



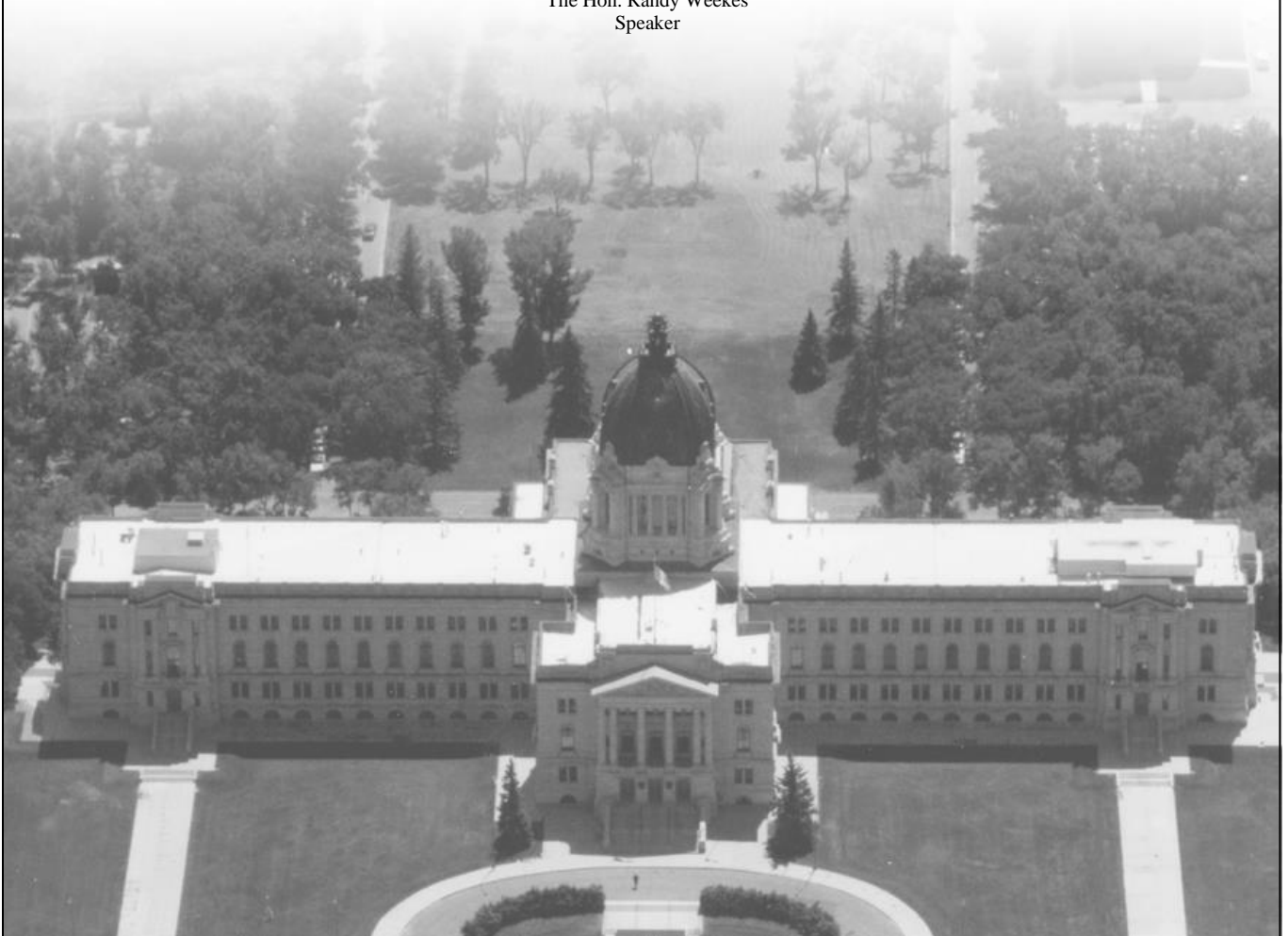
THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

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



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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

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

Standings

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

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]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery are a number of special guests. Today I was pleased to jointly announce a very important partnership between Shoppers Drug Mart and the Government of Saskatchewan. Over the next three years, Shoppers will donate 20 million menstrual product pieces to women and girls in Saskatchewan. This is a great day for the province and I'm pleased to be joined by Jeff Leger, George Furneaux, and Perry Martin from Shoppers.

Jeff is a licensed pharmacist and president of Shoppers Drug Mart. Born and raised in Moncton, Jeff attended Dalhousie University and the University of Moncton and joined Shoppers in 2008. And George is the owner of the South Albert Shoppers, and a pharmacist by trade. George has been providing health care to the community for decades. Perry Martin, the vice-president of government relations at Shoppers Drug Mart is no stranger to this building. Perry previously served as the chief of staff to the minister of Health. It was great working with Perry then, and I'm pleased to work with him again.

And while I'm on my feet I'd like to also introduce a number of officials from the Status of Women office seated in the west gallery: Bernadet Hamill, executive director; Renee Bilodeau, director; Cathy Thorne, executive coordinator; Mackenzie Warner, research officer, summer student; and Larisa Murray who will be joining the office in July.

The Status of Women office leads and coordinates the development of initiatives to support women and girls to live safe and healthy lives, from working with Shoppers to negotiating with the federal government and working to develop Saskatchewan's implementation plan to support the national action plan to end gender-based violence. And the Status of Women is working hard to ensure the needs of women and girls in the province are met.

Mr. Speaker, a Shakespeare quote describes the Status of Women office perfectly: "Though she may be little, she is fierce." The Status of Women office may be little in numbers but they are fierce in how they advocate for women and girls in

Saskatchewan. Thank you for everything you do. You make us all proud. I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming these important guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming Jeff, George, and Perry to their legislature here today. Very much appreciate your contributions towards promoting equity for women in our province when it comes to menstrual products, something that's very much long overdue. And again, thank you so much for your leadership and thank you for joining us here.

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the members previous and welcome Jeff Leger and George Furneaux for being here in Saskatchewan. Jeff, certainly Shoppers has a huge footprint in this province and we want to thank you very much. I'm not sure how many times you've been to Saskatchewan but we want to thank you for everything that Shoppers does in this province.

I would be remiss if I didn't get to introduce Perry Martin. A good friend of Perry Martin's. You know, I can remember the day I met Perry. I think it was December 7th. Only a few people in this House who've ever been through a transition of government, and even fewer will ever be through a transition in government. But I can tell you, we met in the cabinet room for the first time. And we were given our offices and I walked into an office. I'd never met Perry before and he's sitting in the office. We had one employee — that was Perry. There was nobody else in the office. This building was so, so quiet.

And Perry built that office up and helped me through the first probably three or four years of being the minister of Health. I'm not exactly . . . I should know exactly how many years, but I know every so often the members opposite . . . One member opposite will talk about kind of the trajectory of health at one point, and whether it's slumped or not. But I can tell you, if there was a trajectory, an upward trajectory of health care in this province, it was really orchestrated through that guy. Thanks for all your help, Perry.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce two other individuals seated in the Speaker's gallery that I just noticed. Kerrie and Patience from SASS, Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan, are here today. It's always amazing to see them. Thank them so much for their advocacy and their work in the province. They have done a lot of work in promoting the improvement of sexual assault services in Saskatchewan, in particular the North. They're huge advocates for ensuring that there's better supports for those who are survivors in the North. Thank them so much for all they do every single day for themselves and their members. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative

Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Through you and to you to all members of this Assembly, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce 34 grade 4 students from the community of Shellbrook, Shellbrook Elementary School. Mr. Speaker, we don't often get students down from the constituency of Rosthern-Shellbrook, so it's quite an exciting time when we do.

Joining these students are a number of chaperones, parent chaperones. We have Chris Archibald, Carly Kennedy, Natalie Smart, Cindy Galema, as well as our educational assistant, Bonnie Lowes, Mr. Speaker, have joined.

And I would just point out they have a very, let's say, tough teacher, Mr. Speaker. I had mentioned to them that they might be a grade 3 class. They quickly corrected me; they're a grade 4 class. And their teacher very quickly corrected them that they are to, you know, be quiet and well behaved while they're down here. I know that your teacher is a very tough teacher because I grew up with her, Mr. Speaker. The teacher of a grade 4 class is none other than my sister, Cheryl Ledding.

Joining this class, actually, is a niece and nephew of mine. But in the class is another nephew of mine named Boston. Yeah, there's a story behind that, Mr. Speaker. His brother that is up there with him is named Brody. Had that story been reversed, his brother's name probably would have been Montreal to represent the other parent in the family, Mr. Speaker. It's taking hockey rivalries to a whole new level, Mr. Speaker. And joining Brody is a niece of mine, is Bella Ledding. Brody and Bella are going to spend the day with me, lead me around over the course as we find our way through the end of this session.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would ask through you to all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming the grade 4 class, their parent chaperones, their teachers, the EA [educational assistant] from the community of Shellbrook.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the member opposite and introduce Kerrie Isaac, the executive director of Sexual Assault Services Canada, or SASS; and Patience Umereweneza director of policy and stakeholder relations, seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

This week, May 15 to 20th, has been declared as Sexual Violence Awareness Week, which is about raising public awareness, of course; educational events; and generally fostering conversations about this very important issue, Mr. Speaker. In '23-24 our

government has committed \$27.5 million to supporting interpersonal violence and sexual assault initiatives, including 876,000 over three years to support second-stage shelters; 150,000 for Hope Restored last November, which provides support for victims of human trafficking.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to our ongoing collaboration with SASS. Please join me in welcoming these two guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Assembly, seated in the west gallery I'd like to introduce 28 grade 5 students from École St. Matthew. Give us a wave. They are accompanied by their teacher, Cali Tofin — I hope I'm pronouncing that right — and eight parent chaperones that have joined them here today.

I'm very excited because this, like the Premier mentioned, is a rare occurrence for a school group to be here from my constituency of Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood, so I'm pretty thrilled that you're joining us here. So I look forward to meeting you after question period and I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome Eric Olauson to his Legislative Assembly today. Eric and I got to know one another a lot over the four years that he served here and served honourably, and served in a lot of good capacities while he was here.

Some of the things that Eric was doing while he was here: Eric served on the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice, Standing Committee on Human Services, Standing Committee on Private Bills, caucus committee for municipal co-operation, and the caucus management committee. Eric also served as the caucus Chair.

You know, over the four years Eric and I had a lot to do and discovered a lot of places around Regina. Got to like it a lot better, and I owe that to Eric a lot because he always wanted to be out and tour around; he didn't want to sit in a room and could never sit still. So I would like to welcome Eric here to his Assembly today.

And also joining Eric today is Kendall, a grade 8 student at Holy Family School in Saskatoon. Kendall was a dancer, but at the moment she has a passion for basketball, flag football, and ball hockey player. She loves making people laugh, sunsets, quality time with her favourite people. And she's here today to learn more of what we do in this legislature. Please help me welcome Kendall to her legislature today. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of guests I'd like to introduce here to the Assembly today. First I'd like to start with my sister-in-law Jillian and her husband, Bryan, and their little boy, my nephew Johnathan. They're from BC [British Columbia] and they're visiting us here in Saskatchewan for a number of days.

And you know, every time that I have friends or family visit from another province, it's kind of like a personal trade mission. My job here over the next number of days is to highlight all the great things about being in Saskatchewan and see if I can't entice them to return to the province one day, Mr. Speaker. So I'd like to ask the Assembly to welcome Jillian, Bryan, and Johnathan to their legislature.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'd also like to introduce my wife, Meagan, who's been to the legislature a number of times. And she's a faithful viewer on the streaming service every single day, so it's always nice to have her in person though. But with Meagan is something . . . It's the latest news in our family, Mr. Speaker. It's our brand new son Bennett, who was born in late April.

You know what, Mr. Speaker, it was right after the SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention. So I rushed home from bear pit — kind of a weird bear pit this year at the SUMA convention — and the next morning, Bennett arrived. And you know, just Meagan and I are so grateful to the staff at Battlefords Union Hospital, who just made the process incredible in the level of care they provided. We're certainly blessed in our community, The Battlefords, to have such a great hospital there and such great health care workers there.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, this is our first child, and you don't really know how it will affect you, but you know, pretty incredible moment to be holding Bennett for the first time in my arms. And I know that Meagan and I are so grateful to be blessed with a healthy baby boy, and we look forward to many exciting years ahead.

