Mr. Speaker, we've been talking a lot about education in question period lately. We, myself and several of my colleagues, had the opportunity to speak with thousands of educators, parents, supporters, trustees, and students on Saturday. You know, we didn't just speak to them at the rally on the Saturday, but we were actually physically there, unlike members opposite. Mr. Speaker, we speak to them all the time. They're in our communities. They

are us and they are our friends and family. And we attend a lot of the conferences and events that they hold and hear the concerns day in and day out, Mr. Speaker.

What we have heard loud and clear, you know, less about the projects that the government seems focused on and much more about the challenges around educating students in Saskatchewan more broadly, Mr. Speaker. We hear about cuts to supports, support staff, cuts to educational assistants and the impact that's having on classrooms. We've got classrooms of 30 kids, Mr. Speaker, with no supports for that teacher anymore, Mr. Speaker. That's the history, that's the legacy of this government, Mr. Speaker.

We had a student come . . . If this government would have bothered to show up on Saturday, they would have heard from the student who was speaking about her experience in high school, how she was a part of an AP [advanced placement] class, an AP program that has been now cut. She's been told that she can still take the test at the end, Mr. Speaker, but she talked about how difficult that is to do when you don't have the support in place, you don't have the teacher who can provide you with the learning that would get you to the place where you could hopefully get that credit.

I was a benefit of an AP class. I took AP English and AP calculus in high school. That was back in the early 2000s during an NDP government, Mr. Speaker. I was able and blessed to be able to take those classes. I didn't get the credit for the AP English class, the university credit, but I did for AP calculus. And I'll tell you, it was a nice leg-up into my post-secondary career. And it's a shame to think about those sorts of opportunities that students don't get anymore.

That's just one tiny story in a broader spectrum of the challenges and the stories we hear throughout the province. But it was one story that was told on Saturday that this government didn't hear because they didn't bother to show up, Mr. Speaker. I know I have lots of other colleagues who are interested to enter into the debate on this legislation. In order to facilitate that, I am prepared now to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 134.

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 Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise and enter in the debate on Bill No. 135, the consequential amendment legislation to the bill that I had just spoke about previously. I've already put my comments on this legislation and

on this government's record of the education sector already in that discussion. Since this is consequential to that bill, I'm not going to add much to that discussion. And I'm prepared now to adjourn debate on Bill No. 135.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:41.]

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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