



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

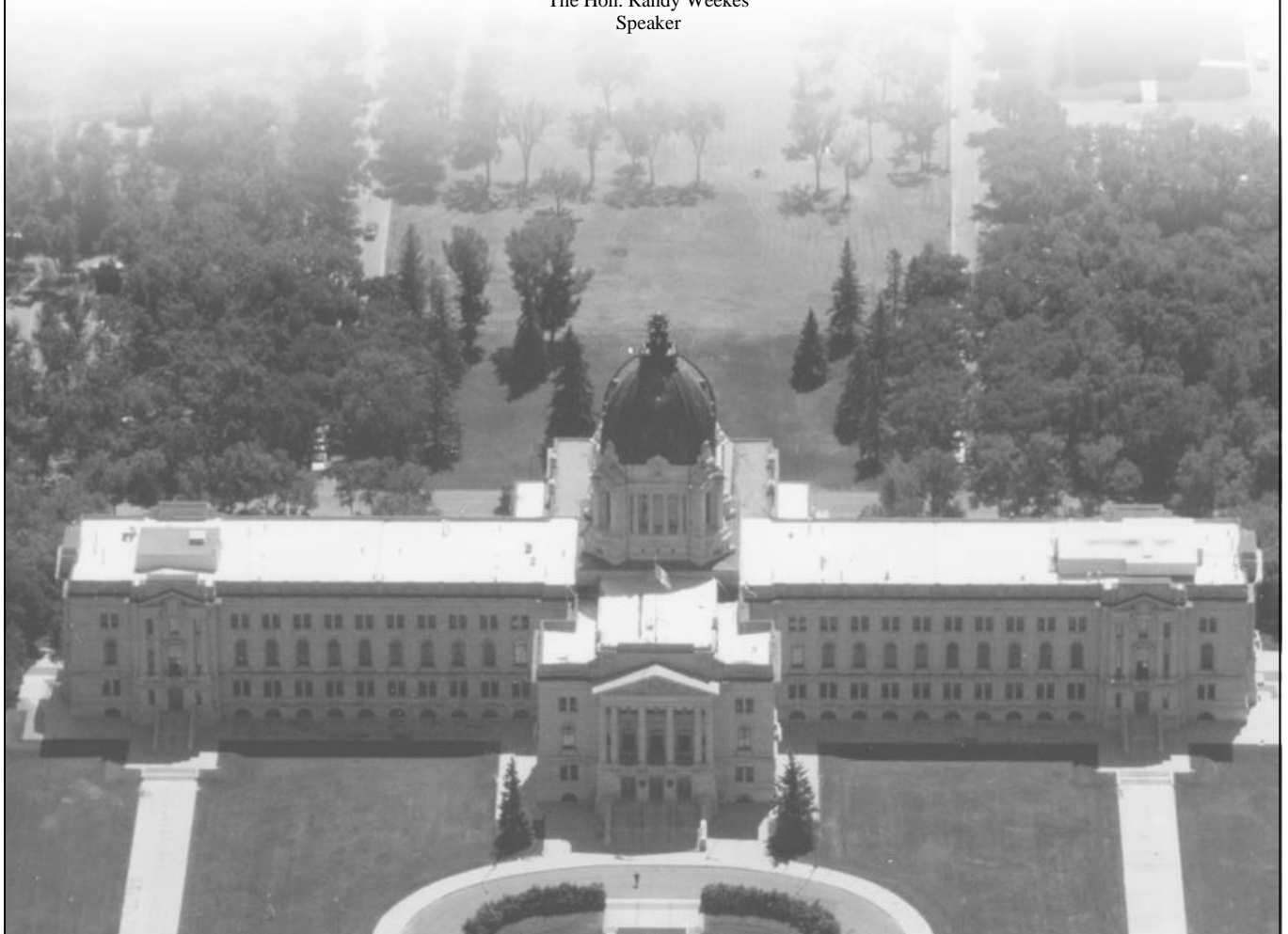
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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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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Legislative Assembly are available  
within hours after each sitting.

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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 the galleries nearly full. I'd just like to caution you that you're not to take part in the proceedings. That includes no talking or heckling or clapping, and also no photos. Welcome, and thank you very much.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to do a couple of introductions, the first of which are two special guests that are seated in your gallery. We're honoured to have with us today Her Excellency Dr. Melita Gabrič, ambassador of the European Union to Canada. She is accompanied by Paul Lasserre, communications officer, and they're also accompanied by Melinda Carter, director of international engagement, and Alice Ye, senior international officer.

This morning the Premier and a number of ministers have had the opportunity — I believe the Leader of the Opposition as well — to meet with the ambassador and had some very good discussions. I would like to welcome her on her visit to the province of Saskatchewan.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce a very esteemed group of chamber leaders seated in the west gallery. The Chamber of Commerce executives of Saskatchewan, of course, are here on their advocacy day today, and a number of leaders are in the gallery.

I will introduce them individually: Prabha Ramaswamy, of course, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO [chief executive officer]; Virginia Wilkinson from the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce; Jordan Ewart, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce; Jason Aebig from the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce; Tony Playter from the Regina Chamber of Commerce; Karla Wiens, Swift Current & District Chamber of Commerce; Linda Machniak, Battlefords Chamber of Commerce; Teri-Lynn MacKie, Lloydminster Chamber of Commerce; Debbie Brown, Prairie Sky Chamber of Commerce; Jackie Wall, Estevan Chamber of Commerce; Rob Clark, Moose Jaw Chamber of Commerce; Heather Bergdahl from the Moose Jaw Chamber of Commerce; and Monica Osborn from the Weyburn Chamber of Commerce.