[13:45]

And hopefully this is the first of many introductions for Bennett in this Assembly. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming Meagan and Bennett to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's kind of tough to follow that one. But, Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to join the member from Westview in welcoming my friend Eric Olauson back to his Legislative Assembly.

And I'm also honoured to introduce, seated in the west gallery, Megan Betteridge and her parents, Bev and Blaine Betteridge, and her sister Paige, if they could give us a wave. Megan is a

summer student in my office and she is pursuing her accounting degree at the U of R [University of Regina], Mr. Speaker.

The Betteridge family joins us here today from Pilot Butte area, where they've lived on their homestead farm since 1882, Mr. Speaker. Just absolute heritage there. When Megan isn't working, my understanding is that she's coaching a U11 [under 11] softball team in Balgonie, Mr. Speaker, and she also plays the guitar.

Mr. Speaker, Megan has been a great addition into our office. She's got lots of spirit, she's got lots of energy, and she's got a little bit of sass, which we always appreciate in Health. So I'd like to welcome Megan and her family to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to rise today to make an introduction. I heard the Minister of Highways talk about his spouse watching question period on the streaming service and how much she enjoyed it. My mom used to watch question period on it all the time. And I would ask my mom whether it was going all right, and she used to just tell me she pressed mute. Some of my colleagues here would like to have a mute button but don't . . . Somebody says they would liked to have had it a thousand times, which sort of goes to my introduction.

Mr. Speaker, seated in the east gallery is Tara Jors. She is a special person. She is an amazing baker. She received a request earlier this year to make a carrot cake celebrating somebody who was going to be asking their thousandth question. So the cake was brought here in February, and it's been kept on ice ever since because it seemed to take a long time to get to that thousandth question.

Anyway I won't say which member of my staff is Tara's aunt, but it's somebody that's office is next to Mike Aman's and does casework. And she's a wonderful person as well and she's up there. But anyway I want to thank her for having made the cake. I want to thank her for being here today and welcome her to the Assembly.

If anybody would like to come up for some carrot cake, room 348 immediately after question period. And that offer is extended to the members opposite as well. So I know that the member from Regina Rosemont was quite unhappy that he didn't get cake earlier so the offer is there.

Anyway, I would ask that all members join me in welcoming Tara to her legislature today.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise again and present this petition calling for adequate funding for education. Those that signed the petition today really have the same concerns as the over 3,000 people who stood on the steps

of this building a couple weeks ago. They were teachers. They were support workers in schools. There were parents, grandparents, students, and concerned citizens. And they all know the same thing: that this year's budget for education is wholly inadequate and will lead to cuts.

We're beginning to find out more and more with each passing day what those cuts will mean. You know, here in Regina, Regina Public Schools is looking at reducing up to 40 positions. That's 40 fewer caring adults in our schools caring for our kids, kids who have greater needs now than ever — when we look at the number of newcomers coming in, the number of intensive supports needs, the mental health needs of our students, especially coming out of some very difficult years of learning — that are going unmet due to one thing, and that's this government's failure to provide adequate funding 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 Yorkton. I do so present.

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that the federal Liberal government supported by the NDP [New Democratic Party] are significantly adding to the cost of living for all of us across the country but particularly here in Saskatchewan. So on behalf of the residents of this province, I'm presenting a 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 their rhetoric surrounding the carbon tax; and that according to the parliamentary budget officer's analysis, most households will pay more in fuel charges and GST [goods and services tax] — as well as receiving slightly lower incomes — than they will receive in the 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 from Langenburg and Churchbridge. I do so present.

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

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

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to adopt a policy making no-cost prescription contraceptives available to all Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, the petition today has been signed by residents of Wolseley and Indian Head. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Catholic Education Week

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate Catholic Education Week in Saskatchewan. This is a time that holds special significance for our province's Catholic schools and the invaluable contributions they make to our communities. Catholic Education Week showcases the distinctive nature of Catholic schools and the profound impact they have on the lives of 38,000 students across this province, as well as their families and their communities.

This year's theme is We Are Many, We Are One. And they have a sub-theme for each school day this week. Monday was When We See, asking to recognize and embrace diversity. Tuesday was When We Listen, encouraging sharing ideas and opinions. Today is When We Reflect, to reflect on ourselves and who we want to grow to be. Tomorrow is When We Learn, appreciating the privilege and the right of meaningful, positive faith-based education. And Friday will be When We Act, calling on young people to work towards a better world.

I ask all members to join me in expressing support and appreciation for the Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association. By acknowledging the dedicated work of the SCSBA [Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association] and the incredible achievements of Catholic schools, we affirm our commitment to provide a quality education that nurtures the whole person, including their spiritual growth. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert

Northcote.

Youth Transitional Housing Expansion Announced for Prince Albert

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Monday I had the great pleasure to attend the announcement for an expansion of a much-needed YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] program that provides a full range of supports, services, and immediate safe housing to vulnerable youth.

The Prince Albert youth transitional housing service or youth shelter provides 16- to 18-year-old youth with a short-term, stable home environment where they are safe from gangs, sexual exploitation, drug use, and at-risk lifestyles.

Community-placed options like this are linked to better outcomes for youth as they can remain in their home communities, schools, and culture. When our youth advisory team in Prince Albert identified the need for more emergency spaces in the North, we listened. Our government responded by providing more than \$910,000 in financial support to the YWCA for their youth shelter this year, an increase of \$625,000. This increased funding allows the YWCA to increase the shelter from 8 to 10 spaces, provide 24-hour, seven-day-a-week staffing, and open their services to youth with complex needs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking the YWCA, P.A. [Prince Albert] Outreach, and the youth advisory team for their vision and determination to support the vulnerable youth in our province. Thank you.

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

Balfour Collegiate Arts Collective

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize the Balfour Collegiate Arts Collective. The Balfour Arts Collective is an innovative high school program for students who are passionate about the arts. It gives them the opportunity to experience high-quality instruction from teachers with expertise in a variety of disciplines, helps them connect with a community of artistically focused peers, helps students access resources to develop creative skills, and allows students to pursue what they love while earning high school credits.

A few months ago the Balfour collective had the opportunity to visit the University of Regina and learn about the MAP [Media, Art, and Performance] program. The MAP program is the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance and is the ultimate playground for the imagination. Students are provided the latest technologies to bring their ideas to life and are given a space to collaborate and learn from other art forms. Students in the Balfour Arts Collective can pursue degrees and graduate studies programs in creative technologies, film, music, theatre, and the visual arts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members in joining me to recognize this amazing program and all the staff, students, and families who make the Balfour Arts Collective a reality. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw

Wakamow.

Sod-Turning at Joint-Use School in Moose Jaw

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's another great day in the constituency of Moose Jaw Wakamow. Yesterday I had the privilege alongside my colleague from Moose Jaw North and the Minister of Education at the sod-turning of the new joint-use elementary school in the Westheath neighbourhood on South Hill.

Mr. Speaker, our government has committed nearly \$69 million in funding for the planning, design, construction of the new pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to grade 8 school. With more young families moving to Moose Jaw to build their careers and futures, we know that joint-use schools are key to delivering quality education.

When the project is completed, it will accommodate 900 students and it will also include a regulated child care facility with capacity for 51 children. Both sides of the facility will include adaptable, state-of-the-art learning environments, separate gymnasium, and a shared community resource space. The facility will also include learning stairs, which offers a formal and informal area for gathering, teaching, socializing, and performing in a flexible amphitheatre-style environment.

This is on top of the nearly \$2.4 billion government has committed to school infrastructure projects since 2008. Growing our schools and bringing more young people to Moose Jaw, now that's growth that works for everyone.

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

Saskatchewan Most Attractive Jurisdiction for Mining Investment

Mr. Friesen: — You guessed it. It's another great day in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The Fraser Institute has once again named Saskatchewan as Canada's most attractive jurisdiction for mining investment. And while we're the best in Canada, we're also the third-best jurisdiction globally for mining investment.

Mr. Speaker, our mining industry is critical to employing residents and developing communities in northern Saskatchewan, and this isn't going to stop any time soon. We're also ranked as the second-best in the world for best-practice mineral potential. That means on top of having the most sustainable mining practices on the planet, Saskatchewan also has some of the most potential in the world for discovery of new mineral deposits.

And, Mr. Speaker, this government will continue to harness our natural resources and encourage private investment into this critical sector. We have what the world needs right here at home, and Saskatchewan workers are ready to provide critical minerals to our trading partners. We are proud of our mining industry and the excellent work they do in developing innovative, sustainable practices while providing good-paying jobs for our workers.

[14:00]

And unlike members opposite, who only support resource

extraction when it's politically useful, we will always stand up for our resource industry because more investments, more mineral extraction means more jobs and opportunities for residents across Saskatchewan. And that, Mr. Speaker, is growth that works for everyone.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Evacuations Due to Wildfires in Northern Saskatchewan

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now is a very concerning time for my community, my constituency, and for the province. There are 27 active wildfires. Eight wildfires are deemed contained. Fire crews, helicopters, heavy equipment, and air tanker support are also in the area fighting fires.

Yesterday, Ile-a-la-Crosse issued an evacuation order for vulnerable people in the community. Buffalo Narrows issued an evacuation order this past weekend. Jans Bay, Cole Bay have both made declarations of emergency. Buffalo River Dene Nation, St. George's Hill, and Michel Village have also been evacuated. Highway 925, 914, 165, 910, and 155 remain closed.

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency officials are assisting with evacuation support and working directly with communities. We are advising all individuals who have been evacuated from the communities to register with SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency]. People in the area are advised to keep their vehicles fuelled and essentials packed in the event of further evacuations. Social services are being provided out of Meadow Lake office and by phone. The SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority], pharmacy, mental health and addiction support, and home care staff are available to assist evacuees.

For those on the front line volunteering, and those leading your communities, if there are moments you feel like you're not being appreciated, know that the entire Assembly is thankful for your efforts. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Thanks Extended to Those Helping in Northern Wildfires

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take the opportunity, this opportunity, to thank and acknowledge the heroic work of so many people who are responding to the current wildfire situation in northern Saskatchewan.

First, thank you to all of our brave firefighters, whose high-risk work is protecting people and protecting property throughout the North. Thank you to all of the community leaders, all the First Nations leaders, and all of the volunteers who are working to attend to the needs of their people in their communities. And thank you to everyone who is helping evacuate residents and support those evacuees. And so thank you as well to all of those who are providing temporary accommodation services, temporary accommodations to those evacuees.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the members of the Government of Saskatchewan team: the hard-working folks at the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, or the SPSA; the Highways division; Government Relations; Health; Social

Services; Education; as well as SaskPower and SaskTel. They are working tirelessly to protect our northern communities and to provide all of the services that the residents need at this very difficult time.

These folks have assisted communities in coordinating supports and evacuations, and they have helped get so much-needed fuel and groceries to those communities. And they have now restored power services to all of the communities where it had been lost.

And thank you to the members on both sides of this House for the phone calls and the sharing of information, in particular to our members from Athabasca and Cumberland for their efforts in supporting their constituents, Mr. Speaker. I would say these efforts are ongoing efforts. The fire continues to burn and there's going to be some difficult days ahead, but together we will get through this. And thank you to the heroic efforts of so many Saskatchewan people.

So thank you to all for all that you have done and all that you continue to do, and know that the members on the floor of this Assembly and collectively governing this province will support you through this, support you in protecting the people in the communities in northern Saskatchewan.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Forest Fires in Northwest Saskatchewan

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll start by joining with the Premier in thanking all those who have been responding: volunteers and leaders in the North. As has been noted though, Mr. Speaker, those fires continue to burn in northwest Saskatchewan, displacing people and cutting off communities from the South and from vital supplies at times. Can the Premier please update the House on the situation in the North and what the plans are for the next coming hours and days to ensure that people are informed, have access to supplies, and to keep people safe?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — A very, very important question, Mr. Speaker. And the full support of the Government of Saskatchewan, first of all through the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, through our air tanker division, when they can fly are there. Our Ministry of Highways is on the ground helping, guiding people when we can get through the fire front, which is south of many northern communities, Mr. Speaker, in getting folks in and out, evacuated from their communities, and also getting fuel and groceries into those communities, getting those much-needed supplies into those communities.

