

THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

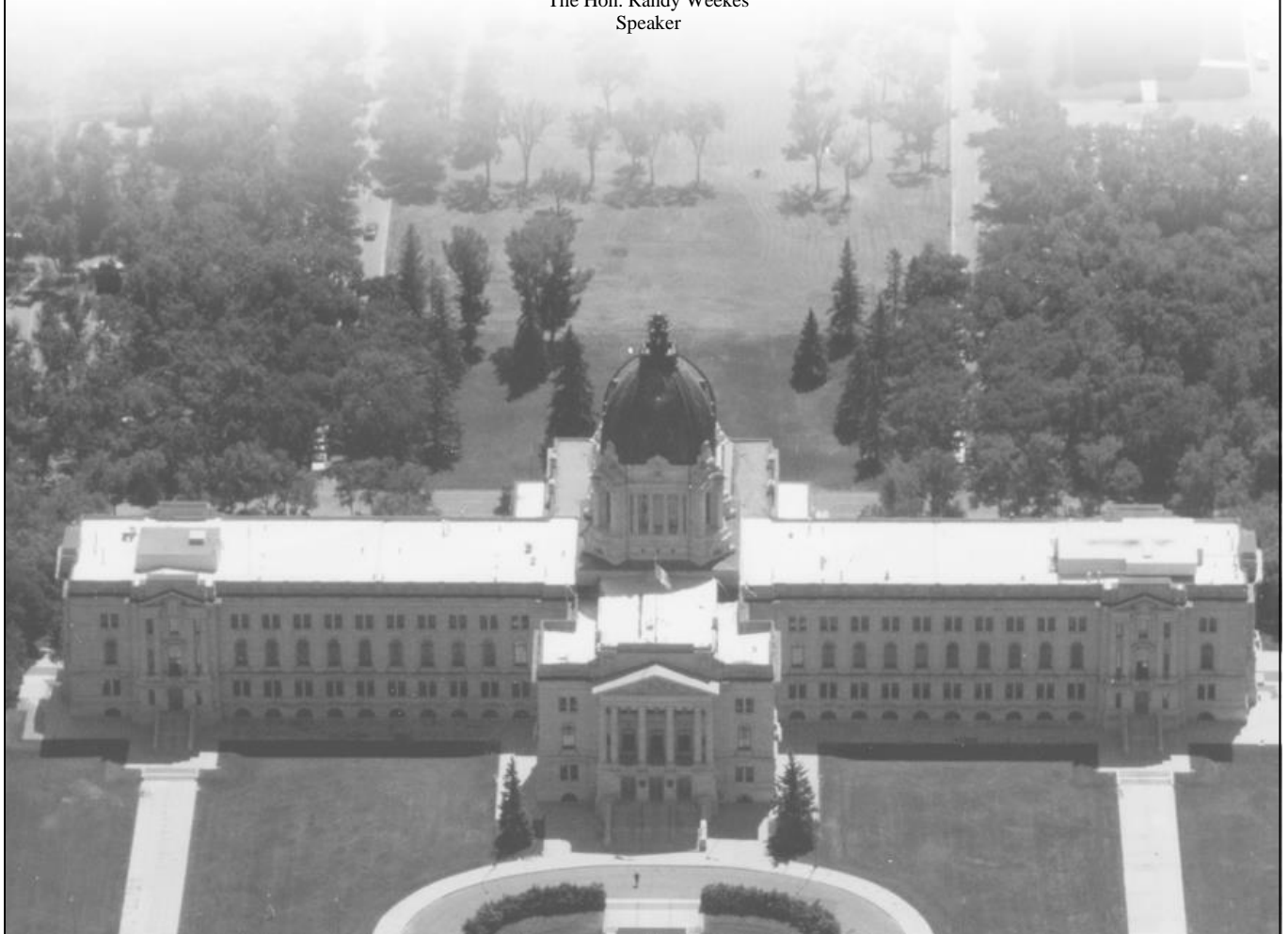
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS**

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



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**3rd Session — 29th Legislature**

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

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

<b>Beck, Carla</b> — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	<b>Makowsky, Hon. Gene</b> — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
<b>Bonk, Steven</b> — Moosomin (SP)	<b>Marit, Hon. David</b> — Wood River (SP)
<b>Bowes, Jennifer</b> — Saskatoon University (NDP)	<b>McLeod, Hon. Tim</b> — Moose Jaw North (SP)
<b>Bradshaw, Fred</b> — Carrot River Valley (SP)	<b>McMorris, Hon. Don</b> — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
<b>Buckingham, David</b> — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	<b>Merriman, Hon. Paul</b> — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
<b>Carr, Hon. Lori</b> — Estevan (SP)	<b>Moe, Hon. Scott</b> — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
<b>Cheveldayoff, Ken</b> — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	<b>Morgan, Hon. Don</b> — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
<b>Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy</b> — The Battlefords (SP)	<b>Mowat, Vicki</b> — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
<b>Conway, Meara</b> — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)	<b>Nerlien, Hugh</b> — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
<b>Dennis, Terry</b> — Canora-Pelly (SP)	<b>Nippi-Albright, Betty</b> — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
<b>Domotor, Ryan</b> — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	<b>Ottenbreit, Greg</b> — Yorkton (SP)
<b>Duncan, Hon. Dustin</b> — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	<b>Reiter, Hon. Jim</b> — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
<b>Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn</b> — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	<b>Ritchie, Erika</b> — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
<b>Fiaz, Muhammad</b> — Regina Pasqua (SP)	<b>Ross, Alana</b> — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
<b>Francis, Ken</b> — Kindersley (SP)	<b>Ross, Hon. Laura</b> — Regina Rochdale (SP)
<b>Friesen, Marv</b> — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)	<b>Sarauer, Nicole</b> — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
<b>Goudy, Todd</b> — Melfort (SP)	<b>Skoropad, Hon. Dana</b> — Arm River (SP)
<b>Grewal, Gary</b> — Regina Northeast (SP)	<b>Steele, Doug</b> — Cypress Hills (SP)
<b>Hargrave, Joe</b> — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	<b>Teed, Nathaniel</b> — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
<b>Harpauer, Hon. Donna</b> — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	<b>Tell, Hon. Christine</b> — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
<b>Harrison, Daryl</b> — Cannington (SP)	<b>Vermette, Doyle</b> — Cumberland (NDP)
<b>Harrison, Hon. Jeremy</b> — Meadow Lake (SP)	<b>Weekes, Hon. Randy</b> — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
<b>Hindley, Hon. Everett</b> — Swift Current (SP)	<b>Wilson, Nadine</b> — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
<b>Jenson, Terry</b> — Martensville-Warman (SP)	<b>Wotherspoon, Trent</b> — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
<b>Kaeding, Warren</b> — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	<b>Wyant, Hon. Gordon</b> — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
<b>Keisig, Travis</b> — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	<b>Young, Aleana</b> — Regina University (NDP)
<b>Kirsch, Delbert</b> — Batoche (SP)	<b>Young, Colleen</b> — Lloydminster (SP)
<b>Lambert, Lisa</b> — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	<b>Vacant</b> — Lumsden-Morse
<b>Lawrence, Greg</b> — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	<b>Vacant</b> — Regina Coronation Park
<b>Lemaigre, Jim</b> — Athabasca (SP)	<b>Vacant</b> — Regina Walsh Acres
<b>Love, Matt</b> — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)	