And I know these leaders are meeting with members here today. I look forward to a discussion later today as well, and I'd like to welcome them 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'd like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming this remarkable group of leaders from the chamber network here in Saskatchewan to this, their legislature.

On behalf of the official opposition, to you all as well as to your staff present, we appreciate the work that you do, not just for the business communities, but in representing your members who are more than just businesses in Saskatchewan but are key contributors and builders to the communities in which they're based and to the province that we all serve. You do such great work not only on behalf of your members, not only on behalf of those of us here in Saskatchewan, but in representing our interests on the national stage and ensuring that we in Saskatchewan continue to punch well above our weight.

So on behalf of the official opposition, thank you so much for the work that you do. Good success today in your efforts in this beautiful legislature. And again, welcome to this, your Legislative Building.

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

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

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Agriculture Student Scholarship is a vital part of the Government of Saskatchewan's commitment to developing young agriculture leaders. Each year we recognize four young individuals for their passion and dedication to agriculture. This year's winners are all community leaders and contributors.

I want to recognize the people that helped these young leaders get here, and that is their supportive friends and family. Up in the gallery, we have the grand prize winner — and I'd ask them to give a wave; I know I can't see them — Caitlyn Spratt, who is accompanied by her father, Michael Spratt. We have three runner-up winners as well, Mr. Speaker: Katherine Andree, who is accompanied by her mother, Amy; we have Danielle Dyok, who is accompanied by a family friend, ag mentor, Kaitlyn Kitzan; and lastly we have Emery Cholin, who could not make it here today, Mr. Speaker.

There will be more details on this year's winner and runners-up through a member's statement later on, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members to join me in congratulating these individuals on outstanding accomplishments in agriculture, Mr. Speaker. Welcome to their gallery. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Ms. Bowes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Minister of Agriculture in welcoming one of these impressive scholarship recipients. In particular, Danielle Dyok is a constituent of mine in Saskatoon University. She's just finishing up her grade 12 year at Evan Hardy and then she'll be heading off to undertake her first year in animal science at the University of Saskatchewan this fall. It's my honour to congratulate her on receiving the 2023 Agriculture Student Scholarship, Mr. Speaker.

I want to mention as well, in particular Danielle is an urban recipient of this scholarship which is quite unique and exciting to see. Not often that you would see an urban recipient for this scholarship in particular. And so while she may be a city girl, Danielle comes from a strong agricultural background with her grandparents farming grain and cattle for many years in the Foam Lake area.

In addition to her academic excellence, Danielle is also an incredibly diverse athlete, playing flag football, soccer, curling, badminton, and basketball. She will also be spending her summer before starting university coaching a soccer camp in Saskatoon.

I would like to ask all members to congratulate Danielle on winning this year's Agriculture Student Scholarship, and please give her a warm welcome here to her legislature. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome, seated in the west gallery, 18 grade 10 students from Melville Comprehensive School. And also seated on the floor is another Melville student, Ayva Delainey, who is a very accomplished wheelchair athlete. She is the Saskatchewan Female Para Athlete of the Year; as well won a bronze medal in the Canadian Summer Games, Mr. Speaker.

Now our students are accompanied by Lucas Thomas and Don Coleman who are no strangers to the Assembly as they bring students here yearly. Mr. Speaker, Melville Comprehensive School has been providing high-quality instruction, especially regarding our trades training.

They recently had five students win medals at Skills Canada provincial competitions: Aldren Pangilinan, photography gold medal; Alex Appel, construction gold medal; Cooper Ell, welding gold medal; Austin Wourms, outdoor power equipment bronze medal; and Olivia Dumalski, photography silver medal. Don Coleman has been the instructor to many of those champion students, Mr. Speaker.

I wish them luck as they compete in skills national competition in Winnipeg later this May. But I'd also like to welcome all members of Melville Comprehensive School, their teachers, to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — 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. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is wonderful to see the galleries here filled today, and I would join all members in welcoming all of those guests to their Legislative Assembly. I do have a few remarks and some people I would like to specifically welcome. And first on that list is Her Excellency, Ms. Gabrič, the EU [European Union] Ambassador to Canada.

As the minister opposite noted, we had the opportunity to meet yesterday. And I just want to say thank you for the conversation, the willingness to learn and ask questions, and I thought that the exchange was fabulous. And I do hope we see you and Jason again very soon here in this Assembly and in Saskatchewan. I want to say thank you for your work, and you know, your curiosity about this province. It's greatly appreciated. I would invite all members to join me in welcoming this delegation to their Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, it's delightful when we have people from our lives, from our families, our communities join us. I first want to say a warm welcome to the class that we see seated in the east gallery from Ford School here in Regina, grades 5 and 6. And a special shout-out to their teacher, Michelle Dueck, who, I don't know . . . I didn't say to the students how long we've known each other, Michelle. They thought Ms. Dueck knows everyone. They can leave it up to their imagination how long we've known each other. But it was great to see them here today and to get to chat with them.

And then a few people in the gallery as well, Mr. Speaker, some that I've had the opportunity to welcome here before. My mom, Judy, and my very good friend and chosen sister Rawda are here today. And a special treat today, Rawda has brought along her two oldest, Omar and Ali. These boys are extraordinary, Mr. Speaker. They have embraced Canada as their home. Omar is an amazing artist. You can get him to draw just about anything. I have one of his pictures on my fridge at home. His brother Ali is a great speller, a good student, and they are good big brothers to a whole bunch of sisters and their little brother.

It makes me proud to know you as a friend, to watch you raise your kids here in Canada, Rawda, and her husband, Abdelkarim. And it's really nice to look up there and see you in the gallery here today. Please, I invite all members to join me in welcoming all of these guests and especially my friends to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been requested for an extended

introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to their Legislative Assembly — seated mostly in your gallery, but both in the east and west gallery — over 65 individuals representing Youth4Change, a group that advocates for more protection of Saskatchewan youth from tobacco and vaping.

