



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

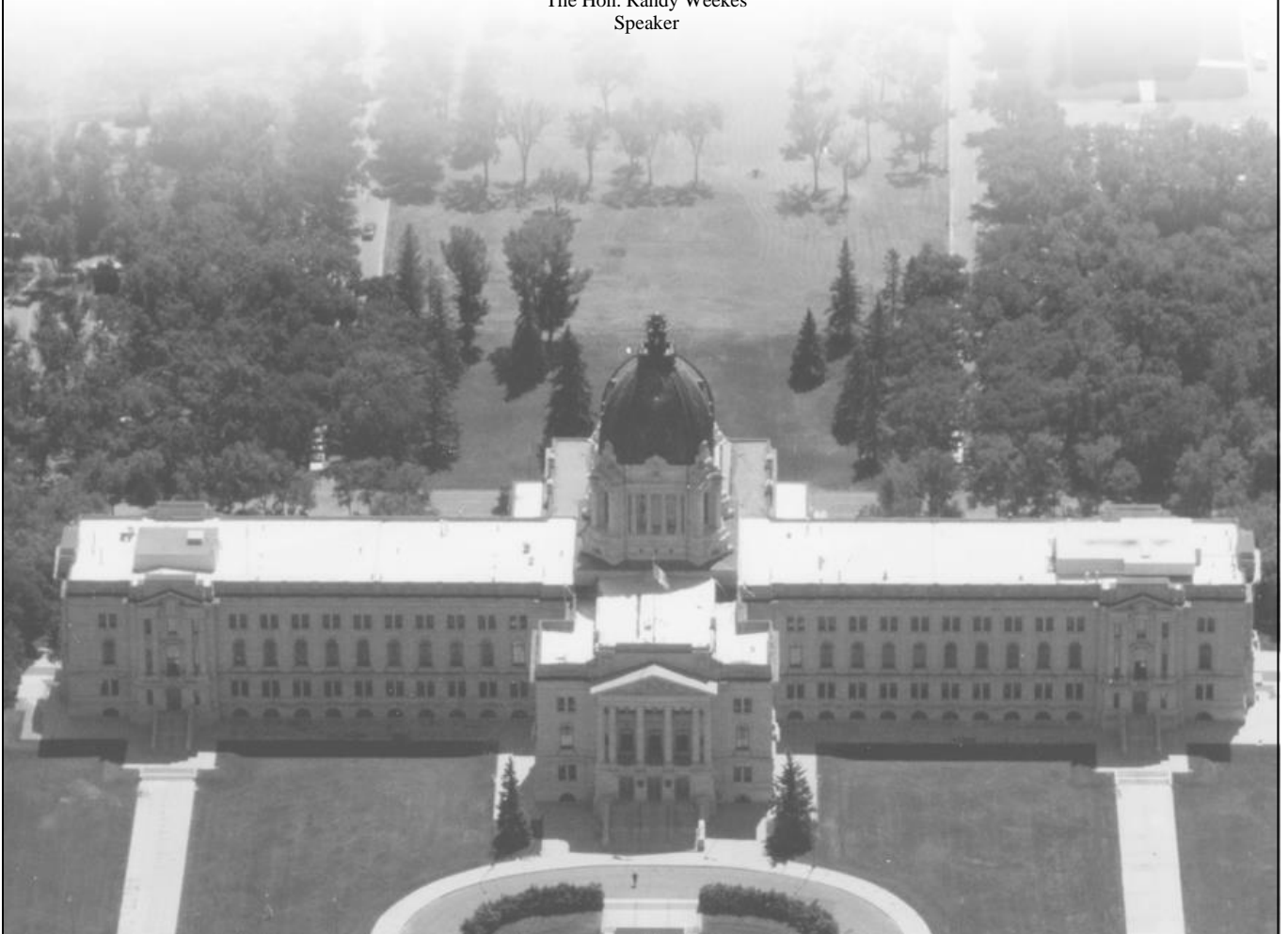
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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

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

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**Standings**

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 46; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 14;  
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