I would say this: the number of phone calls that I have had from northern friends of mine, northern leaders, the Minister of Government Relations, the member from Athabasca as well as other ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and I have been talking as well and sharing some of our information so that we can very collectively, Mr. Speaker, support all of those residents and families in northern Saskatchewan. And they'll have the full support of the Government of Saskatchewan across ministries,

Mr. Speaker, in ensuring that they have the supplies north of the fire line and ensuring that they have all the fire support ultimately that we have, and human resources as well as the planes, the tankers, the ground crews, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — I thank the Premier for the update. As I noted yesterday, one of the most serious concerns that we had been hearing was access to power, to food, and to water in those communities impacted. And it was really good to hear this morning, about 1 o'clock this morning, power was restored. And I want to thank all of those who worked to make that happen. And you know, including the Premier and the calls made, there were also supply trucks that got up.

Concerns that we're hearing now, still concerns about supplies running low, but also groceries lost due to power outages and high food costs. Can the Premier update any plans to ensure that those who are still in these communities will have access to food that they desperately need and sometimes don't have ability to pay for right now?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Certainly, Mr. Speaker, and a function of operating a number of days without power in their communities has been challenging. And most assuredly the power supply, to my understanding, has been returned to most communities as of the early hours of this morning. Thank you to the SaskPower folks that have worked so diligently in recharging those energy lines, Mr. Speaker.

Ministry of Highways, SPSA are ensuring that when we can get trucks through the fire line, they are escorting those trucks. So the priority on the grocery vehicles, a priority on the vehicles that are carrying fuel to those northern communities, Mr. Speaker.

And in no small way we need to continue to thank all of the folks that are the leaders in their communities and the volunteers in their communities because they are working side by side, hand in hand with the SPSA, Mr. Speaker, in ensuring that those products are getting to those northern communities.

And I was on a briefing this morning, Mr. Speaker, with the SPSA. There's a number of briefings taking place throughout the day. We've offered the opposition to participate in some of those briefings so that we can all be updated and have the most current information in the communications and phone calls that we all receive, Mr. Speaker.

But I would just say this: we most certainly will leave no stone unturned in supporting our northern residents through what is a very challenging time today. And as we look at the forecast, Mr. Speaker, with not a lot of rain in sight, it may be a very challenging time for the next number of days as well.

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

Autism Services for Children

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly concur that this is a very worrying situation, and we will continue to look for

information sharing to ensure that people who are impacted by these fires have everything that they need. And I appreciate the response from the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, today we're joined by Jill Kakoske and her sister Jaycee. She lives in Rosthern with her daughter Evie. Her daughter Evie is autistic. Jill helps people all over the world access autism supports for children, but for seven-year-old Evie, those supports aren't here for her at home. She doesn't have access to the child care or health supports that she needs.

What does the Premier have to say to Jill and to families like hers who don't have access to the autism supports that they need and deserve?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, we've been able to, under the Ministry of Social Services, been able to provide individualized funding for those families that have an autistic child, and we've been able to increase that over our time in government.

So there is individualized funding. It provides a benefit for children under the age of 12 who have been diagnosed. The program launched in 2018. And those children, age five and under, there's a \$4,000 benefit. We expanded the annual benefit to 6,000 and again in 2021 to 8,000, Mr. Speaker. So it expanded, also recently, to those under 12. And families are able to purchase services that are available to them on an individualized basis, based on what their child may need and that support. That is available through this program, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, as I noted, Jill is an expert and she understands that you cannot purchase services that don't exist. Mr. Speaker, Jill has helped people all over the world navigate bureaucracy and red tape that exists when it comes to autism supports. But here in Saskatchewan, at home, she can't even access the most basic services. This is what she said in an email, and I quote, "It doesn't matter how much research I do, how many emails I send, or phone calls I make. There is red tape, dead ends, and wait-lists every step of the way."

How does the Premier justify that, and what would he say to Jill who faces red tape, dead ends, and wait-lists at every step?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Again, Mr. Speaker, I would note these programs and this funding is new to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. We brought it in just in the last few number of years, Mr. Speaker. For example, in '21-'22, we paid over \$10 million in individualized funding benefits. This served over 1,500 children in our province, Mr. Speaker.

The ministry does its best as it can to get the payments out in a reasonable amount of time. And there is a process that is available to folks to appeal if there is a discrepancy by what is submitted and what is paid out, Mr. Speaker. But we try and do that in the most reasonable fashion. And if there's suggestions as to how we can do that better and more quickly to support children

within our province, I'm certainly willing to listen to that for sure.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the question was to the Premier and Jill's MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly].

Jill moved her family to Rosthern because she was told that she would have better access to care, but that hasn't been the case. Evie has been turned away from the only inclusive daycare centre in the whole area, and the early childhood intervention program doesn't work for them because both her and her partner work full-time.

Now on a recent trip to the hospital, Evie and Jill had to wait for 16 hours in a noisy, busy emergency room because no beds were available. It's not okay for anyone, Mr. Speaker, but it's certainly not okay for Evie.

Why can't Jill and Evie access even the most basic services that they need to keep this little girl healthy? And, Mr. Speaker, how is this growth that works for everyone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm more than happy to join the Minister of Social Services in meeting with them and talking about some of the services that is provided also by Health and Social Services on the individualized funding, Mr. Speaker. But overall under autism, the minister has outlined that he is more than willing to sit down with new options.

[14:15]

But as far as the emergency room services, Mr. Speaker, this is something that we have been working on and not just in rural communities, but in some of the larger centres and in our rural hospitals to make sure that we have the right complement of people there. That's why we have been working with our human resource plan to be able to move people out into those areas so they don't have any service disruptions, and when those hospitals are operating at their full capacity, Mr. Speaker, we have a full complement of staff to be able to meet the needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, at every turn Evie and Jill are being let down by this tired and out-of-touch government. Evie's family doctor and pediatrician both closed their practices earlier this year. Within 10 days, Evie lost her child care, her doctor, and her pediatrician. And despite Jill's tireless advocacy for her daughter, she can't find a new family doc or a pediatrician for Evie.

Does the Minister of Health think that this is acceptable? And what is he going to do to fix it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And as I'm not familiar with Evie's specific needs, I'm more than happy to sit down and be able to work through this with the family to see how we can navigate to make sure that we're getting those needs met, Mr. Speaker.

But this government has invested millions and millions of dollars into autism services as well as other cognitive disabilities since we've had the privilege of forming government. We're going to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. We're going to make sure that the dollars we have, whether it's individualized funding or global funding for autism or the dollars that we have that are going to go into our emergency rooms within our health care system are effective dollars, efficient dollars, and making sure that it works for the people that need to access those services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, Jill has been told that she should just go to a walk-in clinic or to an ER [emergency room] when Evie needs care, but that's not a serious solution and it doesn't work for kids with special needs like Evie. People in Saskatchewan should be able to get the care they need when they need it, and what Jill and Evie are being put through is simply not acceptable.

When will the minister ensure Evie has access to health care supports when she needs it and where she needs it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, again I can't comment on the specific needs of this specific case, but I'm more than happy to sit down with the family to see how we can navigate this and make it easier for the family. That's why we set up individualized funding for families to be able to take control of that and be able to look at what their specific child needs. That's why it was expanded, not just in scope but in years, Mr. Speaker, to be able to help those families not just deal with the immediate needs but also the needs going through the education system.

The Minister of Education also has programs that are set up for people that have cognitive disabilities or are on the autism spectrum. The autism spectrum is a very large spectrum, Mr. Speaker, and it wouldn't be fair for me to comment on the services that we do have available because I don't know the specific cases of this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this passionate mother up in the east gallery, she knows exactly what's available, and it's not working for her child. Jill says that her greatest fear in life is that something might happen to her or her husband, Adam, and that they might not be there to advocate for Evie anymore. Jill and Adam have no faith in the system, a system which is so clearly broken. They have no faith that the system would be able to step in and make sure that Evie would have the supports she needs to live a full and healthy life.

She has no faith in this minister's system. What responsibility

does the minister take for that, and what is he going to do to fix it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I myself have offered to sit down with the family. The Minister of Social Services has offered to sit down with the family to be able to discuss this. But this isn't just unique of people coming to the legislature. We deal with cases that people need to navigate the system, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have people within both the social services system and the health care system to be able to help parents navigate. Yes, it can be challenging to know all of the programs that are out there. That's why we have caseworkers. That's why we have navigators within our health care system, to make sure that they're getting to the programs that they have access to, Mr. Speaker.

Some of those programs are in person, especially with autism. Some of them can be online, depending on where they are in the spectrum, Mr. Speaker. But there are some services available, such as our individualized funding, also global funding for autism services and the Autism Resource Centre here in Regina. There are lots of services out there, Mr. Speaker, and we'll sit down with the family to be able to navigate those. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the system that minister just described isn't working. That's exactly why Jill has driven three hours to be in her legislature. This tired and out-of-touch government isn't making the investments that are needed for families in Saskatchewan. But that's their MO [modus operandi].

They're sitting on windfall revenue and failing to invest in the services that people need. We see that in education on front after front. In Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, more cuts and fee hikes are on their way — cuts to teacher-librarians, cuts to full-day kindergarten, cuts to experiential learning and supports for kids who struggle to attend.

Why is the Education minister forcing cuts to supports for our kids in Saskatoon Catholic Schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In this budget we are providing Saskatoon Catholic school division with a 4.6 per cent increase from last budget. Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to meet with three school divisions, including Saskatoon Catholic yesterday, where I reiterated what the Premier has already indicated.

We are very much willing to work with school divisions as we look at, in the short term, their enrolment pressures, Mr. Speaker, and committed to them to look in the long term to see whether or not the January, March, September timelines, in terms of when we estimate enrolment, provide a budget from the province and then reconcile the enrolment in September, whether or not that

system works anymore for a growing Saskatchewan.

So in terms of the budget for Saskatoon Catholic school division, what I had indicated to them is that we're working very hard to see what supports we can provide, and additional time would be given to divisions to submit their budgets to the ministry.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that Saskatoon Catholic Schools is making cuts for one reason — this minister's failure to deliver adequate funding. That's it. And they're not the only ones. Regina Public is also looking at cuts, as that minister knows. Prairie Valley is also making cuts to positions, as that minister knows. Saskatoon Public Schools, our province's largest division, is looking at cuts, as that minister already knows.

How many positions will be cut is the question that divisions are looking at. It's not if, but how many. So the question to this minister: what's the number of positions that will be cut that's acceptable to him?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I'll say I've met with, I think almost all of the divisions that the member opposite has mentioned. What I've indicated to all of them is that we are looking in the short term, knowing that the budget had been tabled in March, Mr. Speaker, that we had the situation last year where the projections that were provided by the school divisions in January, by September were no longer valid. And we provided additional money in November.

We understand for planning purposes, Mr. Speaker, that certainly the same situation is likely this year, and we're looking to provide that support certainly earlier than we did last year, Mr. Speaker. But we are working with them on their projections. We're also working with the class size and composition committee that is finishing their work at the end of this month, Mr. Speaker.

And so as I've indicated on the floor of the Assembly and as I've indicated personally to those school divisions, Mr. Speaker, that we are looking for more ways to provide supports, and so we will be giving extra time for the budgets to be submitted to the minister.

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

Access to Contraceptive Methods

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, last month we invited a group of medical students and doctors to come down here to their legislature and advocate for no-cost contraception. Yet that tired and out-of-touch government wasn't interested in what they had to say.

Now, 222 physicians across our province have written to that Health minister. Family doctors, OB/GYN [obstetrician-gynecologist], psychiatrists, urologists — all of them, 222 experts in medicine, know that universal access to contraception will make this province much healthier.

So will the minister for once listen to the experts and finally fund no-cost contraception in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I know they use that line of “tired and out-of-touch government.” I’ve met with this group twice in those four weeks, Mr. Speaker. I met with them after the day that they were here, Mr. Speaker, and I just met with them yesterday . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I’m just explaining the reality of the situation.

Dr. Lett and Dr. Mahood met with me yesterday. We have sat down, and I’ve asked her to meet with the officials to come up with a plan on how we could look at options on this. We do have coverage through our supplementary health benefits, through Social Services. First Nations are covered certainly through the federal government. If there are gaps in the system, I have sat down and I have asked them to work with my officials to identify those gaps and see what the plan is to be able to work with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, I’m glad to hear that the minister has been taking the time to meet with students and doctors, but meetings do not equate to tangible action. This has been an ask for many years, Mr. Speaker. I am actually perplexed why this government isn’t leaping at this opportunity. British Columbia estimates that they will see a 15 per cent drop in abortions as a result of their investment in no-cost contraception.