Youth4Change was started by Jennifer May with Lung Saskatchewan and Dr. Erika Penz, a Saskatchewan respirologist, in 2018, and also supported by Carolyn Cyr with the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Since that time, under the leadership of Lung Saskatchewan and with the partners of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, and Students Commission of Canada who have also representatives here today, Youth4Change has grown.

Five groups are advocating today with the following communities, and I ask you to give us a wave when I mention your community: Saskatoon, Martensville, Dundurn, Carry the Kettle First Nation, Fort Qu'Appelle, Melfort, and Piapot Cree Nation. Members range in age from 12 to 22, Mr. Speaker.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to speak at the rally earlier today outside the Legislative Building and I was also able to attend a meeting last night which was like a mini question period, Mr. Speaker, for almost 40 minutes. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome all of these representatives and the youth to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[13:45]

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the minister opposite in welcoming the Youth4Change advocates that are here today, the student advocates as well as the representatives from the partner organizations — Lung Saskatchewan, Heart and Stroke, Canadian Cancer Society, and Students Commission of Canada — as well as Dr. Penz.

I want to welcome students from all the communities that the minister already listed. I won't list them again, but I do want to thank you for your time advocating on the steps of the legislature this morning. What a rally. Adults could learn so much from you folks in terms of how to advocate. It's really quite impressive and humbling to see inspirational leaders of the next generation fighting for health in our society and making sure the government is looking out for them in terms of the rules, the laws, the regulations that are made in this building.

So thank you so much for your time today. I look forward to the reception tonight. And I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly today.

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

**Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot of familiar and friendly faces up in your gallery today. Some parents and students with Youth4Change — very proud of them and happy to have them here for the meeting later on at the legislature here. Also the Spratts, good family friends, and Caitlyn, one of the recipients of the scholarships there.

This morning, to you and through you, I want to introduce a few schools that we have from the city of Regina here: the Regina Huda School grade 5 class with their teacher, Sandy Jost. We'll be getting together with the member from Regina Pasqua and visiting and answering questions afterwards. And then also the grade 6 class, 25 students from W.H. Ford School and their teacher, Michelle Dueck. So we look forward to that, answering some tough questions and enjoying the time together after question period.

So I would like to ask everyone to invite them to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today, and a real quick shout-out to join in the welcome of the students at the Huda School that are here with us today. Assalamu alaikum. It's wonderful to have you here today. And to the students from Ford, I had so much fun with you out in front of this Assembly, with you using your voice. It was a pleasure to have you here today.

But I want to join with the Agriculture minister in recognizing those scholarship recipients here today. Agriculture in Saskatchewan is second to none — the world's best producers, world-leading innovation in that ecosystem, agribusiness, agri-manufacturing, ag tech, Mr. Speaker. And I want to welcome those leaders here today that have been identified already and that have received this scholarship.

So Caitlyn Spratt, Katherine Andree, and Danielle Dyok, welcome to your Assembly and thank you so very much for your leadership in this incredibly vital sector to this province and to the world.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my colleague and with the minister opposite in recognizing all of the young people who are here with the Youth4Change activities. What a joy it was to be outside and see young people raising their voice on the steps of this legislature.

But I want to recognize one of the adults who is with them today and that's Erin Kuan, who's the CEO of Lung Saskatchewan. There she is. Give me a wave up there. Mr. Speaker, I got to know Erin and her husband, Brad, as I had the joy and the honour of teaching two remarkable young people, their children, their daughter Maija and their son Grayson. Just two of the most amazing young people that I've ever had the honour to work with.

Maija's now studying chiropractics in Toronto, and Erin's son

Grayson is playing lacrosse, studying business, just convocated last week and will go back to Quincy University in Illinois to do his M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration] in the fall. A wonderful family in Saskatoon that I have had the honour to get to know.

And I want to thank Erin for all the work that she does with Lung Saskatchewan and welcome her. I ask all members to join me in welcoming Erin to her legislature.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that the NDP [New Democratic Party]-Liberal federal tax on carbon continues to make life more expensive for Saskatchewan residents; that the federal Liberal-NDP coalition government continues to be disingenuous with their rhetoric surrounding the carbon tax; and that according to the parliamentary budget officer's analysis, "Most households will pay more in fuel charges in GST 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 are residents of Kindersley. I do so submit.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition once again to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for improved mental health support services for northern and rural Saskatchewan. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that the rate of suicide among Indigenous people is three times higher than that of non-Indigenous people; that suicide rates of Indigenous people living on-reserve are twice as high as those living off-reserve; that the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, displacement, and intergenerational trauma are related to the high rates of suicide among Indigenous people.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to address and work with vulnerable communities in northern and rural areas and to provide adequate mental health funding and services for northern and rural Indigenous communities.

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

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to rise and present this petition again calling for adequate funding for education in our province. Those who signed this petition would like us to know that this year's provincial budget is wholly inadequate when it comes to providing the operating funds needed for our 27 public and Catholic school divisions, and that this inadequate funding will again lead to cuts in the classroom. We don't need to look far because we learned yesterday that right here in Regina, in Regina Public Schools, they're expecting next year to see hundreds more students with 40 fewer teachers and support staff working in schools right here in Regina. It's cuts like this that led to well over 3,000 people standing on the steps of this building just a couple weeks ago to make noise for education.

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 and Regina. I do so submit.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present our petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to join with municipalities and provinces across Canada in codifying a ban on conversion therapy.