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

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

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and recognize two individuals seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. No stranger to this Assembly but always very welcome, Tracy Sauer is here today. She's president of SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union], joined with Diane Ralph who also works for SGEU. Thank you for being here today to both of you. Thank you for the service that you do for your members every single day, but in particular your witness here today is valued and very much appreciated. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Tracy and Diane to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to introduce a rather large delegation seated in your gallery today. But I would, before I get into that, seek leave for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Ms. Conway:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's a real honour to welcome a number of folks seated in your gallery here from the John Howard Society of Saskatchewan. They are also, many of them are friends and community leaders. And I want to start with Tanna Young who is the director of operations for Lulu's Lodge, a transitional home for LGBTQ2S+ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, and two-spirit, plus] youth right here in Regina. Tanna does this important work with such care, with such passion. I consider myself lucky to have gotten to know her a bit better over this past summer at an event that I'll have more to say about in a few minutes here, but I just want to welcome her to her Legislative Assembly.

She's joined with us today by Nathan Labatt who is a case worker with the John Howard Society. But I knew Nathan before he took on that special role, and he did a lot of the heavy lifting at the Walk the Walk fundraising event this summer as the production manager for Walk the Walk. So I want to welcome Nate to this, his Legislative Assembly.

We also have with us today Heather Monus who's also a case worker with the John Howard Society. We have Blair Roberts, who's the director of external relations with the John Howard

Society, who's here with his partner, Melissa Roberts. We have with us today Jazmin Rostie who's the manager of housing development. We also have with us today Margo Allaire, who is Chair of Yorkton Pride. So I want to welcome her to her Legislative Assembly.

We have with us today a couple of allies and friends and participants from the Walk the Walk event that I'm going to touch on in a little bit. We have one of the celebrity finalists actually, the only other courageous soul that went in drag king along with me. We have Jodi Robson, who's also known as a baker extraordinaire, and she's here with her partner, Jesse. So I want to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

We also have with us today Rev. Lynn Robertson who absolutely shined as another participant. Really it was a thing of beauty to see her on that stage. So I want to thank her not only for her involvement in that event, but her incredible allyship and all that she really does for her community. She gives back in so many ways, Mr. Speaker.

We have two young people in the gallery today. We have Ebony Campbell and we have Nix Pepper. These are two nonbinary youth with us today who are also gymnasts on Team Sask. So I want to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

I hope I didn't forget anyone, but I know I forgot one person and I want to get to them now. Last but not least is a friend, Terry Vanmackelberg. He's a friend to many in this House, Mr. Speaker. He's known to many within the community as the legendary Flo Mingo, a drag queen who is a real force for good in our province, Mr. Speaker. He is a tireless supporter of Lulu's Lodge and a fearless advocate for the entire LGBTQ2S+ community. He works for Federated Co-op, Mr. Speaker, as a business analyst, I believe . . . No? Something else. He's been promoted since the last bio I read, Mr. Speaker. He's a manager, okay, in Melville.

And I understand that Terry was the first drag queen to ever be introduced in this Legislative Assembly, by the member for Regina Rosemont who I know is proud of that fact.

He frequently and fearlessly shares his story, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's auspicious that we have him here in this Legislative Assembly on this week, which was national coming out week. He shares the story of his journey, of 34 years in the closet due to living in a situation where he didn't feel he could come out. And once he did, he was rejected by his father. And I think Terry has been very clear about this. It was this experience of being rejected by his family, by everything he knew, that led him to become involved in Lulu's Lodge because he understood first-hand how that rejection led to vulnerability and what those youth are facing each and every day.

It's also very important that we have Terry here with us today, and this entire team, the day that this government is poised to introduce a bill that will require parental consent before a child can go by a different pronoun or by a different name.

John Howard Society has very courageously put forward an application as a litigant in the suit that attempted to stop this bill from coming into force, Mr. Speaker, a bill that a judge said

could cause irreparable harm to youth. So when the Premier says that this is just a bunch of eastern special interest, let's be clear: these are community members that are concerned about this bill, Mr. Speaker. And their work is only going to get more difficult and more voluminous if this bill passes, Mr. Speaker, the work that Lulu's Lodge does every day.