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**Standings**

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Iris Lang  
**Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel** — Kenneth S. Ring, K.C.  
**Deputy Clerk** — Kathy Burianyak  
**Principal Clerk** — Robert Park

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Lyall Frederiksen

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

**The Speaker:** — I would just like to welcome all our guests here today. It's great to see lots of school classes and other guests to your legislature. I'd just like to caution and remind you you're not to take part in any of the proceedings, that including clapping or talking or heckling or taking any photos. Welcome.

#### MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS

**The Speaker:** — On behalf of the Legislative Assembly, I would like to congratulate Their Majesties, King Charles III and Queen Camilla, on their coronation. God save the King.

#### STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

##### Ruling on a Point of Order

**The Speaker:** — Following question period on May 5th, 2023, the Government House Leader rose on a point of order, alleging that the member of Regina University yelled across the floor: "Don't trust what Scott's saying." I committed to reviewing the record. On the video at 10:28 a.m., a member can be clearly heard saying: "I wouldn't trust what he's telling you, Scott." All members know that it is unparliamentary to question the integrity or the trustworthiness of other members.

I find the point of order well taken. I would ask the member from Regina University to withdraw and apologize. I recognize the member.

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I withdraw and apologize.

#### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

##### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I would like to introduce Savanna Smuk, who is returning as the summer student in my office. Savanna is completing her fourth and final year of her Bachelor of Commerce degree at the University of Saskatchewan. This fall she will be applying to the Law program to pursue a career in criminal law. Joining Savanna from my office is Sheila Sterling and Twyla Wilson. Please join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for leave for an extended introduction, please.

**The Speaker:** — The Premier has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and

thank you to my colleagues for granting leave, Mr. Speaker. Today is World Ovarian Cancer Day, and it's on this special day that it brings me a great honour to introduce, to you and through you to this Assembly, some very special guests that have joined us. With us are a number of very courageous Saskatchewan women who have survived their own battle with ovarian cancer and are now working hard to support others dealing with this terrible disease.

Mr. Speaker, with us — and I would just ask you to give a wave as I find my way to your name — but we have Brenda Smith. We have Jackie Cherwenuk. We have Brenda Tunstead who is also accompanied by her husband, Darrell. We have Bridget Keeler, Janice Lebell, Kathleen Brown, Celeste Zander, Shirley Wood, also here with her husband, Rod. In the back Beth Ell, Heather Stirling and her sister, Terri Stirling. We have Joanne Fisher and we have Catt McDonald. Mr. Speaker, there's a couple of others that I'll get to in a minute. We have a couple that couldn't join us, but we want to mention them as well. We have Leigh Marcia. Cari Speers was coming and was unable with her sister, Christie Edy, as well as Kathy Szarkowicz, Mr. Speaker.

Our guests come from a number of communities across the province of Saskatchewan. We have Saskatoon, Indian Head, Bulyea, Gladmar, Churchbridge, Warman, Imperial, as well as Regina. And they're accompanied today by, all the way from Shellbrook, Saskatchewan, Stephanie Gosselin, the program director for Ovarian Cancer Canada. As well, sitting to Stephanie's left is the coordinator of Saskatchewan Ovarian Cancer Survivors. That's Anne Chase, Mr. Speaker. And I would take this opportunity to congratulate Anne and thank her for all her advocacies but congratulate her on being a recent recipient of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Mr. Speaker, ovarian cancer is often called the silent killer because symptoms are thought to develop only after the disease has reached a very advanced stage. There's no screening test or vaccine to prevent ovarian cancer, but there's much solid research that is taking place to improve testing as well as to improve treatment options. And some of that good work is happening right here in Saskatchewan.

In 2020 there was a million dollars that was invested to support research taking place at the University of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, among the projects under way is the establishment of the tumour testing and drug prediction program and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency on campus. This will provide for the first time critical, in-province testing for Saskatchewan ovarian cancer patients, Mr. Speaker, and that testing will enable patients to get quicker access to the cutting-edge treatments that they need and that are becoming available. This program is headed up by Dr. Laura Hopkins, who is one of six gynecological oncologists now practising in the province: three in Saskatoon, three more here in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, we expect to maintain that complement of specialists as our province continues to grow, and we will also continue to provide significant support to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Mr. Speaker, the government is working in partnership with Ovarian Cancer Canada, and we owe our deepest gratitude to the staff and volunteers at this organization. And to the survivors, most importantly we owe our gratitude to

the survivors across the province who are bravely sharing their stories, raising awareness, and providing support and encouragement to women across this province. And for that, we are forever grateful.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these guests to their Assembly here today.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming these guests here to their Legislative Assembly today. I want to say thank you to Stephanie, to Anne, and to all those who have joined us. Taking time through what I can only imagine an incredible, trying time to advocate for others and to honour those who still fight and those that we have lost, I think is a very extraordinary thing.