Mr. Speaker, conversion therapy, or reparative therapy, is a seriously harmful and discredited practice and is opposed by the psychiatric and psychological associations across North America. The practice can lead to lifelong trauma and is in direct contravention of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. The undersigned demand action on this file and demand Criminal Code reform concerning the practice of conversion therapy. There is simply no place in our society for this prejudiced practice.

I'll read the prayer:

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

The undersigned residents live in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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



**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet to again present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to bring about adequate and equitable SAID rates. The SAID program, the Saskatchewan assured income for disability program, is a program for folks across the province with significant and enduring disabilities with barriers to employment. Most people on the program rely on this support to meet their basic needs: food, rent, clothing, transportation.

Mr. Speaker, the program didn't see an increase in nearly a decade and then with this past budget, the one announced after we learned we had over a billion dollars in windfall revenue, the government gave them an extra buck a day. That's a 2 per cent increase for most people on the SAID program, Mr. Speaker. We also learned that the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry has now taken this government to court over discriminatory clawback practices, namely of asking people to apply for their CPP [Canada Pension Plan] early, leaving them with less after they turn 65.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition reside in Saskatoon, and they're calling on this government to increase SAID rates to maintain inflation, to respect the constitutional rights of folks with disability, and to index SAID rates going forward. I do so present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

#### Constituency Association Volunteer Thanked for Years of Service

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Mr. Speaker, on the front lines and behind the scenes of every Sask Party constituency association is a dedicated volunteer board and executive committee. These folks dedicate countless hours to representing the grassroots element of political engagement.

My friend and mentor Bonnie Wallin has dedicated herself to numerous roles within our constituency for over 45 years. Bonnie's first foray was attending a nomination meeting in 1977. She quickly became a campaign manager and door knocker for Ray Meiklejohn in the 1978 campaign and then went on to work with Sherwin Petersen in the 1982 campaign, continuing through to 1991.

Much to her dismay, the NDP had a brief role in the Kelvington-Wadena constituency, and she continued to work with June Draude, winning the 1995 election. Bonnie served with June throughout her 21 years of service to the province. Bonnie and her sister Pamela were true mentors to both June and me as I was honoured to win the election in 2016. She has served as membership Chair for many years and has maintained excellent relationships with long-term members in the constituency.

Mr. Speaker, Bonnie is moving out of my constituency, finding more time to spend with family and friends in Humboldt. We want to thank her for her service at Kelvington-Wadena constituency and wish her the very best in years to come. Thank you.

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

#### Asian Heritage Month

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize May as Asian Heritage Month here in Canada. There are so many achievements and contributions of Canadians of Asian heritage who have done so much to make Canada the country we know and love, and to make Saskatchewan the remarkable province it is today. Many Saskatchewan residents are of Asian heritage, including those of Afghan, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Iranian, Iraqi, Japanese, Karen, Korean, Laotian, Nepalese, Pakistani, Filipino, and Vietnamese heritage, and so many more.

These communities have a history of strength and perseverance against real systemic racism and oppression, and over the last two centuries immigrants have journeyed to Saskatchewan from near and far, bringing rich, cultural heritage representing many language, ethnicities, and religious traditions. The people of these diverse, vibrant, and growing communities have contributed to every aspect of life in Saskatchewan, from arts, science, to sport, business, and government. Our cultural diversity strengthens this beautiful province socially, politically, and economically in innumerable ways.

Asian Heritage Month is the ideal occasion for us to all celebrate the rich values, beliefs, and cultural expressions of various Asian cultures. Those of Asian heritage have made extraordinary contributions to our history and to our future diversity and prosperity here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in celebrating the contributions of our citizens of Asian heritage and committing to do better at living our provincial motto "from many peoples, strength."

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

#### Agriculture Student Scholarship Awarded to Young Leaders

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Agriculture Student Scholarship is an important part of the Government of Saskatchewan's commitment to developing young agriculture leaders. Each year we recognize four young people for their passion and dedication to agriculture. Once again, the Ministry of Agriculture received many exceptional submissions from students across the province.

These young leaders are seated in the Speaker's gallery. I will ask the scholarship winners to please stand as I announce their names. Our grand prize winner, Caitlyn Spratt, from Melfort. Caitlyn wrote an essay as part of her scholarship application. Her essay talked about the positive relationship between agriculture and the environment, referencing sustainable practices like zero-till farming, GPS [Global Positioning System] technology, and cattle grazing.

[14:00]

We also have three runner-up winners, each of whom will also be awarded a scholarship. Danielle Dyok from Saskatoon. Danielle's essay highlighted the need for effective communication to share Saskatchewan's sustainability story.

Katherine Andree from Val Marie. Katherine created a video as part of her scholarship application. Her video talked about the sustainable practices that cattle ranchers are using in Saskatchewan to help keep the environment and their livestock healthy.

Emery Cholin from Kerrobert, who unfortunately could not make it today. Emery's essay talked about the climate and how agriculture can play a positive role in impacting it.

I have no doubt that these four will pursue their studies with the same passion demonstrated in their scholarship submissions. I ask all members to join me in congratulating these individuals on this outstanding accomplishment and wish them luck as they pursue post-secondary education in the fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Cathedral Village Arts Festival Has Something for Everyone**

**Ms. Beck:** — As the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Lakeview, I'm thrilled to celebrate the Cathedral Arts Festival coming soon to our neighbourhood. This festival is the true highlight of the year, and it brings together people of all ages to celebrate artists, artisans, and performers from across Regina and Saskatchewan. This year's festival theme is Home, which holds special meaning as it speaks to the importance of community and belonging.