So with that, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming this team from John Howard Society, from Lulu's Lodge, their allies, and of course the great Flo Mingo.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I'd like to join with my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre in giving a special shout-out to a personal friend of mine, Terry Vanmackelberg.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, education is critical to success in life because reading is fundamental, and so is a safe home. Terry is a remarkable citizen of Saskatchewan: king consort, recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal, and just a great, giant example of charisma, uniqueness, nerve, and talent. He's a professional, he's an entrepreneur, and he's an angel to so many in this province, Mr. Speaker, having raised hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars to shelter and protect queer, trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming youth — kids, kids who are kicked out of their home, Mr. Speaker, just for being who they are.

Terry is a champion citizen of Saskatchewan who has done more for homeless queer kids in Saskatchewan than any person sitting in this Assembly and certainly than the entire Government of Saskatchewan. And so on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, on behalf of the official opposition, I want to recognize that good work. I want to thank you for every hour, second, and pump of hairspray that you've put into that. And thank you for being here today and the good work you continue to do.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise and present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for adequate funding for education. Those who have signed the petition today are focused on the things that matter most in our classroom: that's getting our students and our classrooms the support that they need for every student to have the opportunity to succeed in Saskatchewan. This is important today. It's important for our future, and it is not important under the Sask Party government.

Those that have signed the petition are aware that the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], who represents 27 public and separate school divisions, have criticized the current budget that we're in, stating that it further erodes education in our province. Teachers have been vocal, with the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] president saying that she's baffled by this budget and the lack of supports in it.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that this budget falls after

nearly a decade of cuts in classrooms caused by the lack of funding coming from this government, funding that's failed to keep pace with inflation, failed to keep pace with enrolment, and has left school divisions in a position to make the difficult decisions to cut our classrooms year after year after year, failing our kids.

I'll read the prayer:

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

The petition today is signed by residents of Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to present our petition calling on the government to address the affordability crisis.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that inflation is at its highest, at the highest it's been in over three decades; that half of Saskatchewan residents were living paycheque to paycheque before transportation and food costs skyrocketed in 2022; and that the Sask Party government's 32 new tax and fee hikes makes life more expensive, all while harming struggling industries like tourism, culture, and fitness.

While other provinces acted, the Sask Party ignored the opposition calls for a gas price relief plan, most notable when driving from the Sask Party's favourite province, Alberta, through Lloydminster at 1.39 a litre. And you show up in Saskatoon, it's 1.56.

We, in the prayer will read as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to meaningfully address the affordability crisis in Saskatchewan.

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

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to prohibit conversion therapy. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention that conversion therapy uses discredited and abusive practices which attempt to actively change sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* names sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

[10:15]

The practice of conversion therapy is seriously harmful to individuals and is opposed by the Canadian Psychological Association, the World Health Organization, and the American Psychiatric Association. Scientific studies have found that the practice of conversion therapy is associated with negative psychosocial health outcomes such as loneliness, regular illicit drug use, suicide ideation, and suicide attempt. And yet despite a federal ban on conversion therapy introduced almost two years ago, broader ideologies underpinning the practice continue to have a strong foothold in Canada, in Saskatchewan as well.

So as we enter debate on a bill knowingly violating the Charter rights of youth in our province to gender expression, we call on the government to ban the practice and prohibit transporting youth.

Signed by the residents of Regina. I do so present.

**The Speaker:** — I'd just like to caution the members it's 90 seconds for petitions. You know, if it gets out of hand I'll just start cutting you off.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Remembering George Reed

**Ms. Beck:** — I arise today, Mr. Speaker, in memory of George Reed, number 34, one of the Saskatchewan Roughriders' all-time greatest and most-beloved players, who passed away recently, just shy of his 84th birthday. And I want to share something that his youngest daughter, Georgette, said at his celebration of life. She said her dad had a lot of determination "to see things get better, to be better, to do better." Certainly George Reed made the Roughriders better, made our province better, and made the lives of everyone, whoever had the pleasure of meeting him, better.