We look forward to a day when we have good news out of the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] and other places with regard to a vaccination, to a cure. Until then the work that you do here today on behalf of yourselves, your families, and those that we have lost is extraordinary and is to be commended. I invite all members to join me in welcoming these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Friesen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, it gives me great pleasure to introduce in the east gallery — I can barely see them up here — but some 58 grade 7 and 8 students from St. Angela School in Saskatoon. Now your MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] is not here, but as someone that has been very involved with kids throughout a lot of my life, it gives me great pleasure to introduce you here today. I hope you enjoy the proceedings and I look forward to your questions after.

I'd also like to say that they are accompanied by their teachers and I'm going to do my best with the names here, Mr. Speaker: Erin Manovich, Janelle Rasmussen, Chandi Opheim, Bryanne Schreiner, Tamara Weigel, Jennifer Beaulieu, Paulina Pieczko, and Mel Robinson. So please join me in welcoming them to their legislature. Thank you.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — 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.

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize a couple of special guests in this House, seated in the east gallery. First of all I would like to welcome my new

constituency assistant, Jocelyn Adema, to this, her Assembly. Jocelyn has recently returned to Saskatchewan after spending a few years in Toronto and Montreal after studying professional theatre. She's back. She has, much to my gratitude, taken a job with our office in Regina University where she hit the ground running last week on Monday, which was her first day and my first day back in this Assembly. So I believe I left her with the instructions: fly free; you'll do a great job.

When she's not working for me, she is a student at the University of Regina studying geography. Still maintains active involvement in the community through volunteering, specifically with the Indigenous Christian Fellowship. And in her spare time, I believe she considers herself a bit of a wine connoisseur as well.

Seated next to Jocelyn is no stranger to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but my dad, my dear old dad, Don Young, is here for his sessional viewing of QP [question period], an avid watcher at home, always makes a point to stop by. Although he has been very focused on grandpa duty of late, which he has done a fantastic job at, in addition to undertaking to put on the Cathedral Village Arts Festival, which is coming up in a few short weeks here in Regina. And he's been hard at work making sure that fantastic community event takes place and engages all our local arts and businesses in the neighbourhood.

And beyond that, I'm just so grateful that he has chosen to relocate to Saskatchewan from Alberta and is here. We all serve with the support of our families, Mr. Speaker, and I would not be able to be here at all without my dad. So I'd ask all members to welcome these two wonderful people to this, their Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to members of this Assembly, I'd like to introduce to this Assembly, 56 grade 4 and 5 students located in the west gallery from St. Gabriel School. Hi, guys. Accompanying them today is Cindy Welburn, Tricia Neumann, and Nancy Mayer. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd be remiss if we didn't recognize another individual seated in the east gallery. On the other side of Jocelyn is Eric Horbal, who is no stranger to this Assembly. I think he's been here before. I feel like he's been here before.

He's quite active in local politics, Mr. Speaker. He's a resident of Regina Rochdale. He's the youth vice-president of RDWSU local 539, which represents Sherwood Co-op employees. He's also president of UR POLIS [University of Regina Politics and International Studies Students' Association] which is, through that organization was how I and many of the members on this side have had the opportunity to meet him for the first time a few years back. That's, for those who don't know, Mr. Speaker, the U of R politics and international studies students' society. It's a very active and amazing organization. Mr. Speaker, on top of that he's also the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] Young Workers Committee Vice-Chair.

And if that wasn't enough, Mr. Speaker, he also coaches youth curling at his old high school, which is Winston Knoll. Love to see a fellow north-ender in this Assembly. It's great to have him here, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members to join me in welcoming him to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Keisig:** — Request leave for an extended introduction, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to welcome some very special guests to your Chamber here today. Today we are joined by my daughter, Shannara Keisig. She is graduating from licensed practical nursing in June. She's completed her school work and she's finishing up her clinical. Her favourite so far, Mr. Speaker, have been the burn unit and the emergency room. She's enjoyed that aspect.

[13:45]

Also with her is my other daughter, Sharlize Keisig. She's graduating from Lakeland College in Vermilion in the veterinary technician program. She completed all of her school work and classes in March, and her four-week clinical trial finished on Friday. And she is a certified veterinary technician. She did her clinical at Earl Grey veterinary clinic and she really enjoyed it. Very busy during calving season, Mr. Speaker, but she also had a steady rotation of small animals, and it was a great experience for her. She's thinking of going to work in Melville at the veterinary clinic there.

And I am very proud of both of my daughters, Mr. Speaker. And I definitely know that their future lies in Saskatchewan. Seated with them as well, I have to clarify to the Chamber that's not another sister. That's their mother there today, Mr. Speaker.

So Mother's Day is on Sunday, Mr. Speaker, and my daughters have always enjoyed doing something special for their mother on Mother's Day. And it's always challenging with a nurse in shift work and clinical and schedule and a busy agricultural operation my other daughter's in. We have to get the crop in, Mr. Speaker. And then plus there's a Rural Municipal Administrators' Association convention coming up, so my wife's been very busy with that.

So today was the only day that could jive. And my daughters organized everything and they said, you couldn't have a better day than . . . oh, shoot.

**An Hon. Member:** — Today.

**Mr. Keisig:** — No. Oh shoot. You get your toenails done.

**An Hon. Member:** — Oh, pedicure.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Pedicures, politics, and Peavey Mart. So please join me in welcoming Shannara and Sharlize to this, their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tough act to follow. I just wanted to quickly take my feet and acknowledge and welcome a friend and someone I admire, Jocelyn Adema, as well also because she's the daughter of Regina Elphinstone-Centre royalty. Her mom, Ruth, committed teacher for years. Her father, Bert, has served the spiritual and social needs of North Central and indeed the entire city as executive director of the Indigenous Christian Fellowship now for what is it . . . three decades? And Jocelyn is one of four of their brilliant, wonderful daughters. We're just so glad that she's come back to the province and has gotten so active in the Saskatchewan NDP [New Democratic Party]. We're very lucky to have you, Jocelyn. So with that, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Jocelyn once again.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the recruitment and retention of pediatric specialists. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that Saskatchewan's sole practising pediatric gastroenterologist has announced her intention to close her practice this year and leave the province; that parents of pediatric GI [gastrointestinal] patients will have to leave the province to get medical care for their children; that Saskatchewan has an insufficient number of pediatric specialists in other fields including neurologist, immunologist, adolescent medicine, and ENTs [ears, nose, and throat]; and that Saskatchewan children requiring specialized care are not receiving the medical treatment they need.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectively request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately recruit an appropriate complement of pediatric gastroenterology specialists and adjunct services and develop a plan to address the service gaps in pediatric specialty fields.