The week kicks off this next Monday with the parade and picnic at Les Sherman Park, and events continue all week. There's something for everyone at this festival, Mr. Speaker, from the live music, to the art on display, to the shows and games for children, to the local businesses and vendors showing off their wares for thousands with the street fair which happens on Saturday.

I'm grateful to the organizers, volunteers, and sponsors who have worked tirelessly to ensure that this is a festival that is successful. Their commitment and their community-mindedness are what make our community such a special place to call home. From the lively music and colourful art displays to the delicious food and friendly conversations, there is truly something for everyone at the Cathedral Village Arts Festival. And I hope to see some of you next week, joining in to celebrate this wonderful event. Thank you.

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

### **Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan Awards**

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I had the opportunity to attend the 2023 Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan Awards ceremony in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, every year PAS [Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan] recognizes pharmacists who have made a difference in their communities. This year, as in past years, there were several worthy winners.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Garth Walls of North Battleford for his nearly 50 years of service as a pharmacist and then as a pharmacy manager. Garth was one of the driving forces in the formation of the pharmacy association.

The Pharmacist of the Year Award was presented to Courtney Junop from Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon for her work in compounding litres upon litres of medication for children during the supply chain shortage, and for her dedication to her patients.

Mr. Speaker, the Bowl of Hygeia Award was awarded to Amy Lamb of Prince Albert who has been a front-line pharmacist for 10 years. Her pharmacy supplies medication to remote Indigenous communities of Hatchet Lake Dene First Nation, Cumberland House Cree Nation, and Red Earth Cree Nation.

Mr. Speaker, the New Horizon Award was presented to Courtney Mish for her leadership role at the Pharmasave in Kipling. And, Mr. Speaker, three Awards of Merit were presented to Derek Jorgenson, Ryan Bruck, and the clinical instructors at the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, pharmacists are an important member of our health care teams across Saskatchewan. We've seen the role that pharmacists play change over the past decade as it continues to evolve as we recognize ways in which pharmacists can further assist patients with their needs. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, I extend a sincere congratulations to all those award-winning pharmacists and thank them for the work they do every day in keeping our province healthy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

### **Hudson Bay Family Innovates with Hydroponics**

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has always been known as a province that produces food. June and Jan Nel of Hudson Bay have taken an innovative approach to one of the oldest professions in our province. Beginning in 2019 in the old Stewart Hawke Elementary School, June and Jan with their two children created sprawling indoor gardens growing a variety of fruits and vegetables. Using hydroponics, that water-based system, the plants are grown from seed and then sold to the community.

Hydroponics can help bolster the local food supply and be more sustainable than traditional soil operations. Recycled water is often used and less water is required overall. Around the world, more producers and hobby farmers are turning to hydroponics because the grow lights have gotten better and the technology has become more affordable. With the rising price of groceries, specifically fresh produce, the opportunity to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables is something the community of Hudson Bay has embraced wholeheartedly.

The Nels have expanded their operation, providing fresh produce to the community of Hudson Bay by offering delivery, pickup, and drive-through operations. Further expansion includes selling to nearby towns, plans for a cafe, and dreams of creating a training room to share their knowledge.

Please join me in congratulating the Nel family on their successful business venture. Thank you.

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

#### **Yorkton Minor Football Celebrated at Football Night**

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, on May 6th I was joined by my colleague the MLA for Melville-Saltcoats and many local dignitaries and community leaders to celebrate Yorkton Minor Football at the 18th annual Football Night in Saskatchewan at St. Mary's hall in Yorkton.

MC [master of ceremonies] for the event was no stranger to football and sport in Saskatchewan, Sheri Trapp, now working and living in Arizona. The Yorkton Griddier Cheer teams wowed and entertained the crowd before supper. I was honoured to offer a blessing on the evening and excellent meal prepared by the St. Mary's Church volunteers.

Yorkton Regional High School coaches Roby Sharpe and Darcy Zaharia shared the impressive history of the local football program and, in true Roby form, a very emotional thanks was given to all who have participated and supported over the years.

Special guest Yorkton alumni and Langenburg native Noah Zerr of the BC [British Columbia] Lions gave a heartfelt opening speech. The evening's keynote speaker, former university football teammate of Coach Sharpe, now an NFL [National Football League] agent, Zeke Sandhu gave an inspirational speech about how, despite his many challenges throughout his youth and because of his grandmother's influence, he never adopted the entitled or victim mindset and only through hard work, determination, and goals did he achieve his amazing successes. In fact, Mr. Speaker, his first client was Odell Beckham Jr.

The organizers were very appreciative of the tremendous support of the many volunteers and sponsors and attendees for raising significant funds for minor football in our region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Forest Fires in Northwest Saskatchewan**

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, forest fires have been displacing people and impacting communities in the Northwest of our province for a number of days. Some people have been evacuated, others have lost power, and others have lost property. Highways into communities north of Beauval have seen closures causing stress and disrupting supplies getting into some of those communities.

Could the Premier update the Assembly on the current situation in the Northwest and outline the government's plans to keep people safe, to ensure that they have access to the essentials like food, water, power, and other supplies?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Certainly, Mr. Speaker. Daily the SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency] is communicating with the media as to what the situation is in various communities. Earlier we had a fire between Clearwater and La Loche, up in that area. More recently, Mr. Speaker, we have just over 30, I believe 38, active fires in the province. As we speak, one substantial fire just south of Buffalo Narrows, in that area where there are a number of evacuations that are occurring.

The SPSA are very good, Mr. Speaker, on the ground — I've seen that first-hand in years gone by — as are the people in the community that live throughout our North and most certainly have experienced fires in years gone by as well. And they work very closely with not only the SPSA but other government ministries, Crown corporations as well, or Crown utilities, Mr. Speaker. SaskPower is working diligently to ensure that power continues to be provided as uninterrupted as possible to those communities north of the fire line.