But he did so much more. He was one of the first celebrity Special Olympics ambassadors in the 1970s. And he went above and beyond. He didn't just show up for medals and to pose for pictures, but he kept working to grow the organization. And not long after that, Mr. Speaker, he founded his own non-profit, the George Reed Foundation, to improve opportunities for people with physical and mental challenges.

We all remember watching or seeing the highlight reels of George play — the rush, the excitement, the sheer athletic excellence. But I ask my fellow members to join me in remembering also number 34 for his kindness, his selflessness, and his love of others. He came, he played, and he stayed. And we will always be grateful that he did.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

#### Indigenous Woman Pursues Modelling and Psychology Careers

**Mr. Domotor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ember Sunchild Whitford, an Indigenous woman from Sweetgrass First Nation,

is forging a career for herself as an international model. At the end of May, Ember headed to Fiji where she modelled Indigenous fashions during fashion week.

Mr. Speaker, Ember was asked by designer Helen Oro to model her designs in Fiji. Helen Oro is from Saskatoon. Ember and Helen will be the first Indigenous Canadians to be in this event. The Fiji show will focus on a variety of new fashions including Indigenous-inspired pieces.

Presently, Ember is freelancing as a volunteer model in a number of shows to gain experience, but plans to seek future employment as a professional model. Mr. Speaker, Ember wants to be a positive role model for other young Indigenous women and raise awareness of important topics such as missing and murdered Indigenous women. When Ember isn't working on developing her modelling career, the 18-year-old student is at the University of Saskatchewan studying psychology. Ember's future plans include becoming a psychiatrist so that she can help people that are dealing with mental health challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating Ember Sunchild Whitford in her modelling during fashion week in Fiji, and wish her all the best as she pursues her modelling and psychology careers. Thank you.

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

#### Celebrity Drag Show

**Ms. Conway:** — On August 26th I joined local leaders in support of John Howard Society's Lulu's Lodge, a transitional home for LGBTQ2S+ youth in Regina. It was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to live a dream and sashay away as a drag king at the Walk the Walk celebrity drag show.

I am lying, Mr. Speaker. This was not a dream. It was terrifying, but I got through it thanks to my fabulous mentors and, of course, everyone's favourite drag mama, local drag legend and all around champion for good, Terry Vanmackelberg, a.k.a. Flo Mingo.

I was in great company with other participants Chase Hussey, Jodi Robson, Cole Davenport, David Belof, Melissa Coomber-Bendtsen, Pastor Lynn Robertson, Mayor Sandra Masters, Chief Cadmus Delorme, and our fabulous champion and pillar of the community Jada Yee, who proudly carries the torch passed on by the former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Mark Docherty.

We raised an epic \$160,000, Mr. Speaker. We couldn't have done it without our fabulous mentors, Shefoam, Nick Knockers, Yada Ya-Oughta Book Ahead, Katy Hairry, Lala Bottome, Aida Baguette, Caesar Melons, Ben Danthrust, Sandy Beeches, Adam Goodtime, and judges Korinne Konnor, Dean Renwick, and Ruby Hymen. And Mama Flo, who taught us that the discomfort that we experienced that night is nothing compared to the discomfort of queer and trans youth if the world around them does not accept them for who they are.

I hope all members will join me in offering con-drag-ulations to Flo Mingo, Lulu's director Tanna Young, and their incredible team for the difference they make in lives each and every day.

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

### Remembering David Thompson

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with true sadness that I must inform this Chamber of the passing of a constituent, David Thompson.

Dave Thompson was born in 1932 and raised in the Kelliher area. He quit school in grade 8 to work on the family farm. Agriculture was his passion, Mr. Speaker. He attended the University of Saskatchewan and received his Diploma of Agriculture in 1954. And at 80 years young, Dave went back to school again and received his GED [general equivalency diploma], completing his grade 12 equivalency. And he was very tickled when former premier Brad Wall complimented his accomplishment on the Facebook.

In 1951 Dave purchased his first quarter of farm land, and in 1960 married Carole Church. They were lifelong partners and raised four wonderful children together. Dave was a busy community member, judging 4-H, coaching hockey, and serving on numerous boards. He was a reeve of the rural municipality of Kellross for many years. He was recognized for all his hard work in 2005 with the Lieutenant Governor Award, and in 2021 he was also awarded the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal for community involvement.