This is signed by individuals from Saskatoon and the RM [rural municipality] of Lakeland, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition that speaks to one of the root causes of affordability issues in this province, and that's the crippling effects of the ever-increasing federal coalition's implementation of the carbon tax.

I will read the petition. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the

following: That the NDP-Liberal federal tax on carbon continues to make life more expensive for Saskatchewan residents; that the federal Liberal-NDP coalition government continues to be disingenuous with the rhetoric surrounding the carbon tax; and 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 in climate action incentive payments; despite promises from the federal government that the tax would remain revenue neutral and that families would benefit, the reality is that families are paying more than they receive.

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

The below undersigned residents are members of Melville and Grayson. I so submit.

**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. Those who signed this petition would like us to know that education funding provided in this year's budget is wholly inadequate and will lead again to cuts in the classroom. Today I'd just like to point out one point: that the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, who represent 27 public and separate school divisions in our province in a non-partisan way, have issued a harsh criticism of this budget, stating that it further erodes education in Saskatchewan.

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.

Today's petition is signed by residents of Moose Jaw. I do so submit.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipients Recognized

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, last month the 2022 recipients of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal were announced. I want to extend my sincere congratulations to each of those outstanding individuals.

The dedication, commitment, and selfless service of the medal recipients have truly made a positive impact in our communities.

These super-volunteers donate their time to the arts, mental health, seniors, to welcoming new Canadians, and so much more. The efforts of these individuals have not only contributed to the betterment of our province, but have also inspired countless others to get involved in volunteer work. Their service is a shining example of what it means to be a caring and engaged citizen.

It's an honour to have the opportunity to publicly acknowledge the recipients' hard work and their dedication. The Volunteer Medal is well-reserved recognition of the outstanding contributions and the positive impact that they've had on our province, and it's greatly appreciated.

Once again, congratulations to the 12 deserving recipients of the 2022 Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal. They join the ranks of the 249 celebrated recipients honoured since 1995. We thank them for all that has been done and continues to be done to make our province a better place. Thank you.

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

#### National Nursing Week

**Ms. A. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to recognize National Nursing Week. This year's theme is Our Nurses. Our Future. We are grateful for our registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, licensed practical nurses, and nurse practitioners. This week we celebrate the many contributions they make across the health care system.

Saskatchewan's ambitious health care human resource action plan outlines how we will continue to support our nurses by implementing more than 550 new training seats in 18 high-demand health occupations, funding year two of the 150-seat nursing expansion, adding 250 new and enhanced full-time positions to stabilize staffing in rural and remote areas, ongoing recruitment of internationally educated health care workers, creation of a new registered nurse travel pool for rural and remote areas, and funding for the rural and remote recruitment incentive of up to \$50,000.

These are positive steps that are benefiting our health care workers and our communities. There are nearly 18,000 nurses working across the province on the front lines of health care. I ask all members to join me in thanking them for their dedication and hard work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Regina's Citizen of the Year

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize a proud resident of Regina University and a wonderful woman to celebrate: Regina's Citizen of the Year, Aura Lee MacPherson.

Aura Lee is a warm, engaged, committed volunteer in the Hillside neighbourhood here in Regina, but credits her volunteerism and life of service to her upbringing in Balcarres. When interviewed, Aura Lee remarked, "Volunteerism in rural



Saskatchewan is just part of your DNA. You just learn that.”

In addition to her local community, Aura Lee serves the province with her commitment to protecting our waterways as the Chair of the Calling Lakes Ecomuseum, a grassroots organization focused on water quality in the Qu’Appelle river system here in Saskatchewan.

She helped establish the Blanket of Warmth project, which developed award-winning, patented heating systems to address the poor air quality and mould in homes on Star Blanket Cree Nation. This project uses heating systems to warm basements with an interior blanketed heat that is similar to how rocks are used in tipis to store and release warmth.

A strong feminist, multi-talented business and community leader, I ask all members to join me in thanking the truly remarkable Aura Lee MacPherson for her commitment to this great province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Evacuation Orders during Northern Wildfires

**Mr. Lemaigre:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency and the leadership from Clearwater River Dene Nation and the community of La Loche were hard at work over the weekend containing fires. On May 3rd and 4th, residents were asked to leave the communities of La Loche and Clearwater River as thick smoke blanketed the area and fire threatened the communities. Mr. Speaker, many of these residents were transported to Lloydminster, Regina, and Meadow Lake.

I had the opportunity to visit with many folks over the weekend here in Regina. The Red Cross and SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency] did an amazing job organizing things to do for kids, meals, and supplies. On Sunday afternoon the evacuation order was lifted and residents are starting to return to their communities.

I’m very happy to know that there have been no reported injuries or major damage to any homes. We’re also thinking about our friends and neighbours in Alberta who have had to leave their homes due to challenging conditions caused by wildfire.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the SPSA, firefighters, Red Cross, and the residents and leadership of the affected communities who stayed behind to help keep people and property safe. Thank you.

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

#### World Ovarian Cancer Day

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask today that fellow members and others join me in recognizing May 8th as World Ovarian Cancer Day. We know that ovarian cancer is a difficult cancer to diagnose early. As a result, ovarian cancer is often diagnosed in later stages, which has a negative effect on survival. We all want to help women spot the warning signs and seek a diagnosis quickly.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Health partnered with Ovarian

Cancer Canada in 2020 to provide \$1 million to support ovarian cancer treatment, research, and clinical trials in Saskatchewan. This funding is being used to advance various research and initiatives led by our own Saskatchewan specialists to make improvements on how women are diagnosed and treated in this province. We look forward to seeing results of these initiatives in improving the lives and the outcomes for patients facing this very challenging disease.

Mr. Speaker, over 3,000 women were diagnosed with ovarian cancer in Canada last year. Our government continues to invest in cancer services, and we are committed to improving access to diagnostic services and surgical care for our residents.