And the Highways department has also been very much involved with keeping highways as open as they are able and navigating some of the buses and some of the traffic through those highways or through other routes where those may be available, Mr. Speaker.

We'd say thank you to the community leaders in all of the communities in the affected areas, First Nations leaders, Métis leaders throughout the North, working alongside the SPSA, the government, and many other entities, Mr. Speaker, in ensuring the safety, the paramount safety of our Saskatchewan residents.

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

#### **Forest Fires in Northwest Saskatchewan and Ambulance Services**

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continued updates and we all here hope for rain and for continued safety for everyone involved.

Mr. Speaker, in the first six weeks of this year, there were 216 times that a Saskatchewan person called for an ambulance but one was not available. Last week in Premier's estimates, I asked the Premier how many times since that report was there an instance where a Saskatchewan person called for an ambulance but none was available. We now know the answer. The answer is 440 times in February, March, April, and in the first week of May.

To the Premier: does he think that it's acceptable that 440 times in this province in just three months people called for an ambulance but there was none to be dispatched?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, just to finish off on the very early preamble of that question, as well for communication purposes, all of the cell phone towers throughout the North have battery backups on them.

Again all the community members, leadership working along the SPSA leadership, we are extremely thankful for. And we most certainly have asked the SPSA to include all members of this

House, the opposition and the government as well, on their daily briefings that they have with the media, with leadership across the province, Mr. Speaker.

This is most certainly not a partisan approach. This is a Saskatchewan approach, an all-of-Saskatchewan approach in ensuring that we all have the most recent and most relevant information, so that we can reach out to friends and family that may live in those impacted areas.

Mr. Speaker, no, 440 times, far too many. That's why we're investing and investing heavily in our emergency medical services here in the province: 100 million across government for our very ambitious recruitment, retention program that we have; 10 million in urgent care centres to help with some of the offloads, to help with some of the urgent care that is now arriving in our emergency rooms; and close to \$10 million invested directly in our ambulance services, EMS [emergency medical services] services across the province, Mr. Speaker.

Of those times, as well, it does not mean that an ambulance did not arrive, Mr. Speaker. There is ambulances that are dispatched; however be it they may be dispatched a few minutes later, Mr. Speaker, in the same way they're dispatched in the private system that we have in the province.

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

#### Ambulance Services

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, clearly these are not just numbers. Four hundred and forty times represents people who had to wait for care that they urgently needed because there was no ambulance available. People like Sharon Chartier, who waited for more than an hour while she was experiencing symptoms of a heart attack. Imagine. More than an hour, once again, when she got to the emergency room before she could be offloaded and admitted — again, not minutes. This is completely unacceptable.

Four hundred and forty people like Sharon Chartier who had to wait for care because no ambulance was available. What does the Premier have to say to them?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to build on what the Premier has already mentioned in the House, we have been able to work with our EMS providers to make sure that they do have ambulances free to be able to get to individuals.

And as the Premier identified, it's not always . . . It's not that an ambulance didn't show up. It was just a delay at that moment and we work to make sure that we have backup plans in place that if an ambulance isn't available that one can be available right away. That's why we've had a 40 per cent reduction in offload delays in our major cities. We've also reduced the overall stay of a hospital stay by one day across the system, Mr. Speaker.

And just some dollars that we've been able to invest in this last year's budget is an \$8.8 million increase for EMS; 31.19 FTEs [full-time equivalent] in 27 communities across the province, building on an \$11 million investment and 70 FTEs in last year's budget; \$866,000 to support a 2 per cent grant increase for

ambulance contract operators. We also had \$510,000 to improve their radio system, Mr. Speaker.

There's more work to do on this to make sure that those ambulances are there when the people need them, but we've got the dollars to be able to make sure that we can action that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[14:15]

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, people in Saskatchewan shouldn't be left thinking that they're dying on their kitchen floor, calling their children to say goodbye because no ambulance was available in their time of need. That's exactly what happened to Sharon Chartier.

People shouldn't have to wait more than an hour for the ambulance that they need, and they shouldn't be left to wait for hours to get treated when they arrive at the hospital. Those are the exact types of experiences that these 440 people were faced with because of this tired and out-of-touch government. It is completely unacceptable.

When will we see real action from this minister to reduce the wait times for ambulances in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again directly to the member's question, I did outline the dollars that we're doing, the programs that we're doing to make sure that the ambulances have a quick turnaround and can get back, most importantly, into the rural communities where they have to travel a great distance.

That's why we have redundancies that the city ambulances can take over and make sure that the rural ambulances can get going back to their communities. Because we understand there might be only one or two ambulances in that community, where the cities have a little bit more capacity to be able to make sure that those patients are safe.

Mr. Speaker, we have dollars invested in this. We have quotes from the ambulance providers, from the president, from Steve in the paramedic services chiefs of Canada:

Where they've allocated the money to go into this budget, it has really helped support retention. Some of the money is targeted towards an increase in funding, so rural services can pay more for those positions.

Mr. Speaker, we have the dollars in there. The paramedics, ambulances of Saskatchewan are supportive of this and we'll continue to work with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, we're talking about people. When you take the 440 people who were told no when they needed an

ambulance in February, March, April, and the first week of May, and then add in the 147 people in January from our FOI [freedom of information], this brings the total number of people who didn't have an ambulance when they needed one to 587.

And that's only in communities with SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority]-run ambulances, doesn't even include Saskatoon, our province's biggest city. We're on track to have more than 1,700 people told that there's no ambulance available, this year.