For all of his awards and recognitions, Dave was most proud of his marriage, his children, and his grandchildren. And they are the best legacy anyone could ever leave behind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Elder Receives Saskatchewan Order of Merit

**Ms. Lambert:** — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit was established in 1985 to celebrate excellence and achievement by our citizens. It is the province's highest honour. This year six individuals were invested with the Order at a formal ceremony on September 27th in Saskatoon. One of those worthy recipients was a constituent of mine, Nora Cummings.

At a Saskatoon hospital on a chilly New Year's Day in 1938, there was joy at the birth of Nora, a proud descendent of the Round Prairie Métis. Her parents brought her home to her people on the Métis road allowance in Saskatoon, and she learned about her history and heritage at the feet of her elders.

Nora is a mother of 10. She is a grandmother and a Great Mother to nearly 100. She is an elder and a senator for the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, a breaker of barriers and of glass ceilings, a mentor and tradition keeper. In 1969 Nora was a founding member of the Gabriel Dumont Local #11. She was one of the first field workers for the Métis Society. She helped form the Saskatchewan Native Women's Association.

Mr. Speaker, she is an organizer, an advocate, and for nearly 60 years has been reaching deep into the hearts of everyone she touches. She is humble, loving, patient, and someone who has

lived her life on a foundation of faith and respect. She continues to support and to educate about Métis culture, ensuring that the history of the Métis people is accurately told and preserved. Nora's tenacity of spirit will echo through the generations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Foster Families Month

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am pleased to rise to recognize October as Foster Families Month in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my deep gratitude to our dedicated foster families who show the same commitment as our government to build strong families and communities. Every child deserves a loving home, and our foster families make that happen.

When families are in crisis, they provide care and compassion, positively impacting children's lives. My deepest also extends to the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association. Our government prioritizes family-based care to support the best outcomes for children and youth, and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association does just that. They work hand in hand with our government, offering training and support to foster parents who bring hope to children and families in need.

I invite all the members of this Assembly to please join me in thanking over 415 foster families that provide safe and loving homes. Let us also recognize the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association's vital service to our great province. Your unwavering dedication to support children in need strengthens Saskatchewan families and communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Questions for Opposition Member

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate one of the members of this House on a wonderful opportunity she has this weekend. The NDP [New Democratic Party] member for Saskatoon University has been asked to join Jagmeet Singh as a guest speaker at the federal NDP convention in Hamilton. That's the convention where the NDP will be debating a resolution to, and I quote, end fossil fuel production.

Will she be addressing that in her speech? Or will she be running down Saskatchewan or telling them that Saskatchewan is a dumpster fire or there's nothing to be proud of here? Will she be defending Saskatchewan's ethical and environmentally responsible oil and gas industry? Will she be decrying the federal carbon tax, which is driving up the cost of heating our homes and buying food for our families?

Will she be telling delegates that it's time the NDP end their support for the Trudeau government? Will she be defending the hard-working people of Saskatchewan? Or will she be bowing to her federal masters and their planned destruction of Saskatchewan's interests?

Anyway, say hi to Jagmeet for us, and tell him to end his support for Trudeau now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



## QUESTION PERIOD

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

**Education Policy and Mental Health Supports for Youth**

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government have clearly lost sight of the things that matter most to Saskatchewan people. They've recalled the legislature early to sow division, while Saskatchewan people go without the help, without the relief that they need. And nowhere is that more clear than when it comes to mental health supports.

Here with us today, Mr. Speaker, in your gallery, is Sarah Mackenzie. Sarah lost her 14-year-old child to suicide. Sarah tried to help her child, Bee, but the supports simply weren't there. What does the Premier have to say to Sarah and parents like her who can't access the mental health supports that their children desperately need?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, I would say first and foremost I'm so sorry for your loss. Anyone, any family that loses a family member in this province, we most certainly are sorry for that loss. And I can't even fathom the loss of a child, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to mental health supports in this province, there's more work to do by the government, and I would say by all of us as communities, as individuals, to ensure that the supports that are in place are accessible, and to ensure that the supports that are in place are actually achieving the outcomes that they were designed to achieve, Mr. Speaker. And we need to look, as a government, at how we are providing additional supports, not only in mental health supports for our youth but mental health supports for our communities, Mr. Speaker.