Now we offer them a simple, economical way to reduce abortion numbers and spending, so how doesn’t that work for everyone here in that House? With so many anti-choice members on that side of the House, you’d think that they would be rushing to support a measure that would reduce the number of abortions needed. So why won’t the minister get on board?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again, as I identified, I talked with Dr. Mahood and Dr. Lett just yesterday on this. We sat down. The meeting was a good meeting to be able to discuss on what a plan forward was.

The members opposite want us to consult, then they don’t want us to consult. But I think what they actually want is just to do whatever they feel is appropriate, Mr. Speaker, not necessarily consult, talk to officials, and get a plan. Just whatever they want to throw up against the wall should stick, and we should be able to do that.

We’re going to sit down with doctors, with officials and do some consultation on this, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we are covering . . . If we have gaps in that coverage, we will identify those gaps, and we’ll work on a plan to be able to close those gaps, Mr. Speaker. But for them to say that we’re not doing anything is just completely false. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Bowes: — Mr. Speaker, Dr. Christine Lett wrote to the Health minister of the day, the Sask Party Health minister of the day, four years ago in 2019. Mr. Speaker, guaranteeing access to reliable birth control isn’t just morally right, it makes total financial sense. And Dr. Lett laid that out for the Health minister back in 2019, and the fact remains the same.

A US [United States] study suggests that every dollar spent on reliable birth control saves \$7 in health spending. And when you factor in the reduction in child poverty, family breakdown, plus greater educational and professional opportunities for young women, you’re saving \$90 in public spending for every dollar spent. That is a substantial savings to Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. So why on earth is the minister spinning his wheels, squandering public money in this way?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I just met with these individuals 24 hours ago, Mr. Speaker. They’ve submitted me with two reports that we are looking at. Mr. Speaker, I’m asking my officials to look into this. Are they saying we should just bypass the ministry, bypass everybody else, and just do this because they stand up and ask in question period? We’re going to do our consultations on this, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that if we do make any changes, that we’re making it with the most effective way with the dollars that we have allocated within the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, again, we are working with this. We had a good meeting with the two doctors and the student yesterday. I said that I would follow up with them in 30 days, and I’ll do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Protection of Children in Care

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Stellayna Severight was 14 years old when she died in the care of the Ministry of Social Services. Her mother, Angela, came to this Legislative Assembly last week wanting an explanation from that minister what happened and what he’s actively doing to ensure it never happens again.

Contrary to what that minister has told media and the public, there are at least two confidentiality exceptions under *The Child and Family Services Act* that would permit him to discuss this case: subsection 74(2) when a parent like Angela requests details about their child as she’s done twice now; subsection 74(5.1) which gives the minister blanket discretion where the benefits outweigh the cost.

A child has died, Mr. Speaker. Angela doesn’t want Stellayna’s death to be in vain. The benefits don’t get any more compelling than that. Will the minister explain today the changes his ministry will put in place to ensure another child is not failed by the system the way that Stellayna was?

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

[14:30]

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member well knows, cannot speak specifically to any given case, Mr. Speaker. But as I outlined, Mr. Speaker, any time there is a serious incident, the ministry will look at this case or look at any case and pass that information along to the Advocate for Children and Youth and the coroner, and those agencies can look at the case however they like and do an inquest and report out of that, Mr. Speaker.

They can make recommendations as well, Mr. Speaker. The amendments to the Act that we've discussed in this sitting will expand information sharing and disclosure to authorities such as the coroner and the advocate, as I mentioned, for former children in care and for family in situations regarding a person who is deceased. It does not expand public release of information, Mr. Speaker.

Of course the safety and well-being of children is one of our top priorities. We'll continue to work on that very hard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I am advised that His Honour the Administrator is here for Royal Assent. All please rise.

[At 14:32 His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne. His Honour then gave Royal Assent to the following bills.]

ROYAL ASSENT

His Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly at its present session has passed several bills which, in the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour and to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Clerk: — Your Honour, the bills are as follows:

- Bill No. 99 - *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 118 - *The Warrant Compliance Act*
- Bill No. 104 - *The Local Improvements Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 105 - *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 128 - *The Mineral Resources Amendment Act, 2023*
- Bill No. 110 - *The Wills Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur les testaments*
- Bill No. 111 - *The Family Maintenance Amendment Act, 2022/Loi modificative de 2022 sur les prestations alimentaires familiales*
- Bill No. 108 - *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 109 - *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2022 (No. 2)*
- Bill No. 112 - *The King's Printer Act*
- Bill No. 113 - *The King's Printer Consequential Amendments Act, 2022/Loi de 2022 corrélative de la loi intitulée The King's Printer Act*
- Bill No. 114 - *The King's Bench Act/Loi sur la Cour du Banc du Roi*
- Bill No. 115 - *The King's Counsel Act*

- Bill No. 126 - *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 129 - *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2023*
- Bill No. 103 - *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*
- Bill No. 130 - *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act*
- Bill No. 131 - *The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Consequential Amendments Act, 2023/Loi de 2023 portant modification corrélative de la loi intitulée The Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation Act*
- Bill No. 94 - *The Public Pension and Benefits Administration Corporation Act*
- Bill No. 122 - *The Saskatchewan Revenue Agency Act*
- Bill No. 133 - *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2023*
- Bill No. 125 - *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 132 - *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel (Automation and Remote Supervision Pilot) Amendment Act, 2023*
- Bill No. 91 - *The Saskatchewan Employment (Part III) Amendment Act, 2022*
- Bill No. 134 - *The Education Amendment Act, 2023/Loi modificative de 2023 sur l'éducation*
- Bill No. 135 - *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2023*

His Honour: — In His Majesty's name, I assent to these bills.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly has voted the supplies required to enable the government to defray the expenses of the public service.

In the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour:

- Bill No. 136 - *The Appropriation Act, 2023 (No. 1)*

to which bill I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

His Honour: — In His Majesty's name, I thank the Legislative Assembly, accept its benevolence, and assent to this bill.

The Speaker: — Please rise for the departure of His Honour.

[At 14:37 His Honour retired from the Chamber.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: — Please be seated.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I order questions 93 to 155.

The Speaker: — Could you repeat that, please?

Mr. Ottenbreit: — I order questions 93 to 155. 93 to 155, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Ordered.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Made-in-Saskatchewan Plan for Power Generation

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to all members. I know many will be joining in on what I think is a very important debate for the floor of this legislature and a debate for not only folks in this province but for folks across the nation of Canada. And that is how we are going to ensure that from an electricity perspective, the supply, the reliability of our electricity system, ultimately the affordability of our electricity system, how we are going to preserve those items, those terms, Mr. Speaker, all while we in this nation continue to remove emissions from that said electricity sector.

And so herein lies the challenge for us as Canadians, and I would say it's even a global challenge, Mr. Speaker. And the goal for us in this province is we need — as a slide show that we had put out the other day says — Saskatchewan needs to ensure an affordable, reliable power supply while continuing to reduce our emissions within realistic timelines.

Some of the challenges we have in this province may be a little bit more than other areas, as we have a low population density, Mr. Speaker, and we are providing power to the mass of that population. Most notably, the importance of that power supply, the stability of that power supply, was noted in communities like Buffalo Narrows and La Loche the last few days where they do not have access to that power supply and have essentially the entire community running on generator power, Mr. Speaker. Which then led us to the need for fuel supply, which is another product that we very proudly produce in this province, Mr. Speaker.

So why would we need to keep our electricity rates affordable in this province, and I would dare say, across the nation of Canada? Well first is for the very affordability of families, Mr. Speaker, the very affordability of the families that are living here, so that their electrical bill that they receive each and every day . . . each and every month. You don't get one every day. Every month, Mr. Speaker. Thankfully we don't get one every day. Don't get any ideas, to the Minister of SaskPower.

We need to keep those rates as affordable as possible, again in particular in those communities, many of them northern communities where they heat their homes predominantly with electric heat, Mr. Speaker. And so it's incumbent on us as a government, and I would say on any government or any representatives across the nation, Mr. Speaker, at the provincial or the federal level, to do what they can to keep power rates affordable for the families that they ultimately represent.

In this province, 70 per cent of what we do is directly export related. Seventy per cent of our employment directly export related. Our largest export to the US for example, Mr. Speaker, is oil. Oil industry is one of the largest power users in the province. We export potash. We're actually the largest exporting region of the world when it comes to potash. And I dare say with respect to that oil, it's the most sustainable oil of its kind that you can find. If the rest of the world was producing oil in the same

way that we are, with the same regulations that we have, global emissions from oil production would drop 25 per cent overnight, Mr. Speaker.

So in this province, we're not only proud of what we produce, but we're very proud of how we produce those products. When it comes to potash, 50 per cent of the carbon emissions per tonne of potash, relative to our competitors, Mr. Speaker.

All of these industries, the forestry industry, the uranium industry, Mr. Speaker, the now value-added industry in the ag sector — all creating jobs for Saskatchewan people. All here because we have affordable electricity rates, competitive electricity rates, and that needs to remain into the future if we are going to continue to keep those said industries here but also attract future investment, additional investment into this province, Mr. Speaker.

Which brings me to, as we went through our display of slides the other day, in order to make decisions around what our electricity grid generation makeup is going to look like by 2035, we first need to ascertain, what's the province going to look like by 2035, Mr. Speaker? Well when you look out a number of years, the estimation is 1.5 million people are going to live here by 2035. That's more than the 1.22 million people that live here today, Mr. Speaker, substantially more, and most certainly we are on track to achieve that.

Mr. Speaker, our economy, about \$82 billion today, is expected to grow to just under \$110 billion at the very least by the year 2035, a much larger economy here in the province than we have today. And with that economic growth, with that population growth is going to come a need for not only the megawatts of electricity that we're delivering today but additional megawatts, Mr. Speaker.

So today we have the capacity to produce about 5437 megawatts, just under 5500 megawatts here in the province. The estimate is by 2035 we are actually going to need about 7000 megawatts of generating capacity from various sources — some renewable, some that's going to have to be baseload.

Mr. Speaker, today that baseload power comes from essentially three sources. We have some hydro, Mr. Speaker, and we're maximizing out the hydro facilities that we have without a lot of additional options for additional hydro megawatts to come into our system.

Mr. Speaker, we have some coal. We have about 25 per cent of our electrical generation in this province is coal. Traditionally it's been higher, but as our coal-fired facilities find their end of life, we have been replacing them with natural gas facilities, which do have a lower emissions profile, still providing fairly affordable power, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

Which brings me to the next statement, is about 40 per cent of our power supply comes from natural gas. Just opened a natural gas plant here a couple of years ago. Another one scheduled to be open in Moose Jaw next year. Another one announced, there's some argument over the names Aspen or Wolverine. We'll refer to them as either will work, I think would be the fair statement,

Mr. Speaker.

But all said, about 65 per cent of our baseload power, our available baseload power today, comes from coal and natural gas. About 80 per cent of the usage comes from coal and natural gas, which tells you that that baseload power is very, very important in the actual usage that we're using.

There are some days . . . And we're building out our wind and our solar and our geothermal — leaders, really in the case of geothermal in the nation, Mr. Speaker — and we're out building those renewable sources. But the fact of the matter is the sun doesn't always shine and the wind doesn't always blow, Mr. Speaker. We're working too with some battery backup with that, in its early days.

But ultimately, at the end of the day, we are going to need some baseload power in this province. And if we are going to reduce our emissions, Mr. Speaker, the steps would come from coal ultimately to natural gas.

And then the other option that we may have here is nuclear, specifically small modular reactors, which is why we in this province have led the nation in signing a memorandum of understanding with first New Brunswick and Ontario and later, Alberta, coming on to that agreement, Mr. Speaker, to advance the innovation and to look at how we can collectively and together work towards advancing small modular reactor use, not only in our province but across the nation and ultimately around the world.

So where is the challenge? This all sounds fairly simple and easy, Mr. Speaker. You run out the generation sources you have till their end of their life. As they come due, you replace them with the next available technology. That may be natural gas today; it may be a small modular reactor in the years ahead. It all sounds fairly simple, and it was, Mr. Speaker.