What is the minister's plan to avoid that outcome? What is his plan to fix the broken ambulance system in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to correct that, Mr. Speaker. At no time were they said, no. That is a delay. That means that the ambulance wasn't available at that specific moment but could have been available 5 minutes later, 10 minutes later to be able to get to those individuals. It's not ideal but to categorize that that was a flat-out no, that's incorrect, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have made sure that we are investing into those communities as I've listed out here with the dollars. We also have new procedures that we've worked with the paramedics and with the emergency rooms on treat-and-release, so they do not have to bring that individual. If the ambulance, the advanced care paramedic on scene determines that they don't need to, they can do that.

We also have virtual care, where they can sit down and talk to a doctor to make sure that they are providing the proper services and the individual can be released at that point in time so they are not coming to our hospital.

These are suggestions that were brought forward by advanced care paramedics and EMTs [emergency medical technician] that we're implementing with the help of the SHA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, this lack of ambulance access impacts communities across Saskatchewan, and it comes up over and over again when we're meeting with leaders in rural communities. Our FOI showed that there were serious problems with ambulance access in Meadow Lake, Indian Head, Esterhazy, Kindersley, and so many more hometowns across Saskatchewan, yet there's no breakdown of communities in the latest figures from this government.

What's the plan to make sure paramedics in rural communities and small urban centres have the supports they need to respond when someone calls for an ambulance?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in addition to what the Minister of Health has said, there is a plan in place — we've talked about it for a number of years now —

specifically the multi-year EMS stabilization plan, which we put some significant dollars in last year's budget and continued by supporting that with millions more dollars in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Health indicated.

Nearly \$9 million to a number of communities, designed to not only stabilize areas where there's temporary service disruptions but to stabilize areas where they're having difficulty meeting those response-time targets; additional resources to support emergency departments; stabilization around some of the hub hospital sites; as well as addressing the funding gaps for some of the non-profit ambulance services, Mr. Speaker.

In this year's budget with that funding, we'll be providing supports to 27 additional communities, building on top of the support that we provided to rural and remote communities in last year's provincial budget, Mr. Speaker. More work to do and we'll get that work done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Access to Child Care Spaces

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government's \$10-a-day child care is supposed to help parents, but because of this Sask Party government, unfortunately far too many families across this province can't access it. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives just released a report on child care availability across the province. It found 92 per cent of young Saskatchewan kids live in child care deserts without access to quality child care. That's over 85,500 kids. This government is dead last and they're not even close. Second-last was Newfoundland at 79 per cent.

How can \$10-a-day child care help anyone when the majority of parents across Saskatchewan can't even hope to get their kids enrolled in care?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would note my understanding is that that report is based on postal codes which don't really, I think, tell the full story. If parents want, for example, say they live on the outskirts of say, Regina, but they want child care closer to where they work, say downtown, then that postal code of where they live really is irrelevant, Mr. Speaker.

But what I would say is we are the third Canadian province to achieve \$10 a day. We did so several years in advance, Mr. Speaker. We are working towards implementing the child care agreement, adding thousands of spaces across the province, Mr. Speaker, not only ensuring that we have the workforce, working through a workforce plan, but also an expansion strategy that will look to see where we can expand, not only where there is no child care but working with centres and regulated family-based spaces to see whether or not they can take on additional child care numbers.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, the report touches on urban and rural communities in Saskatchewan, let's be clear about that. This government is failing at both. In their 16 years in power, that tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government has failed to deliver on child care.

The CCPA [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives] report ranked 51 Canadian cities. Regina was 49th at 24 per cent coverage and Saskatoon was dead last at 18 per cent. For context, the top city was Whitehorse at 76 per cent. Meanwhile this minister has failed to deliver on a plan to recruit and retain the workforce. This is a jobs issue and it's also a cost-of-living issue, Mr. Speaker.

Why is this minister content to make us dead last when it comes to child care coverage in the country?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite will know, in the last 16 years since this government has been in place, we've allocated funding for 10,572 new centre-based spaces. That's a 114 per cent increase from the number of spaces that we had when the government changed in 2007.

Mr. Speaker, in the last round of announcements in November — the member brought up Saskatoon — we've announced spaces, 90 additional spaces at Tykes and Tots Early Learning Centre; 27 expansion spaces at Building Brains; Hope's Home Inc., 54 additional . . . an additional site that we have created; Lutheran Early Learning Centre, 42; Maria Montessori Preschool, 90 additional at a new site, an additional site; and at the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association], 74 in a new site; as well as 19 expansion sites in Preston Early Learning Centre.

That was a part of 1,600 spaces that we announced in November, Mr. Speaker. We're working with the sector as we build out an expansion plan to ensure that we do have more sites in Saskatchewan.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, context for the viewing public at home: this government loves to announce spaces that they can't actually staff. They've reached 17 per cent of their targeted expansions. Ten-dollar-a-day child care should be a good-news story. This minister wanted a flashy headline, but he hasn't done the work.

We're joined today by Nichole Kessel, the director of Wiggles and Giggles. It's a child care centre in Whitewood. We're joined by her again. The minister met with her back in March, told her that changes barring part-time kids from coverage wouldn't come into force until June and that he'd work to find a solution. But once she got back to Whitewood, Mr. Speaker, ministry officials told her the minister got it wrong. And now five families have lost child care at her centre since she came to this legislature.

Why did the minister say one thing and have his ministry do

another? Will he meet with her today to find a solution as he promised me he was doing back in April when I asked him about this in estimates?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make myself available for a meeting after question period, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we had indicated at that time — and that's still to be the case — that we were going to work to change the way that the funding would be delivered to centres so that there wouldn't be an incentive for centres to choose full-time rather than part-time children, Mr. Speaker. And I will make sure that that is in fact the work that the ministry is going to be doing.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, folks shouldn't have to come down to their legislature once, twice, multiple times to get solutions to their issues. We support \$10-a-day child care, but we don't support this minister's botched rollout of the plan that offers no flexibility for parents that don't necessarily need full-time care. Details matter, but this minister's failure to consult with the sector means that parents and families are paying the price.