I want to thank the local support groups in Saskatchewan and Ovarian Cancer Canada for offering resources and a sense of community for patients, their families, and caregivers. We can accomplish so much when we work together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Prince Albert Man Celebrates 100th Birthday

**Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize an amazing man from Prince Albert, Edwin Laird. This past Saturday I had the honour, along with 150 other family and friends, to gather to pay tribute to Ed for his 100th birthday.

Ed was born May 5, 1923 on a farm near Mayview, just west of Christopher Lake. He is a decorated World War II veteran. He served in Sicily, Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, and Holland. He was wounded three times. On his 22nd birthday, he was a signalman for the 2nd Division artillery and was the man who sent the message to cease fire. After the war, he came back to Prince Albert and got a job at a car dealership, earning \$70 a month.

[14:00]

I had the privilege of presenting Ed with the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Medal recently, and Saturday I had the honour of bringing greetings and presenting Ed with a certificate on behalf of the Premier and the province. One hundred poppies were pinned on a sash by Legion members and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And as an amazing gesture, Ed donated his Legion jacket and all his medals to the Historical Society.

Ed is a truly extraordinary man who has served his country and his province well. I am truly honoured to know him. I’d ask all members to join with me in wishing Ed a very happy 100th birthday. Thank you very much.

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

#### Graduate Retention Program Helps to Grow Saskatchewan

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Mr. Speaker, one of our government’s most popular and successful initiatives has been the graduate retention program. It was introduced shortly after we were first elected in 2007 as part of our plan to grow Saskatchewan by 100,000 people. Since then, Saskatchewan has grown by well over

200,000 people and is growing today at its fastest pace in over a century.

The graduate retention program has been a big part of that success, delivering up to \$20,000 in tax credits to more than 81,000 post-secondary graduates who chose to stay in Saskatchewan. A very successful program, Mr. Speaker. So what does that NDP want to do? Of course, they want to get rid of it. They want to get rid of it and go back to the days when Saskatchewan was losing thousands of people, especially young people, to other provinces.

Last week in estimates, the NDP member for Saskatoon University told the Advanced Education minister to scrap the graduate retention program and direct that money elsewhere. Mr. Speaker, we're not going to scrap that graduate retention program, and we're not going back to the NDP days of job losses, a stagnant economy, and declining population.

Today in Saskatchewan, there are more jobs and more opportunities than ever before. The graduate retention program is a big reason more young people are choosing to stay in this vibrant and growing province, and that's growth that works for everyone.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Support for the Health Care System

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this is a government failing to deliver when it comes to health care. When people in this province need access to health care, they should be able to get the care that they need when they need it. But under this tired and out-of-touch government, for far too many people, that simply is not the case.

How is it, Mr. Speaker, that at a time of windfall revenue, so many Saskatchewan people are forced to wait or even go without the care that they need?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — This government, since 2007, has taken the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, provided by the people of this province to invest and invest heavily in health care starting with a number of new hospitals and long-term care centres across this province. Starting with and continuing with investing, most notably, in our health care teams, in our physicians. Back in the early days, shifting the whole way that we attract physicians into the province and register physicians, Mr. Speaker, adding to the seats at the College of Medicine.

Most certainly, Mr. Speaker, that continues today as we see rural physician recruitment incentives increased to \$200,000 for five years of service. We see a commitment, just this past weekend by both Health ministers to look at a blended pay structure for our physicians here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is, is we have and will continue to have some of the most attractive, Mr. Speaker, incentive packages, most attractive remuneration packages for physicians. We do for nurses, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to invest not only in

that infrastructure but to continue to invest in those very folks that are providing that valuable front-line health care service in community after community right across this great province.

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

#### Access to Pediatric Specialists and Health Care Staffing

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, we're joined today by Sarah Turnbull, who is advocating for her daughter Blake. Blake requires the care of a pediatric gastroenterologist, also known as a GI. Sarah just got back from Edmonton, a trip made so that Blake could get the care that she needs. We used to have one of these GI specialists here in Saskatchewan, but that doctor has resigned and now Blake has to go out of province.

What does the Premier say to Sarah and her daughter Blake about the fact that they're forced to travel out of province for care that they should be able to get here at home?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, what I would say first and foremost is what the Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority are doing when it comes to recruiting a GI, of which we need two in this province. There's about two and a half million dollars that have been invested in this effort to recruit a couple of GIs, Mr. Speaker, but most notably one as soon as possible to the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in Saskatoon to provide that service to Saskatchewan families.

And the Leader of the Opposition is correct, Mr. Speaker. We need to work together across this province to ensure that we are attracting people to work into some of the infrastructure that has been constructed here, like the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, Mr. Speaker, to attract researchers into that hospital, researchers and physicians and surgeons and specialists that will also work at the College of Medicine training those physicians for that next generation.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it all does come together hand in hand. But we are experiencing some challenges in particular in some of those specialist areas, not exclusive to the province of Saskatchewan. We're experiencing those challenges across the nation, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we are working collaboratively, not only with the Ministry of Health, not only with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, not only with the College of Medicine based out of Saskatoon, and the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, but working with the other provinces and the federal government across the nation in attracting more front-line health care professionals into our facilities, regardless of where they may be in the province.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, frankly I was expecting a little better answer than that, but I'll go on. Back when we had a GI specialist in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, there were still even then, long wait-lists for kids like Blake, some families waiting six years or more just to see that one specialist.

And despite the funding that's been announced by this government, families like Sarah's are still left with more

questions than answers. They've been given no timelines and no information as to when this new GI specialist and team is supposed to be online. All this, Mr. Speaker, at a time when this government is sitting on windfall revenue.

The question: when will kids like Blake be able to see a GI specialist here in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, I would say as soon as possible, and this is of the highest priority for the Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, as well as the health recruitment agency, of which we had the new CEO [chief executive officer] in the gallery here just past week.

In the meantime — and this is a point as to what is happening in the interim time — the Minister of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority has been working with the other provinces. If they are able to procure an intern to come in for periods of time to provide those services here in Saskatchewan until such time we can land and bring in one . . . not one, but two GIs into the province, Mr. Speaker.