It was fairly simple until about the year 2012 actually was when the first hint of some federal regulatory changes coming into this space, was a Conservative government, admittedly, came in and said, with your coal-fired facilities, we need to start taking the steps to lower-emissions power sources. So if that coal-fired facility is timed out prior to 2030, you're going to close it down when it's timed out. If it's timed out in some time past 2030, when that 50-year time hits, you're going to close down that facility; you're not going to refurbish it. So in the case of our Saskatchewan scenario, Shand is 2042, BD3 [Boundary dam 3] would be 2044, I believe are the numbers, that they would ultimately time out, running those assets to the end of their life.

And so the regulation that came into place in 2012 wasn't out of line with what ultimately Saskatchewan could potentially do. In 2016 things changed, Mr. Speaker. We had a government that — I remember the Vancouver Declaration well — where my predecessor, former premier Wall had signed on with all of the other premiers. It's the last document around carbon taxation, or climate conversation in general, that was actually unanimously signed by all of the premiers across the nation. And the Vancouver Declaration and what it committed to was working together, 13 premiers and a Prime Minister, a federal government, on moving forward with climate mitigation and emissions reductions strategies.

One of those conversation points of the four, I believe if I remember correctly, was to work collaboratively on a price on pollution, or what is known most certainly and is a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. We all know the rest of the story, the Paul Harvey rest of the story after that day when the federal government, the Prime Minister himself, stood in the House of Commons without consultation of the provinces, Mr. Speaker, and introduced a carbon tax that would under no circumstances, and by promise of then Environment minister and that Prime Minister, never go above \$50 a tonne of carbon, Mr. Speaker. And so that is where we found ourselves.

Since then and today our carbon tax is at \$65 a tonne in this province and across the nation, heading to about 170, Mr. Speaker. Now I'm musing about something north of 240, Mr. Speaker.

Alongside . . . And I say this, this is the shifting sands that not just our Saskatchewan power utility company has been faced with, but all utility companies providing electrical generation across the nation have been faced with. The shifting sands of, we're going to introduce a carbon tax; it'll never go up above \$50. Then it's going to go to \$170, but we might think about \$240. And oh yeah, where you were going to run your coal-fired plant past 2030, now that's going to close at 2030. You're going to strand that asset according to us, Mr. Speaker.

And then, we are going to achieve net zero by 2050 in this nation, but a little bit later come out and said, but in the electricity sector we're ultimately going to achieve net zero by 2035. We're going to do so through the clean electricity standards of which have been consulted on to some degree among the provinces, Mr. Speaker, and quite simply they aren't going to work.

They aren't going to work I would say for a great many provinces across this country, and they most certainly are not going to work in this province as well. We just simply will not sign our province and the residents within and all of the industries that are creating wealth and opportunity and jobs in our communities, Mr. Speaker, we will not sign them up to an almost certain doubling or possibly tripling or quadrupling of the cost of electricity in this province, make us uncompetitive with not only our neighbours to the south but folks around the world, Mr. Speaker.

So this is where we find ourselves today. And we are faced, over the course of the next short while likely facing some . . . these actual clean electricity standards which will be coming forward by the federal government of which they have been consulted on. And herein lies the challenge. We today at 65 per cent of our power supply, 80 per cent of our use is coming from products that will no longer be available to us in 2035, some of them not available in 2030, Mr. Speaker.

The offset costs of that . . . If we were to even attempt to find our way to what the federal government's plan is of net zero by 2035, which we cannot achieve . . . It actually, and by SaskPower's admission, is not achievable. We cannot achieve net zero by 2035. And I think it's important to note that we're not alone in that statement. Ontario, about a 94 per cent of the way to net zero already today with their transition to wholesale large nuclear power, will not achieve net zero by 2035. Ontario has brought on 10 natural gas facilities over the course of just the last few years that most certainly, as the clean electricity regulations could potentially deem them, not to be used after 2035.

And I don't think you're going to see a government in Ontario, I certainly know you're not going to see a government or a power company in Saskatchewan, that is going to strand those assets, for us in this province an asset that we haven't even turned on yet. One we turned on two years ago, and one we just announced a number of weeks ago, Mr. Speaker.

And so we're not going to take that \$46 billion required investment that would have to come about for us to not achieve the federal emissions standard, the net zero by 2035, the resulting at least a 107 per cent increase to our utility bills, Mr. Speaker.

By comparison, if your monthly utility bill, your power bill, is coming to you and it's \$140 — or quite likely about \$50 of that actually is carbon tax today, Mr. Speaker, and what we would see in the increase in the carbon tax would be above and beyond — but just in the increase in the power usage, Mr. Speaker, would be at least a 107 per cent increase. And so your \$140 bill would ultimately increase to somewhere north of \$200 and likely then about another 100 or \$120 carbon tax added to that.

So no fear, Mr. Speaker. We have a plan. It's called a Saskatchewan plan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that plan is going to consist of a number of things. First and foremost, we are going to run the power generation plants that we have out to their end of life. We are going to run our natural gas facilities out to their end of life. We're not going to strand those assets, Mr. Speaker.

We understand and respect that with how we generate power in Saskatchewan, how we generate power actually in any province in the nation is fully, by constitution, within the rights of the province to set where that generation is coming from. So, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to thou shalt not utilize a coal resource in a post-2030 environment . . . We have a couple of plants. One, and the only one in North America outfitted with a carbon capture and storage facility, that we would reserve the right to utilize, either coal or convert that to natural gas, in a 2030 environment, Mr. Speaker.

And what we will do is we will ask SaskPower to look at what is the most affordable, what is going to provide us the strongest level of baseload power and what will be the most affordable for Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan industries that ultimately are employing those Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, with respect to the clean electricity standards that will deem quite likely that gas will not be available to be used as a generation source in the post-2035 environment, Mr. Speaker, that won't be the case in this province. Mr. Speaker, we are going to utilize those assets to the end of their life as well.

Much of what you will see in the Saskatchewan plan, I would say as well, lines up very closely with what the Biden administration in the USA [United States of America] have brought forward through the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] just a few days ago. In fact that very EPA report referenced Boundary dam 3 and the carbon capture and storage facility that is operating there, Mr. Speaker, that is capturing carbon off that facility. About 5 million tonnes I believe it's captured thus far. That carbon then as we know is brought north, used in an enhanced oil recovery oil field, Mr. Speaker, creating the opportunity for some of the lowest carbon barrel of oils available in the world, quite frankly, of that type of oil, Mr. Speaker.

And so the EPA report, the whole EPA targets that they have, Mr. Speaker, that they're looking at south of the border most certainly line up very closely to what we are seeing in the Saskatchewan plan. Prioritizing the affordability of your electricity supply, prioritizing the reliability of your electricity supply, and then looking at how, as you're prioritizing those two, you're able to reduce emissions, Mr. Speaker, in that supply. And that's precisely what we are going to be doing here in Saskatchewan.

So the cost of the Saskatchewan plan is substantially less, Mr. Speaker, about \$20 billion less, Mr. Speaker. So I would ask this: why would we invest \$20 billion more to achieve a target that we actually can't achieve, Mr. Speaker, and ultimately end up with an electrical supply, a generation system that is far less reliable than we can have with the Saskatchewan plan?

And what we are asking within the Saskatchewan plan, about a \$28 billion investment between now and 2035, relative to 46, Mr. Speaker, is for the federal government to participate in \$6 billion of that plan. \$22 billion then would be the investment by Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Speaker.

We're not interested in participating in the regional round tables that are juxtaposed with a just transition and how we're going to transition jobs out of Saskatchewan to some other fairy-tale place in Canada or around the world. We're just not going to take part in negotiations where the predisposed position is one of job loss in the industries that have, quite frankly, have created wealth, health, and jobs for decades here in the province.

I would say this, Mr. Speaker. Volkswagen didn't participate in the regional round tables; neither will the Government of Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, the choice is quite simple and I would hope . . . And when we first discussed this at the Williston Basin conference, Mr. Speaker, the opposition lent their support to this idea of a Saskatchewan plan being a realistic way for us to go in this province, Mr. Speaker.

We are not going to power this province entirely with windmills, most certainly not, not even if we had started building them 10 or 50 or 100 years ago, Mr. Speaker. We do need baseload power in this province. That baseload power is to maximize our hydro assets, of which we are doing. Our baseload power is our coal assets of which we still have a lifespan left in them, Mr. Speaker. Our baseload power is natural gas of which we have a substantial lifespan left in the assets that Saskatchewan people have invested in.

As we look ahead, we will utilize the full lifespan of those assets, Mr. Speaker. And we will look at one of the only other options that we have today to provide that 80 per cent of power that Saskatchewan residents are using — and no, windmills and solar will not provide that, Mr. Speaker — is nuclear. And so we most certainly are looking at, Mr. Speaker, at moving forward every . . . I was asked the other day, why won't you just commit to moving forward with a small modular reactor? Well in a way, all of the decision points that we have had over the 10-year period that it takes to get a nuclear reactor approved, Mr. Speaker, have been yes, yes, yes.

Mr. Speaker, the last off-ramp is 2029, and once we say yes in 2029, Mr. Speaker, this province will be moving forward with a

small modular reactor, Mr. Speaker, alongside utilizing the lifespan of all of the current assets that we have, including Shand, including Boundary dam 3, Mr. Speaker, including each and every natural gas plant that we have built as we work our way to another baseload power source, which is at the crux of the need and the transition here in Saskatchewan, is how do we provide that 80 per cent of power source that we need.

[15:00]

So it's a pretty clear choice, a pretty clear choice for all of us in this province, and I would say a number of other provinces have a choice as well. And that's for us to move forward with the Saskatchewan plan, Mr. Speaker: a realistic plan, a plan that provides reliable electricity for decades to come and a plan that provides affordable electricity for decades to come and a plan that continues to reduce the emissions in our system, in our electrical generation systems, Mr. Speaker, over the next number of decades.

Or you have the federal plan, Mr. Speaker, the net-zero-by-2035 plan which is, as I said, unachievable. We can't attain it. No matter the money, can't be attained. You should get there — it makes no sense, Mr. Speaker.

So we have an unachievable, unattainable plan put forward, the net-zero-by-2035 plan: a plan that would cost \$20 billion, \$20 billion more than the Saskatchewan plan, a plan ultimately that would at least double and quite likely triple or quadruple our electricity costs for Saskatchewan families and Saskatchewan industries that are creating jobs in community after community, Mr. Speaker, and a plan most certainly that won't work for the communities here.

Mr. Speaker, we are not going to attempt the impossible when it comes to powering our future, providing electricity to our Saskatchewan residents. We're not going to risk plunging our homes and our schools and our hospitals, our long-term care homes, our businesses, our industries into the cold and darkness of night because there is an ideological plan, a target that has been put forward by another level of government. We're not going to increase the costs to our businesses in Saskatchewan and to our families to the point where they're, quite frankly, completely unaffordable. And that's what's happened in other areas of the world. And I would point no further than the European Union.

Saskatchewan, if we are to continue to be a competitive place to invest and a competitive place for families to move and live and raise their family for generations to come, we must have affordable and reliable electricity and it must be available on demand. And under our watch, under this government's watch, Mr. Speaker, I would say this: we're going to have just that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we have provided an opportunity for the federal government to join the Saskatchewan government in supporting the Saskatchewan plan, supporting all of the metrics, and supporting it financially, Mr. Speaker. Thereby supporting all of the current and existing jobs that we have in the oil industry, in the forestry industry, in the potash mining industry, in the uranium mining industry, in the agriculture industry, in the ag value-added industry, in the retail industry, in every corner in our community, Mr. Speaker. This is an opportunity to invest in far more jobs than you'll ever get from a Volkswagen plant, Mr.

Speaker, ever, Mr. Speaker. So I would, on that note, offer that invitation to the federal government to participate in ensuring that Saskatchewan continues to be a place to invest and a place for families to move.

And I would move the following motion:

That this Assembly recognizes that the federal government's electrical generation target of net zero emissions by 2035 is unrealistic and unaffordable in Saskatchewan; and further,

That this Assembly supports the provincial government's made-in-Saskatchewan plan for affordable, reliable power generation to 2035 and beyond.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The Premier has moved:

That this Assembly recognizes that the federal government's electrical generation target of net zero emissions by 2035 is unrealistic and unaffordable in Saskatchewan; and further,

That this Assembly supports the provincial government's made-in-Saskatchewan plan for affordable, reliable power generation to 2035 and beyond.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Energy security, reliable baseload power, and reducing emissions will be without a doubt one of the greatest challenges our province faces in the decades to come. And to ensure that and also ensure good jobs, strong revenue, a strong economic future, and power that people in this province can afford, Mr. Speaker, that will require extraordinary efforts to be sure. And that would have been the case had we started a decade ago.