Nichole is also the vice-Chairperson of the southeast child care centres' directors association. She says that by July 1st, half the centres in her region will be forced to say goodbye to kids who rely on daily or part-time care. This minister fails to grasp the importance of hourly or part-time child care, especially in rural centres. Many of these moms and dads are shift workers and won't be able to find care for their kids.

What does the minister say to the parents of those kids in the Southeast who will have no child care because of his government, come Canada Day?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say what I said earlier this session, is that when this issue was raised, what I did was made a commitment that we would ensure that we had a funding model that was rolled out to centres that didn't incentivize full-time children so that families that use child care on a part-time basis would not be penalized, Mr. Speaker. That's the commitment that I made. That commitment still stands, and I will ensure that the ministry puts that in place.

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

### Affordability and Cost of Living

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — This tired and out-of-touch government is failing to get the details right when it comes to child care and it's creating further pressures for families already struggling with the crushing cost of living. We know in Saskatchewan 52 per cent of households are in bad shape or barely getting by when it comes to their finances. Tone-deaf to that reality, this government is piling on more costs, more taxes that make life more expensive.

When will this government finally act and deliver the cost-of-living relief that families so desperately deserve and need?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — As I've said to the member opposite many, many times throughout this session, there is over \$2 billion of forgone revenue or straight revenue expenditures in this budget that addresses affordability. It means that a family of four in Saskatchewan, if you take housing, utilities, and taxes all into account, Saskatchewan is the most affordable province in Canada, Mr. Speaker. It means that we don't have high taxes when compared to other provinces, Mr. Speaker.

And I will be more than happy to say what else it means when the member asks the next question.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government, that lot over there, are completely failing Saskatchewan people when it comes to the cost-of-living challenges that they are facing, you know. And that's what they should be focused on — making paying the bills a little easier for families, not harder, Mr. Speaker.

Instead of taking the PST [provincial sales tax] off the food families buy in a grocery store, like a rotisserie chicken or a ready-to-eat salad, or scrapping the other PST this government has added on so many fronts, they're starting a costly new tax collection agency — all in an effort to stop the bleeding of support, I guess, from the member from Sask Rivers — a plan that will cost taxpayers more and businesses more forcing them to file twice.

Why won't the minister see the light, scrap this wasteful plan, and deliver the cost-of-living relief that families deserve and need?

[14:30]

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Do you know what's failing families, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker? And something that went up just this past April — and that's numerous increases — is the carbon tax which, quite frankly, the members opposite do not have a unified position on whether they support it or don't support it. But what they will not do is they will not publicly, they will not publicly make a statement to their federal leader and ask him to not support Justin Trudeau on the carbon tax.

Do you know what else? When the NDP were in power, if they had the chance, on affordability . . . A family of four right now pay absolutely no personal income tax on \$56,500 of income. Under the NDP, they started paying provincial tax at \$26,000. That means \$30,400 of tax-free money today that they would have been paying taxes on if the NDP were in power.

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

## Rates of Youth Smoking and Vaping

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, we've been clear on our opposition to the carbon tax. That minister knows that.

Mr. Speaker, we're joined today by many young people from across Saskatchewan. They're concerned about the fact that more and more young people are getting hooked on vape products and getting hooked on smoking. They want to see action to drive these rates down, and more supports for youth who want to quit. Both would protect the health of young people for the long term. The Premier I understand will be meeting with a group of them this afternoon.

What action will the Sask Party government take to drive down the rates of youth vaping and smoking in our province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my introduction today, I had the opportunity to sit down with the youth and they put some good questions to me, some stuff that we need to think about. And I really appreciate them having the opportunity and having the courage to come down and be able to speak about some of the things that are concerning them, Mr. Speaker.

We met with them earlier today. We attended the rally. We had lots of MLAs from both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker. We don't need to politicize this. We had members from both sides of the House. We're all attending the reception here tonight, Mr. Speaker.

But I'm wondering if that member wants to stand up and put on the record the NDP's position on legalizing all hard core drugs. Do they want to stand up and put that on the record of what they want to do with hard core drugs and being able to legalize them in our province and in our country? I wonder what the youth would have to say about that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. 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 14:34.]

# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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**Hon. Scott Moe**  
**Premier**  
**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

**Hon. Lori Carr**  
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement  
Minister Responsible for the  
Public Service Commission  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority  
Minister Responsible for  
The Global Transportation Hub Authority

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill**  
Minister of Highways  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**  
Minister of Education

**Hon. Bronwyn Eyre**  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Finance

**Hon. Jeremy Harrison**  
Minister of Trade and Export Development  
Minister of Immigration and Career Training  
Minister Responsible for Innovation  
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

**Hon. Everett Hindley**  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,  
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

**Hon. Gene Makowsky**  
Minister of Social Services

**Hon. David Marit**  
Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

**Hon. Don McMorris**  
Minister of Government Relations  
Minister Responsible for  
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs  
Minister Responsible for the  
Provincial Capital Commission

**Hon. Paul Merriman**  
Minister of Health

**Hon. Don Morgan**  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister of Crown Investments Corporation  
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Power Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Telecommunications  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Water Corporation  
Minister Responsible for the  
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

**Hon. Jim Reiter**  
Minister of Energy and Resources

**Hon. Laura Ross**  
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

**Hon. Dana Skoropad**  
Minister of Environment

**Hon. Christine Tell**  
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**  
Minister of Advanced Education