And the efforts of the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the recruitment agency now added to that, the relocation incentives that the government and local communities are offering, Mr. Speaker, is showing success in not only family physicians coming to the province, but over the course of the last two years, we have been able to attract over 100 specialists into this province.

Mr. Speaker, that is the record that we have. That is the work that we are set out to do over the course of the short term and the longer term to ultimately attract a couple of GIs into the province to offer those services, and most notably out of that new piece of infrastructure in Saskatoon, the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this specialist gave ample warning of her departure. We've known about this for over a year, back when we had one. We now have none.

The Turnbills, Mr. Speaker, are not the only ones who are impacted by this loss of our only GI specialist. Many families have to travel now to Manitoba, to Alberta just to get the care that their children need. In Manitoba they have four of these doctors. In Alberta they have eight taking new patients. But here in Saskatchewan, again, we have none.

How is this acceptable to that Premier? And how is this growth that works for everyone?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, most certainly as I said, what we are doing in the interim is talking to our neighbouring provinces and other provinces to bring in on an interim basis, someone that would be able to offer those services here in the province so our families do not have to leave for these particular services.

And the long-term effort is to use the incentives that are in place, Mr. Speaker, the health recruitment agency that we have, to ensure that we are attracting physicians of all sorts, all specialities, including GIs, to the province of Saskatchewan.

And as I said that effort, that initiative has attracted more than 100 specialists over the course of the last two years, Mr. Speaker. We are adding to that now. The health recruitment agency, that will be working to not only attract physicians and specialists to our facilities in Saskatchewan but working to attract all of the other health care professionals — nurses, CCAs [continuing care aide], LPNs [licensed practical nurse] — to make sure that we are able to offer the full suite of services that people expect in this province, Mr. Speaker. And that I would say over the last 16 has been, that suite of services has been expanding, expanding due to investment in the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Mr. Speaker.

And the people of this province can rest assured that that investment and that increased investment in years into the future is going to continue under this government.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, the Turnbills aren't the only ones impacted by the loss of Saskatchewan's last pediatric GI specialist. Earlier today I spoke with Anne-Marie Wheeler, who lives in Saskatoon. Her four-year-old daughter has a rare genetic condition that affects multiple organ systems. Seventy per cent of people with her diagnosis end up needing a liver transplant. Her best chance of avoiding it is with regular medical care, but she no longer has access to regular medical care in Saskatchewan.

As kids grow, pediatric GI is needed to make sure that treatments and doses are at the right levels for their changing bodies. What does the minister have to say to families like the Wheelers who don't have access to a GI anymore under this minister's watch?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And what I would first and foremost say to those families is the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the Ministry of Health, and my office is continuing to work on this to make sure that we do have a full complement of GIs.

We have put together a multidisciplinary team, Mr. Speaker, with pediatricians, patients, and families to make sure that the patients' needs are getting met. We are also working with our neighbour provinces to be able to bring in GIs on a locum basis to make sure that the patient care.

We've been able to communicate this with the families, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to continue to work with them to make sure that they're getting their medical needs from this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Except they aren't getting their medical needs

met, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Lisa Glines is another parent who is speaking out about the impact of pediatric GI shortages. Her two daughters, Ella and Rachel, live with Alagille syndrome, which affects multiple organs, including their livers.

Like the Wheelers, Lisa's daughters need regular check-ins with a pediatric GI to stay healthy, but they don't have that access anymore. Now they are travelling to Toronto for care.

Again how is this acceptable to the minister? And when will they be able to get care in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I identified in my previous answer, Mr. Speaker, we are working to make sure . . . This is a very specialized profession. We are working with our health human resource agency — that has just appointed the CEO — to be able to recruit these positions.

One of the first things that I sat down and sat with Erin Brady last week, Mr. Speaker, was saying we need to be proactive on this. We need to make sure that we're getting ahead of this, that we're not reacting when a physician or a specialist leaves. We will continue to do that. This agency has just stood up. We've had some great successes right away. And to the families out there I can tell them, we are working on this diligently to make sure that we have those specialists so they can get their children treated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — It's not working, Mr. Speaker, and the time for being proactive was years ago. The loss of the only pediatric GI in Saskatchewan is making it harder for families like Lisa's to get care. But the shortage of other specialists for Ella and Rachel takes its toll as well. They've lost their pediatric neurologist and we're down to only one ear, nose, and throat specialist as well.

All of these shortages of pediatric specialists make wait times longer and force families out of the province. Why should families like the Turnbells, the Wheelers, and the Glineses be forced to travel out of province just to access the care that their kids need?

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the answer to the question is, we're investing dollars in this. We put two and a half million dollars into our budget this year specifically for GI recruitment at the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, Mr. Speaker, to be able to get those individuals . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — For the team. They need the specialists there to support them.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Mr. Speaker, they need to be able to make sure that those individuals are covered off by other

pediatricians that can assist in this while we are bringing locums in.

No, Mr. Speaker, this isn't ideal. We don't want this to happen, but we are making sure that those patients are being treated by people outside the province until we can secure our own GIs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Provincial Economy and Job Creation

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Is that the best we can do? Come on.

Mr. Speaker, since this Premier took office in February 2018, he's had the worst jobs record of all the provinces. And last month's job numbers are out. Nothing's changed. This Premier still has the worst rate of job creation in Canada: just 4 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the Premier is bringing up the rear, miles behind everybody else.

So when it comes to making good mortgage-paying jobs, does this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government even acknowledge that they have the worst record in Canada?

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And here are the facts. This economy created 5,600 jobs over the course of the last year. This province has the second-lowest unemployment rate in the entire country. This province has the second-highest number of jobs per capita in the entirety of Canada. This economy has the second-highest labour market participation rate in all of the country. There are 17,000 jobs posted right now on saskjobs.ca. Full-time jobs are up by 8,800 over the course of the last year.

Mr. Speaker, leave it to the NDP though to find anything they possibly can to try and talk down the economy, attack our job creators, and attack our businesses that are creating good mortgage-paying jobs here.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're not talking down the economy. We're talking down their record, which is dead last. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a fact. And the minister might not like it, but he doesn't have to take my word for it. He can take his own. In his news release, the minister bragged about creating 5,600 jobs from April of last year to April of this year.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is just a 1 per cent rate of job growth, the worst year-over-year rate in Canada. Is the minister proud of being dead last, year over year, on job creation?