But let's make no mistake. The place that we're in today regarding power generation in Saskatchewan is the result of failures by both the federal government and that government, Mr. Speaker. And we know that virtue-signalling from either side, we know that Twitter battles aren't going to get us there.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's clear that this tired and out-of-touch government is not going to get us there either, because while other provinces took steps years ago, the Sask Party government has been completely missing in action when it comes to expanding renewables at SaskPower. This government killed the solar industry through its changes to net metering and has only expanded the capacity of renewables at SaskPower from 25 per cent to 31 per cent over the last decade.

The inaction has also caused uncertainty when it comes to investment and when it comes to good-paying jobs here in this province. Mr. Speaker, there is no denying climate change. There's no denying that climate change is real, and we will not be immune from the impacts of climate change, Mr. Speaker. And if members on that side do not believe that, they certainly have not found the courage to say that publicly.

But, Mr. Speaker, this uncertainty ensures that there is impact to those who work and live in this province, to those who work in places like Estevan, and those who look to invest here. We've heard that time and time again across the province, and we certainly heard that when I met with SaskPower officials and travelled to Estevan with the member from Regina University to discuss the current grid infrastructure as well as the challenges and opportunities ahead. And we also heard that from workers, about the uncertainty that they faced over the last decade.

And that brings us to today. Mr. Speaker, would have net zero by 2035 been possible with a different provincial government committed to emissions reductions over the last 16 years? Probably. But because of the Sask Party inaction for the last 16 years, that isn't an achievable goal for this province today. But, Mr. Speaker, it's clear that that Premier doesn't want to plan as much as he wants a sound bite and the people of this province deserve better.

Should we be given the privilege to form government in 2024, we would have to work with the reality of the Sask Party's failures to plan for the last 16 years. Mr. Speaker, we should absolutely strive to achieve net zero in our energy production as quickly as possible, but it needs to be done in a way that recognizes the reality of our province and ensures good jobs going into the future, Mr. Speaker. And we will certainly be bound by the failures of that government over the last 16 years.

So I'd like to move the following amendment:

That all of the words after "and further" be struck out and replaced with the following:

That this Assembly calls on the government to make significant investments in renewable power to ensure reliable, affordable, sustainable power and seize the economic opportunity that comes with green jobs.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The Leader of the Opposition has moved an amendment:

That all of the words after "and further" be struck out and replaced with the following:

That this Assembly calls on the government to make significant investments in renewable power to ensure reliable, affordable, sustainable power and seize the economic opportunity that comes with the green jobs.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm surprised at the position taken by the members opposite. I'll have some comments to make shortly about some of their history on this issue.

I am pleased to enter into the debate before us today. SaskPower's mission is to ensure reliable, sustainable, and affordable power for their customers and the communities they serve. I'd like to touch on each of those goals briefly and give

context to the situation that we are in today. With regard to sustainability, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower's committed to transitioning to a net zero greenhouse gas future. However achieving a net zero greenhouse gas electricity system by 2035 is simply not possible.

SaskPower has committed to achieving net zero CO₂ emissions by 2050 and will add 3000 megawatts of wind and solar generation between 2022 and 2035. Just last year SaskPower brought on an additional 375 megawatts of wind and 20 megawatts of Indigenous-owned solar power. SaskPower's also launched the competition for 100 megawatt solar facility near Estevan, which will be 10 times larger than our current largest solar facility.

Once complete, these renewables provide power at a very low cost, but the sun doesn't always shine, and the wind doesn't always blow. This intermittency means that you need to have additional sources of power that can be dispatched to cover the shortfall of renewables when they're not producing. Mr. Speaker, a grid that is made up of 100 per cent wind and solar may be an appealing idea to some, including the members opposite, but I can assure the House that the consequences due to the lack of reliability would cause those individuals to very quickly change their mind.

With reliability, Mr. Speaker, we must maintain the reliability of our grid so that our furnace fans can heat our homes and keep us from freezing on cold winter nights; our fridges can preserve food and keep us from starving; our hospitals can treat patients and keep us healthy; and our businesses can drive our economy and keep generating the wealth that allows us to invest in the people of Saskatchewan.

In terms of reliability, Saskatchewan is somewhat unique. While we operate five hydroelectric facilities today, making up 16 per cent of our capacity, there is little opportunity for further hydro development. We import power from Manitoba, which is largely based on hydro. However Manitoba has indicated that we will not be able to expand our imports significantly in the coming years.

But the majority of our grid is based on fuels, with roughly 25 per cent of our generating capacity coming from coal and natural gas making up roughly 40 per cent. We're working diligently on the potential deployment of small modular reactors. However we're more than a decade away from seeing them produce power for our grid. Coal and natural gas therefore are the only significant options we have right now for backing up our expanding fleet of renewables and generating baseload power.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, we have a federal government that is forging ahead with regulations that would force us to shut down our coal plants by 2030, shut down our natural gas plants by 2035, and require a net zero grid by 2035 as well. Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. Reaching this target is impossible for SaskPower due to technological, financial, and logistical realities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to mention cost effectivity. Even attempting to reach this target would roughly cost \$46 billion in capital, involve replacing a large majority of our current grid, and more than double our power rates. The drastic increase in rates would make our provincial economy uncompetitive, our communities

unaffordable, and would unduly punish our citizens for the egregious crime of being born in a part of the world that sees some of the coldest days on earth.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, the federal government's plan is simply unrealistic, unaffordable, and based completely in ideology rather than reality. We will not allow our citizens to be held hostage and be subjected to the consequences of an unreliable grid. We will not allow our citizens to be charged double what they're paying now in order to meet an arbitrary federal goal.

What we will do is ensure that Saskatchewan continues to have reliable power by using our facilities until the end of their useful life. We will continue to reduce emissions from our electrical grid in an aggressive yet sustainable way. We will keep power rates affordable so that our citizens can maintain a high standard of living in one of the greatest places on earth and continue to benefit from growth that works for everyone.

[15:15]

But, Mr. Speaker, I just want to be absolutely clear about the NDP's position. They stand up today and say we should have done something 16 years ago, or something when they were in government. Mr. Speaker, we had a proper plan. We had a plan that was agreed to with the federal government, for 2050 to get to net zero, a plan that was working and a plan that was well placed and was affordable and was manageable.

Let's look at what the NDP critic's position is on baseload power. Against geothermal: "Geothermal in Estevan is building false hopes," member from Regina University.

Against importing hydro power:

Scott Moe signed a deal to buy \$5 billion of power from Brian Pallister's Manitoba Hydro. That's \$5 billion of jobs, energy security, and future opportunity that the Sask Party has given away.

Same member, July 7th, 2021.

Against importing baseload power from USA, while I hear them chirping from their seats, Mr. Speaker. They don't like the reality.

The Sask Party has decided to spend a billion dollars of our money building infrastructure in the US, creating jobs in America with our money to link us to the Southwest Power Pool.

The same member, February 11th, 2023.

Against carbon capture and storage: "This one has been a costly boondoggle from the start," from an NDP news release. "Limited hydro potential in Sask." "The power breakdown is interesting." "Sask has limited hydro capacity." Well at least they're admitting that much.

The NDP's position on baseload power for 2035: no to geothermal, no to imports from Canada or the US, no to building more hydro, and no to CCS [carbon capture and storage] on fossil

fuel . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker, the NDP are not in favour of anything except politics. And, Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that's far too important to be dealt with by simple politics. We need to have good ideas, solid ideas, well planned, and we'd like them to stand with us with regard to our dealings with the federal government.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, it's been a real journey over here. I've been sitting here wondering, back and forth, whether I was going to take this opportunity to be brief or if we were all going to go on a fun journey to explore this government's record. And given the minister's comments, I'm not sure what I can say about those that's parliamentary, Mr. Speaker. But you know, I guess for those comments to be taken at face value, you'd also have to believe that thunder curdles milk.

So let's start, Mr. Speaker. Where to begin? You know, the Premier started by talking about leading the nation. And Saskatchewan did, used to lead the nation. We've led the nation in power generation, in having a remarkable Crown corporation, an asset, a jewel in SaskPower. And we used to be leaders in renewable generation. When this government took over, we led the country. Now we're laggards.

And, Mr. Speaker, for the members opposite, you know, using finger quotes to refer to climate change as science, or making baseless personal attacks because they don't like to hear the words "climate change" said in this Assembly, an energy project is an energy project is an energy project. Jobs are jobs are jobs for the people in those communities, whether they are building solar plants outside of Estevan, whether they're mining coal, whether they're building and operating windmills, whether they're working at a natural gas plant, whether they're building innovations in geothermal like we're seeing here in Regina. An energy project is an energy project is an energy project, and the members on that side would be well reminded of that.

So this is, you know . . . And the minister said this is an issue far too important for rhetoric or for politics. And, Mr. Speaker, that is a view that we share, and that's a position we have taken repeatedly on this file because, as the Leader of the Opposition said, energy security, power generation, climate change, labour market development, good jobs for Saskatchewan people who want to work with their hands. This is the opportunity and the challenge of the 21st century for this province, Mr. Speaker, and we are uniquely challenged within Canada by our power makeup, and that is a unique opportunity.

And on this file, Mr. Speaker, it is too important for rhetoric. It is too important for the cheap politics that the members opposite, with 16 years in government, still seem to rely on because they can't defend their own shameful record. What we need, Mr. Speaker, are adults in the room, people who are going to put the interests of this province ahead of their own personal, petty, vindictive, anti-science, partisan views.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, is an all-of-the-above approach when it comes to power generation, when it comes to jobs, when it comes to the economy, when it comes to an approach to dealing

with climate change. And Saskatchewan has a proud history of innovation, of bootstrapping, of ingenuity. But again all we see out of this government is cheap politics and not even particularly creative rhetoric. And what a tacky and shoddy way to run a government, and a tacky and shoddy way to try and position themselves as leaders, Mr. Speaker.

You know, the minister says he wants to take politics out of it. Hey, love it; love a tech briefing. The number of times we've said, hey, this issue is too important for politics. We would love to stand united for Saskatchewan. Help us find out what's going on. Give us a heads-up. Give us a tech briefing. No response.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, they're laughing because they feel so smug and so content that they are right. But you know what? These are the people who have raised the power bills of people in this province 11 per cent in the last eight months, Mr. Speaker.

And when we talk about power generation here in Saskatchewan, we are in agreement. People in this province want their power to be affordable. They want their power to be reliable. They want it to be homegrown here in Saskatchewan, and they want it to be sustainable, Mr. Speaker. Because outside of touring around, holding closed door meetings for their, you know, economic manifesto called by Alberta economists "insane" and "completely un-credible" . . . "The worst piece of political writing in the history of Canada," I believe, was another glowing review.

You know, people in the province care about climate change. They care about jobs, they care about opportunity, they care about reducing pollution, they care about nature, they care about the future for their children, and they care about how much their houses are going to be worth and how they are going to pay their bills.

So let's talk about that, Mr. Speaker — affordability, affordable power for Saskatchewan. Again this government, during a crisis when it comes to the cost of living, with a Crown corporation, a unique opportunity in Canada, has raised the power bills of the people of this province 11 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that still has over \$400 million sitting with the federal government because they can't figure out a way to talk through an agreement to get that money back to the Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. And that money should go to reducing emissions, to working with large industry to reduce emissions. It should also go to empowering people through household programs like solar, like the net metering program they killed out of spite and ideology, things like energy retrofits, things like helping people and communities and First Nations achieve energy security, power co-ops.

These are all simple things that this government could be doing, and we in Saskatchewan have the unique opportunity, thanks to a Crown corporation like SaskPower, to do. But instead, Mr. Speaker, it's all sleight of hand. It's all, you know, listen to our bombastic rhetoric while we actually do nothing to help the people of Saskatchewan. They're collecting a carbon tax right now, Mr. Speaker. They can't keep it straight between the Minister of Environment and the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan], but to date, Mr. Speaker, they're actually collecting a carbon tax here in

Saskatchewan.

But you know what we've learned in committee? We've learned that that money that should be going back to Saskatchewan people, to Saskatchewan industry, businesses, farms, they're just going to roll it into the General Revenue Fund, Mr. Speaker. Because what says small, effective conservative government like the biggest government in the history of the province?

Let's talk about reliability, Mr. Speaker, because yes, there are challenges when it comes to Saskatchewan's power makeup. Yes, we need reliable baseload power, and that is going to be a challenge for us. And no, renewables are not going to be the silver bullet to provide that for us, Mr. Speaker. They can help. We've got intermittent power needs as well.

And this is a government that has put us nearly two decades behind every other jurisdiction in Canada. You look west to Alberta where they are powering up to be a green energy powerhouse in Canada. And again Saskatchewan, under the leadership and guidance of the people opposite, are going to be left empty-handed. We are going to lose labour, we are going to lose investment, and we are going to lose people.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask, when it comes to reliable baseload, let's judge the government, let's judge the members opposite by their actions. And their actions to date are slow-walking SMRs [small modular reactor] as they say, yes, we're consulting. Yes, we're potentially going forward with this but it's a real decision. We haven't already made a choice. We're not spending 120, \$140 million to, you know, consult.

This is a government that spent \$5 billion to buy hydro from Manitoba with no transparency to demonstrate to Saskatchewan ratepayers that they're getting good value for their money, that that cost per megawatt is actually good value for Saskatchewan people. Again when you look at the tie-in to the United States, Saskatchewan people need to know that their power will be affordable and reliable.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has failed to invest in infrastructure in Saskatchewan, keep money in the province, and has continued, Mr. Speaker, to pull hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars out of that very Crown corporation we now need to bail out. This is a government who operates a monopoly power utility and has still managed to run it into a historic position of loss — \$174 million operating a monopoly during a time in which you've raised power rates four times. It's truly spectacular incompetence, Mr. Speaker.

And on the issue of climate change, if there is a person in this province who believes that this is a government who takes that seriously, I've got a bridge in P.A. to sell you. Because, Mr. Speaker, sustainability and green power generation is not just an opportunity for sneers and derision from the members opposite. The minister and the Premier well know this is a matter of jobs. This is about firing up entrepreneurship, innovation, good union jobs which people can be proud of, supporting workers.

The coal transition centre in Estevan has no funding. The doors are closing next month. Well I guess problem solved, guys. This is a government who's done nothing to secure supply chains, who's doing nothing to keep that skilled labour force we need for

this transition here in Saskatchewan. And again, Mr. Speaker, they might laugh. They might sneer. They might stomp around in the legislature any time the issue of sustainability or renewables comes up. But again, an energy project is an energy project, and that generates electricity in Saskatchewan, jobs for Saskatchewan people, and an economic future.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, when they look ahead, when we look at the choices that this government is making, it's hard not to ask questions, generally because the answers are not particularly forthcoming, generally because transparency is but a dream and accountability is something we can only hope for. But, Mr. Speaker, this is a government who has not to date presented a plan, who instead prefers to govern by decree, introducing legislation without details, without working out the specifics because, yeah, that's a path to success other governments anywhere else in the world have chosen.

And this is a government who's continued to sell out our future in Saskatchewan, whether it comes to renewables or whether it comes to baseload generation, by digging their heels in firmly and refusing to look to the future.

This is a government who's spending, by their own admission, a billion dollars on a new natural gas plant in Aspen. That's great, Mr. Speaker. In Lanigan, a new natural gas plant combined cycle, not equipped for CCS, not equipped for CCUS [carbon capture, utilization, and storage], which — the Premier and the minister have just spoken to — is going to be necessary. A billion dollars is a heck of a lot of money to spend just to own the feds, Mr. Speaker. So again all we see is tacky, shoddy rhetoric.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are capable of holding more than one thought in their mind. The people of Saskatchewan know that despite your efforts — despite these, you know, emergency debates and press conferences that need to be held to hold a plan, to respond to things that we don't even know the specifics of yet and explore more creative math on costing these things, Mr. Speaker — the people in the province know that the only people making power less affordable, less reliable in this province are the members on that side of the House.

[15:30]

These are the people, Mr. Speaker, who sit around the cabinet table and vote to raise utility rates. These are the people who have SaskPower at a loss of \$172 million, Mr. Speaker. And these are the people who are collecting industrial carbon taxes right now today and, by their own admission, rolling them into the General Revenue Fund instead of putting those dollars to work making a better, more secure energy future for the people of Saskatchewan.

So you know, Mr. Speaker, it is too important a file for the type of rhetoric and the type of, you know, sad, self-congratulatory, tacky politics that we see far too often from the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

We need strong Crowns. We need sustainable power. We need real investment and we need a real commitment for affordable, reliable, sustainable power in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we need an all-of-the-above approach. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is about *The Twilight Zone* meeting reality. Someone had to say it, that the emperor has no clothes, and that someone has been Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, our power pathway, Saskatchewan's pathway as laid out formally yesterday, is an affordable, reliable, and realistic one compared to an unaffordable, utterly unrealistic plan in the form of, for example, the clean electricity regulations that would jeopardize Saskatchewan's very ability to generate the necessary power supply in this province to meet provincial demand. That's the bottom line — fact versus ideology, science versus myth.

Last year, according to SaskPower, for seven days during a particularly cold stretch in Saskatchewan, there was no wind. There was no wind. Germany, which has gone through a power transition off coal, off nuclear — it has a lot of wind — experienced something very similar recently: an extended stretch that was referred to as uniquely windless, so extended that they started to fire up coal.

But Germans' reality in contrast to ours? They have a vulnerable backup power grid. They have vulnerable baseload power. They were lucky to have a mild winter, but they're openly nervous about a not-so-mild one. Here in the land of minus 40, we're not going to go there, Mr. Speaker. Germany came to Canada not so long ago asking for LNG [liquefied natural gas], liquid natural gas which Canada couldn't give them, partly because federal legislation such as Bill C-69 had killed the liquid natural gas facility in Saguenay, Quebec.

There are consequences to the wrong path. And anyone who tells you that we can manage on renewables alone without a strong baseload power in Saskatchewan is either misleading you or misguided, Mr. Speaker. SaskPower is bringing on more wind and solar all the time, but we cannot rely on wind and solar in minus 40.

Here's the reality: we were federally mandated off coal. We are working toward SMRs for the late 2030s. Mr. Speaker, it's acknowledged around the world that the SMR technology has potential, but we have to get this right. It's a very costly proposition. It's costly technology, so we have to use gas. There are no other options. And really gas is quite a miraculous thing, Mr. Speaker.

And there was an interesting letter to the editor in the *StarPhoenix*, *Leader-Post* not so long ago from a physicist from Nevada who was visiting Saskatchewan, who read about the lawsuit against SaskPower by Climate Justice Saskatoon, which is trying to stop natural gas power plants on the basis of the right to life, liberty, and security under the Charter. He said, "as a physicist" he read this with "interest." He said:

Though I'm in agreement that we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time, completely and suddenly ceasing their emissions would create great havoc and suffering in our society, as rapid change always creates problems, and we will struggle to develop alternative sources of energy. Beyond nuclear and renewable forms of energy, natural gas

[he said] is one of the cleanest energy sources. People still need to heat their homes in the winter so they don't freeze to death. We need a more balanced and gradual approach [he wrote] to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, one that aims to eliminate the worst polluters first. Natural gas is not one of them.

Good points. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, the federal government doesn't like natural gas, and that is at the root of the clean electricity regulations. The unvarnished, inconvenient truth about the CER [clean electricity regulations], as they're called, is no fossil fuel-generated power by 2035, period. That would mean the shutdown of 65 per cent of Saskatchewan's electrical supply, period. The dollar impact: more than 100 per cent increase in electrical power rates by 2035, as pointed out by SaskPower. That's at least \$20 billion more for an enormously less reliable plan.

Who would do that, Mr. Speaker? A less reliable plan but 100 per cent increase in electrical power rates by 2035. Twilight zone. And that's to meet an ever-elusive net zero target. For all that, the carbon tax hasn't reduced emissions, Mr. Speaker. But ah, yes, the formal regulations are still to come. They're not out yet. The feds may say there's nothing to see here; these are but abstract trial balloons. Not buying, Mr. Speaker. Their intention has been very clear, very explicit, very black and white.

Here's what the federal government said itself about the clean electricity regulations in the context of another policy, the net zero emission vehicle mandate:

Canada has also committed to achieving a net-zero electricity grid by 2035, and is actively developing a series of measures, including new Clean Electricity Regulations and complementary measures that will ensure that Canada phases out remaining fossil-fuel generated electricity.

That's pretty clear.

They like to talk about the famous tax credits. "Oh, but you get all the money back." We've heard that one before too. We also heard about a famous futures fund which would flow — what was it? — 2 billion back to provinces impacted by federal policies. How much has flowed, Mr. Speaker? Zero dollars.

Unfortunately these famous tax credits come with dangerous strings attached, which is usually how it works. One, that in order to qualify, Saskatchewan has to be net zero by 2035 — literally impossible as we know, according to SaskPower. But we also have to lower our power rates. That surely is the definition of paradox, Mr. Speaker. If we were to do this 2035 thing, power rates would go up exponentially, so we wouldn't qualify for the tax credits. As SaskPower has stated, it is not possible to reduce electrical generation emissions to zero in the time frame proposed by the federal government.

So how does the federal government propose getting there? We would love to know. We really would. We'd seriously love to know. Eighty-three per cent of Canada's electricity may be non-emitting due to hydro and nuclear power, but fossil fuels currently constitute 65 per cent of Saskatchewan's electricity generation.

And it's not that we haven't told them, Mr. Speaker. Last year the president of SaskPower wrote the deputy ministers of Finance and ECCC [Environment and Climate Change Canada] in Ottawa that "The proposed accelerated time frame to decarbonize electricity is not technologically, logistically, or financially feasible." The president also noted, "The technology required for such a radical transition either does not exist or has not been proven at a commercial scale." He was talking about CCUS on natural gas plants — not coal. This isn't Boundary dam. This is CCUS on natural gas, technology in it's infancy and incredibly expensive. Let no one tell you different.

Last November the president of SaskPower wrote to ECCC:

Given the current state of commercially available technologies, the costs associated with the overhaul of the electrical grid, supply chains that are growing more constrained and costly, and expectations for future demand growth, there are no realistic options for baseload power in Saskatchewan that will meet the 2035 timeline and stringent near-zero performance standards. Natural gas will be a crucial bridging fuel to net zero.

As for hydro, which has also repeatedly been pointed out to the feds, Saskatchewan does not have sufficient hydroelectric resources to generate the base power, baseload power required to meet the federal government's stated clean electricity goals. You can get additional imports from Manitoba, they say. No you can't. Manitoba has limited energy capacity for additional export, and the amount that is available is insufficient to meet the needs of Saskatchewan to reach net zero by 2035.

I also love the argument about, well you can just use the gas when you need it, you know, just sort of an emergency thing you can turn on and off. First of all, Mr. Speaker, minus 40 is pretty close to an emergency. It's a life-or-death proposition. But that's also not how it works, Mr. Speaker. You have to have infrastructure in place, and planning cycles for power facilities take 8 to 10 years.

And this continual change of the goalposts by the federal government — 2050, then it's 2035 — that of course doesn't help. And it risks nothing short of major economic destabilization, serious negative consequences for affordability, and reliability of course of electricity, generation supply planning, private sector investment, economic growth, and interprovincial and international competitiveness, not to mention dramatically increased rate disparity between Saskatchewan and jurisdictions that are primarily hydro-based, Mr. Speaker.

So we're charting our own path of sense, of affordability, of protection for the Saskatchewan people. It's the Saskatchewan plan, Mr. Speaker. There is no choice. In addition to the clean electricity regulation's obvious flaws, they also infringe on the exclusive power of the province to regulate facilities for the generation and production of electrical energy under section 92A of the Constitution.

The power to regulate these facilities includes the power to regulate their environmental effects, including their GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions. And, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in the Supreme Court's decision in the carbon tax case which justifies this clear federal intrusion into matters of exclusive

provincial jurisdiction. That was a very narrow case around price stringency.

And you know what the Supreme Court Chief Justice said in that case? That federalism recognizes that provinces have the autonomy to develop their economies as they see fit, that the Constitution can't upset the balance and deprive provinces of the powers that are essential to their ability to control their cultural and economic destinies — their economic destinies, Mr. Speaker.