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Mr. Speaker, here are some more facts. In the last year, this economy created more jobs than the entirety of the 16 years that the NDP were in government. That is a fact — dead last in job creation over their entire 16 years. In fact they lost jobs. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they lost population.

What is our record on this side of the House? The largest population growth of any time in the history of this province since 1914, Mr. Speaker. Two hundred thousand-plus people have moved to Saskatchewan to call it home over the course of the last 16 years. I will put our record up against theirs any day of the week.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nothing like yelling facts back and forth at each other to make a point, and the point is that member's economic record is dead last. The unemployment rate is up. Only 200 jobs were created last month, and that's after losing 4,300 jobs the month before. Folks across the province are out of work, and this government is so out of touch that they're doing victory laps. We're talking about people's livelihoods.

When will this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government accept any responsibility for the fact that, under this Premier's watch, they have the worst jobs record in Canada?

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we've canvassed the record: a 5,600-job increase over the course of the last year, 17,000 jobs available right now on saskjobs.ca, the second-lowest unemployment rate in the country. And the future is very bright, Mr. Speaker, because we are seeing billions of dollars of new investment coming into this province, billions of dollars that never would have happened under an NDP government and never did happen under an NDP government.

A party opposite that has virtually no economic policy except a couple, Mr. Speaker, and we know what they are because they voted that way repeatedly, one of which is their opposition to pipelines. Every time they get the chance, they vote against, Mr. Speaker. Every time . . . A party opposite that supports the carbon tax. A party opposite that I have yet to hear criticize Justin Trudeau. The reason for that is because they agree with Justin Trudeau on literally every single one of his policies.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister loves to talk a big game in here, but when it comes to facing reporters he's MIA [missing in action]. Last week he huffed and puffed the same claims but didn't make it out of the House. Is he confident in his lines today, Mr. Speaker? Will he defend his tired and out-of-touch Premier's dead-last-in-Canada jobs record in front of reporters? Yes or no?

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Well I would venture to guess, Mr. Speaker, I have done more scrums on an order of magnitude and multiples than that member ever has or ever will. So happy to talk to our good friends in the media at any point, Mr. Speaker.

But what we hear from the members opposite is this: a constant attack on the economy. Talking down, every chance they can get, the performance of our economy, the work being done by our job creators, the work being done by those who are doing that hard work in creating jobs, Mr. Speaker.

Full-time jobs up by 8,800 over the course of the last year. And all we hear from them, Mr. Speaker, every chance they get, talking down the economy, supporting Justin Trudeau's economic policies, opposing pipelines, talking down the energy sector and opposing it at every step.

**The Speaker:** — I'd like to caution our guests in the gallery not to clap, please. Don't take part in the proceedings.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

### Funding for Post-Secondary Education

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, it bears repeating: this Premier has the worst jobs record in the entire country. Those are the facts. This is a government that pats itself on the back and bellows, growth that works for everyone, while we see mass layoffs in our steel mills and no help from this government, projected layoffs in our public schools, and now layoffs in post-secondary, Mr. Speaker.

Last week layoffs started at the University of Regina as a direct result of this government's underfunding — 5 per cent cuts across the board at that institution, Mr. Speaker. How many more jobs will the Sask Party government force the University of Regina to cut due to their lack of funding?

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

**Hon. Mr. Makowsky:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the work done by the post-secondary sector, particularly the U of R. I have two boys that attend that particular institution, and happy to invest in that with . . . I know what they're going to come out of it with. High quality programming at that institution, Mr. Speaker.

Of course the U of R, just like the U of S, is an independent autonomous institution, and it has its own independent board that makes decisions on day-to-day operating and business matters. And so my understanding is no academic programs are eliminated in what they're looking at. And as a percentage of operating dollars coming from the government, U of S and U of R have some of the highest outside of Quebec, Mr. Speaker. So we've been able to come up with a historic memorandum of understanding, four-year operating agreement, Mr. Speaker. I'll talk more about that if there's more questions.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, providing adequate funding to our universities has nothing to do with undermining their autonomy

as institutions. Not one thing.

Mr. Speaker, this government is in fact downloading cuts onto the U of R through their underfunding. He's forcing them to make cuts just the same way that the Education minister is forcing schools to make cuts. Everything is on the table for cuts in each faculty at the U or R, including to programming, while other provinces take action to attract new students and young professionals.

Why, while sitting on record windfall revenues, is this government forcing cuts?

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

**Hon. Mr. Makowsky:** — Mr. Speaker, in terms of the multi-year funding agreement, the institutions are very happy with that. They signed this with a four-year consistent and stable amount of money, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member opposite talks about cuts. Now only the NDP would characterize as that, Mr. Speaker. It would be like an NHL [National Hockey League] player who signs a four-year contract, gets a signing bonus, and then in the second year of that contract saying he's taken a pay cut. Nobody would say that except the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the U of S, U of R are happy with it. Peter Stoicheff has said, "In years three and four, the agreement will continue to provide predictable, stable support enabling USask to continue to provide outstanding post-secondary education . . ." And they're doing a great job. We're going to continue to work with the universities, the minister has said, on a new funding agreement going forward, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, this government is forcing cuts at our universities, and it's hurting our province. That historic four-year agreement, that represents a cut of 13.7 per cent to the institutions when you take inflation into account over the four years of that agreement. Nothing to brag about there.

In Manitoba this year, their government increased their post-secondary budget by 11.2 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Other governments get that we are in a global competition for talent and are making investments in their future success. What message does it send when our province is forcing cuts while our neighbours are investing in post-secondary?

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

**Hon. Mr. Makowsky:** — Mr. Speaker, in terms of investments on the student side with the graduate retention program . . . in terms of over a million dollars a day to all of our institutions right across the province. Student supports as well, several million dollars in that area, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to continue to work with our post-secondary sector, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the student side, students don't pay interest on student loans while they're going to school. The minister, I understand, just did an announcement today on the

Mitacs scholarship. So we're continuing to invest in our students each and every day, Mr. Speaker.