What that case did not do is give the federal government carte blanche to wade into provincial jurisdiction whenever they take a notion to use the peace, order, and good government trump card whenever they take a notion to alter the constitutional balance, the division of powers, by fiat. The Government of Saskatchewan will never permit the federal government to jeopardize the reliability of electricity in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's not as if we haven't been down this road before — the micromanaging, the infringing on provincial jurisdiction road — that we're seeing with the clean electricity regulations. It's a pattern of behaviour. Look at coal. The member opposite was mentioning coal. Given that the coal sector was the first sector to be subject to the federal government's just transition path, its utter failure to adequately support the transition of workers should cause significant concern for any industry that comes next.

Mr. Speaker, as the Auditor General of Canada found in an April 2022 report, titled *Just Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy* . . . This is the Auditor General:

Natural Resources Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada were not prepared to support a just transition to a low-carbon economy for workers and communities.

NRCan [Natural Resources Canada] did not have an implementation plan, Mr. Speaker, to address the transition of workers and geographies or any “. . . coordinated approach to helping workers and communities avoid hardship and continue to contribute to the economy.” And federal departments “. . . did not establish a framework to measure, monitor, and report on actions to support a just transition for Canadians.”

And finally — wait for it — the Canadian Auditor General found that Saskatchewan and Alberta would experience significant job losses and economic effects as a result of the accelerated shutdown of coal-fired generating stations and thermal coal mines, Mr. Speaker.

[15:45]

We know what just transition is really about, and that's beyond coal. The federal leaked briefing document on it was very clear that there could be what were called significant disruptions to 13 per cent of the industrial workforce, 3 million workers, particularly in three provinces — Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. Despite the federal government's attempt to rebrand just transition, an admission that the term is toxic, the core proposition of the federal just transition remains the same — reducing or eliminating industries.

Mr. Speaker, as Lorne Gunter noted in the *Edmonton Sun* earlier this year regarding the federal just transition plan:

This is exactly what happened in Ontario in the late 2010s. The Ontario Liberal government tried to transition away from coal-fired electricity to wind, solar, and biomass. The result was a doubling of energy prices and a loss of 200,000 manufacturing jobs to lower-cost jurisdictions . . . Only about 12,000 “green” jobs popped up to replace all the well-paying manufacturing ones.

And, Mr. Speaker, emissions did not budge.

As well, the harmfulness of these federal policies — whether it's just transition, the carbon tax, the looming clean electricity regulations, the cap on oil production — they affect everyone and they are economically and socially destructive to our Indigenous communities as well.

Mr. Speaker, Dale Swampy, president of the National Coalition of Chiefs, has made this point in a number of commentaries, most recently:

If the federal government continues on its path with a “just transition,” an emissions cap and other crippling legislation, we will enter an energy crisis that will have a catastrophic effect on our people, especially those living on reserves across this country . . .

Almost 14,000 self-identified Indigenous people work for Canada's oil and gas industry. Their incomes benefit their families and communities across the country, allowing for significant progress in areas that address poverty and inequality experienced by Indigenous people . . .

[Mr. Speaker] . . . the federal government [he said] intends to further limit the ability . . . to compete with other global players by implementing a new, unreasonable emissions cap. The implementation of this policy proposal will have numerous negative consequences. Consumer prices will rise further. Our economy will suffer more . . . And Indigenous reconciliation . . . will become even harder to achieve.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has a very strong environmental record. We are not laggards. We are not laggards on methane, Mr. Speaker. Our critics call on us to collaborate with the federal government. Well it took three years of negotiation with the federal government but they granted Saskatchewan formal approval of our provincial methane plan in 2020.

In 2021 Minister Guilbeault publicly congratulated Saskatchewan for achieving a 50 per cent reduction in emissions under our provincially led plan. We subsequently achieved a 60 per cent reduction in GHG emissions from 2015 levels, once again far exceeding the federal target.

But in typical fashion, despite Saskatchewan's success, the federal government once again decided to move the goalposts with respect to federal targets. Last year it stated the new target would now be a 75 per cent reduction in methane emissions below 2012 levels by 2030. And this was released in a federal discussion paper without any prior consultation with the provinces. There was no consultation on the feasibility of the

policy, any concrete details on the scope, definition, or intended application. Sound familiar, Mr. Speaker?

We are not laggards on sustainable agriculture and we are deeply concerned at the threat of a 30 per cent federal fertilizer reduction target and the impact that it will have on Saskatchewan agricultural producers. The target was announced in 2020, again without any accompanying economic analysis, impact analysis, feasibility assessment, Mr. Speaker. Talk about lack of collaboration and consultation.

Just before Christmas the federal government released an interesting discussion document on its sustainable agriculture strategy. Despite what the federal government had said for months, that the 30 per cent reduction target would be voluntary, this discussion paper suddenly left the door very decidedly open to the creation of future federal regulations to ban certain agricultural practices.

To quote, “regulations — amending existing or establishing new regulations . . . could establish performance standards and/or mandate or prohibit the use of a specific agricultural practice.” This despite the fact that Saskatchewan is using the methods that Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada wants to promote, Mr. Speaker. That federal discussion document notes, “Canada has seen positive trends in soil health over the past decade, especially in the Prairies.”

As Saskatchewan’s deputy minister of Agriculture said in a presentation to the Senate committee studying soil health in Canada last year, over the last 30 years Saskatchewan’s grain production has increased significantly from about 22 million tonnes to over 40 million tonnes in 2020. And as reported in the *2022 National Inventory Report*, Saskatchewan producers sequestered at the same time almost 13 million tonnes of carbon, almost 80 per cent, Mr. Speaker, of the total agriculture emissions in Saskatchewan.

Recent research commissioned by the Global Institute for Food Security found Saskatchewan’s net carbon footprint for canola and wheat production was more than 60 per cent lower than competitive jurisdictions; for dry field peas, 95 per cent lower. And zero or minimum till was invented in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. To date about 95 per cent of our land seeded to annual crops is done using zero or minimum tillage, a higher percentage than any other province. This is a huge increase from just 36 per cent in 1991.

It is also the position of the Government of Saskatchewan that the regulation of fertilizer use, the day-to-day business, the regulation of the day-to-day business of farming fall under the authority of the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, and that is consistent with what courts have found. Yes, the jurisdiction over agriculture is concurrent under section 95 of the *Constitution Act*, but the regulation of that day-to-day business of farming has been left to the provinces while the federal government has the power over agriculture as relate to exports and interprovincial trade.

Mr. Speaker, again to the real, not abstract, impact of these federal policies, I would like to read into the record the federal government’s own analysis of its proposed regulations on electrical vehicles. But it could be an analysis of anything else — clean electricity standards, federal fuel standards, the carbon tax.

We unfortunately are spoiled for choice, Mr. Speaker.

These factors indicate that low-income households would likely be disproportionately and negatively affected by the proposed Amendments.

The proposed Amendments would also disproportionately impact households living in rural and northern communities that may have lower access to public charging infrastructure. In addition, northern communities are expected to face more difficulties with the transition to ZEVs due to prolonged periods of cold temperatures . . .

Some Canadians may experience a compounding effect of disproportionate impacts if there is an intersectional component where individuals belong to both regional and economic subgroups discussed above.

Compounding effects — I’ll say, Mr. Speaker. The constitutional basis for these regulations is also once again dubious. Laws with respect to the sale of particular products in the marketplace fall under exclusive provincial jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. The courts have upheld this principle many times.

It’s the same principle that applies when the products are imported into the province. Once they are here, it is within exclusive provincial jurisdiction to determine the terms and conditions under which a product can be sold. And the federal government cannot constitutionally mandate to car and truck dealerships in Saskatchewan what kind of cars and trucks they must sell, period, Mr. Speaker.

Just to go back to the clean electricity regulations and the existentially harmful effect that they would have on the power mix and on the power rates here in this province. We were pleased to hear the member for Regina University appear to go a bit rogue on this one — bit of an occupational hazard over there, Mr. Speaker — where she said that, that’s something where I think you won’t see a lot of “daylight” between the Premier and us.

This, of course, the same member who Twitter-cheered when energy workers were laid off, Mr. Speaker. She’s also part of an opposition which, last time they stood by energy workers, were advocating for the replacement of every single pipeline in the province whether it needed to be replaced or not. Price tag at \$50 billion, Mr. Speaker.

To conclude, I’d like to go back to nothing less than the beginning of our federation, Mr. Speaker, as a federal entity. And during the discussions about Confederation, representatives from Lower Canada in particular insisted on a federation in which provinces would retain important powers that could be relied upon to protect each province’s economy, language, religion, culture, and unique way of life.

In fact, Confederation would not have been possible if the delegates had not agreed that Canada was a federation with legislative powers divided between federal and provincial governments. The very foundation of our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, is the principle of federalism and the notion that both the federal and provincial governments have certain spheres of legislation that they alone can exercise.

Within this provincial sphere is the control and development of natural resources. The courts have long recognized this. In *Reference re Secession of Quebec*, the Supreme Court recognized each level of government as, quote, sovereign in its assigned areas of jurisdiction and that each level of government is autonomous from the others within these areas. Those spheres of autonomy are guaranteed by the Constitution, Mr. Speaker, and they are not recent constructs.

In 1919 Viscount Haldane of the Privy Council, in *Reference re The Initiative and Referendum Act* stated:

Subject to this each Province was to retain its independence and autonomy . . . Within these limits of area and subjects, its local Legislature, so long as the Imperial Parliament did not repeal its own Act conferring this status, was to be supreme . . .

Was to be supreme, Mr. Speaker.

And to be modern and quote *Hamilton*: “This is a movement, not a moment,” Mr. Speaker. And I was certainly proud to be in the room where this happened. This is actually historic. And this is bold on the part of the Premier to be the first province to say no, we can’t do this. And we can’t do this to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

This is the right thing to do, and it is on the right side of Canadian federalism and the right side of Canadian history.

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion of the Premier.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — All those in favour say yea.

Some Hon. Members: — Yea.

The Speaker: — Please say no if opposed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 15:58 until 16:01.]

The Speaker: — All those in favour of the amendment please stand.

[Yeas — 7]

Beck	Nippi-Albright	Wotherspoon
Love	Teed	A. Young
Sarauer		

The Speaker: — All those opposed please stand.

[Nays — 40]

Moe	McMorris	Reiter
Merriman	Harpauer	Morgan
Duncan	Tell	Wyant
Makowsky	Marit	Cheveldayoff
Kaeding	L. Ross	J. Harrison
Carr	Skoropad	Buckingham
Hargrave	Fiaz	Lambert
Dennis	Kirsch	A. Ross
Ottenbreit	Francis	C. Young
Steele	Lawrence	Bonk
McLeod	Friesen	Grewal
Nerlien	Goudy	Keisig
Lemaigre	Jenson	Domotor
Wilson		

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 7; those against the amendment, 40.

The Speaker: — The amendment is lost.

The question before the Assembly:

That this Assembly recognizes that the federal government’s electrical generation target of net zero emissions by 2035 is unrealistic and unaffordable in Saskatchewan; and further,

That this Assembly supports the provincial government’s made-in-Saskatchewan plan for affordable, reliable power generation to 2035 and beyond.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Call in the members.

All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 47]

Moe	McMorris	Reiter
Merriman	Harpauer	Morgan
Duncan	Tell	Wyant
Makowsky	Marit	Cheveldayoff
Kaeding	L. Ross	J. Harrison
Carr	Skoropad	Buckingham
Hargrave	Fiaz	Lambert
Dennis	Kirsch	A. Ross
Ottenbreit	Francis	C. Young
Steele	Lawrence	Bonk
McLeod	Friesen	Grewal
Nerlien	Goudy	Keisig
Lemaigre	Jenson	Domotor
Beck	Nippi-Albright	Wotherspoon
Love	Teed	A. Young
Sarauer	Wilson	

The Speaker: — All those opposed, please stand. Seeing none.

[Nays — nil]

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 47.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request leave to move a motion of transmittal.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to have a motion for transmittal. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

TRANSMITTAL MOTION

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would move:

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit copies of the motion as well as verbatim transcripts of the debate and the vote to Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada; Jagmeet Singh, leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada; and Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Official Opposition of Canada.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved:

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit copies of the motion as well as verbatim transcripts of the debate and the vote to Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada; Jagmeet Singh, leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada; and Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Official Opposition of Canada.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, 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 10 a.m. tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:12.]

CORRIGENDUM

On page 3923 of *Hansard* No. 63A, Tuesday, May 16, 2023, the final sentence of the first paragraph in the right-hand column should read:

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.

The online transcript for May 16, 2023 has been corrected.

We apologize for the error.

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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