Again we talked about, the member from Cannington talked about the graduate retention program, the only one of its kind in the country, Mr. Speaker. That would certainly have an input on the amount of students that go to the U of R, U of S. The members opposite want to cut that program, Mr. Speaker. We're not going to.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

### New Compensation Model for Family Physicians

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to inform the House of significant forthcoming changes to the way our province compensates family physicians. This past Friday, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health and I announced to the Saskatchewan Medical Association spring representative assembly, held in Saskatoon, that our government is committed to developing a new made-in-Saskatchewan family physician payment model based on blended capitation.

Blended capitation is considered blended because it offers two streams of remuneration to the family physicians: a base payment for a standard basket of services provided for each patient on a physician's patient roster and the amount is adjusted by their age, gender, and complexity for each patient; and an additional service-fee payment also available to physicians for extra services provided outside the defined basket of services. This will offer an alternative care for traditional fee-for-service model in which family physician payments depend solely on the quantity of services provided.

Mr. Speaker, once fully implemented, this will be the most significant change in the way physicians are compensated in Saskatchewan in more than 60 years. This payment model will allow physicians to work collaboratively with a team of health care professionals, ensuring greater access and quality of care for patients and a better distribution of responsibilities amongst team members.

Incentivizing physicians to take on patients requiring more complex care will ensure that primary care is accessible and a preferable method of care for all Saskatchewan residents. Our goal, Mr. Speaker, is to ensure that all Saskatchewan patients who want a family doctor can access one and feel supported on their medical journey.

[14:30]

Our government has heard the concerns raised by the Saskatchewan Medical Association that an alternative to fee-for-service is needed. This new model will be supported by ongoing recruitment and retention efforts within family medicine. Despite the challenges facing our health care system, we continue to see successes including the recruitment of 72 family physicians and 106 specialists to Saskatchewan from outside the province, totalling 178 physicians in the past 20 months.

Mr. Speaker, I was able to make this announcement in the

presence of approximately 180 Saskatchewan physicians who were in attendance at the Saskatchewan Medical Association spring RA [representative assembly] this past Friday. I'm pleased to share some of their reactions from the physicians for this announcement:

This is positive news and we are very pleased to hear that the Ministry of Health and the government are willing to be partners with us and improve the care for our patients, improving access and improving compensation.

Said Dr. John Gjevre, outgoing president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association.

Dr. Carla Holinaty, a family physician and Chair of the family practice section of the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association] had this to say about the announcement:

We were thrilled. We were really excited to hear that this was something that the government was coming forward with. It is something that we have been asking for, for a period of time now. So we're really heartened to hear that they have heard us and they have listened to us and were willing to move forward in a partnership with this new model that I really think is going to be better for patients and for physicians.

A move to a new compensation model was recommended by the collaborative working group formed between the Saskatchewan Medical Association, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and the Ministry of Health. We anticipate this new model will benefit not only physicians but a range of other health care professionals and most importantly patients by supporting a move towards a more team-based health care.

Mr. Speaker, a team-based health approach ensures that all health professionals work to their full scope creating more capacity for physicians to perform those tasks that only a physician can perform. This new payment model will take time to design through further group effort. In the meantime, our government will continue to work closely with the Saskatchewan Medical Association to design transitional measures to build capacity positions to eventually adopt blended capitation.

I am fortunate to have the opportunity to meet with the president of the SMA regularly as well as the SMA board of directors and the board of their family practice section. We look forward to the work ahead of us and are very pleased to confirm these first steps towards overhauling our family physician compensation in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I would also like to thank the minister for providing a copy of his remarks in advance, although, you know, it was certainly encouraging to hear some of this news come out over the weekend.

It's encouraging to hear the minister finally agreeing with the concept that we need a change when it comes to the compensation model for doctors, although they have been quite slow to act on this front, Mr. Speaker. Doctors have been actively

pleading with this government for the past year to find an alternative to the fee-for-service model. And we've stood alongside them in these calls. And we've heard the minister stand up repeatedly arguing that . . . you know, not addressing the need for these changes, Mr. Speaker.

It's critically important that these changes come quickly. Other provinces have taken swift action, and we need to ensure that we move quickly to make sure that we stay competitive, Mr. Speaker. And the more time that goes on, the more at risk we are as a province to losing more family doctors.

We have raised concerns consistently over the past couple of years with family doctors closing their clinics, leaving the family practice altogether, because they're overwhelmed by administrative and overhead costs, Mr. Speaker. This is a known issue. It's been a known issue for quite some time.

The SMA has been very clear for quite some time about what's needed to change this. We need to support family physicians. We need to ensure that this is a profession that new doctors want to enter, and it's also a profession that experienced doctors want to stay in. So those are the two components that need to be addressed here: recruiting but also retention.

Right now, we have 200,000 people in Saskatchewan without a family doctor. Physicians have been calling for team-based care and for fee-for-service changes to happen quickly. The minister provided a quote by Dr. Holinaty but also didn't include the fact that Dr. Holinaty said that supports are needed faster than 12 months, Mr. Speaker. So I hope he thinks very carefully about that.

The health care crisis is now, not 12 months from now. And you know, we'll await further detail on the proposed model, but while doing so we will urge the minister to act quickly and listen closely. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

## SECOND READINGS

### 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 Saskatoon Eastview.

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be on my feet. And I'll be very brief today in response to Bill No. 134, *The Education Amendment Act, 2023* as we will look to see this bill proceed through the typical path and will bring the questions and concerns that I'm hearing from stakeholders, including divisions, families, and teachers when we have the opportunity to do that at Human Services Committee. But at this time I will

conclude my remarks and see this bill proceed through the usual channels. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 134 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 House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Human Services.

**The Speaker:** — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

#### 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 Saskatoon Eastview.

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As with the previous piece of legislation, I will bring questions and concerns from stakeholders, that have been shared with me and shared publicly, to committee when we see this bill there at the Standing Committee on Human Services. But at this time, I'll conclude my remarks on Bill 135.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 135 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 House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Human Services.

**The Speaker:** — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Human Services. 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 motion is 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 14:39.]





# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

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Minister Responsible for the  
Public Service Commission  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority  
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Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

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Deputy Premier  
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Saskatchewan Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Power Corporation  
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