There are a number of initiatives that are in place through our mental health and all-too-often subsequent addictions action plan, which was just announced it was being updated this past Friday in Saskatoon by the Minister of Mental Health. He was joined by the Minister of Health, the Minister of Social Services, and the mayors from our two large centres, Mr. Speaker.

But there are more initiatives that need to be undertaken from this government, not only in how and where we are providing those supports but also how we are accessing those supports as families and ultimately as individuals across the province.

[10:30]

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Sarah did her best. She tried repeatedly to get supports for her child. But she waits for counsellors, for psychiatrists, Mr. Speaker, those waits are simply too long in this province. Bee lost hope after not one but four of their close friends died from either suicide or by overdose. Bee died by suicide. With better access to supports, Bee might be with us today.

When will we see in this province the mental health supports that kids need, to stop tragedies like this from happening over and

over again?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, with respect to, you know, when we will see increased supports for our youth and for the residents of Saskatchewan — but in particular our youth in this case — is we are always working on how we are expanding those supports and ensuring they are available, accessible, and ensuring they are the correct supports that our families and our youth ultimately require. Mr. Speaker, I would point . . . and that's an ongoing effort that this government is always looking at. We expanded into each of our schools, for example, a mental health first aid individual, so each school today does have at least one representative that is trained in mental health first aid, Mr. Speaker.

As recent as, I believe, last Friday we expanded to our 13th community. Operating in 40 communities, our rapid access counselling services, but expanded to 13 of those communities that service to be available to the youth in the community, whether they be in school or even outside of the school setting, Mr. Speaker. That was in Yorkton; that's the 13th community. And looking very seriously at, do we have to expand those services to other communities as well?

With respect to access, we have the urgent care centre being built here in Regina on north Albert Street. Part of that is, yes, about emergent care or urgent care, but part of it is about access for mental health and all-too-often subsequent addictions access, to ensure that individuals have access to the professional that they need, whatever that might be, Mr. Speaker.

So to answer the Leader of the Opposition's question, yes, there's more work to do in this space in Saskatchewan and across Canada. This is a government that is committed to doing just that.

**The Speaker:** — Leave the mother and child alone. They can stay in the gallery.

I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this is about priorities. And this government clearly, clearly has the wrong priorities. This is a government that drafted the pronoun policy after a matter of days and a handful of letters. They've recalled the legislature to invoke the notwithstanding clause to sow division and to score political points, Mr. Speaker. They have completely, completely lost sight of the things that matter most to the people of this province. This is not an "aw-shucks, wait and see, we need to do better" moment, Mr. Speaker. They are the government and it is their responsibility to do what it takes to keep children alive in this province.

So here is my question: when will the Premier act on the mental health supports with the same urgency that he's addressed the pronoun policy with?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, I would say that one of the highest priorities, if not the highest priority, of every parent across this province is the well-being of their children. And that's

precisely who we have said on the floor of this legislature, in the rotunda, that this government is listening to as we find our way into this House to pass this piece of legislation that up until now has been a policy that was in place until recently, Mr. Speaker. A policy also that I would say was in place in a number of school divisions, either by policy or by practice across the province.

And so most certainly this government is going to ensure that we are doing all we can to support parents, support families, Mr. Speaker, whether it be with their involvement in their child's education, their child's school, their child's classroom, Mr. Speaker, or supporting those children as well with the mental health and all too often the subsequent addictions challenges that we have in many of our communities across Saskatchewan and across Canada.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, I've met with Sarah to hear her experience and it's heartbreaking. She tried her best to keep Bee alive and to get Bee the supports that were needed, but the supports just weren't there. Sarah wants to see the government take real action to fix the broken system. When will we see a government that takes this crisis seriously?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I too would like to extend my condolences to Sarah on the loss of Bee. Mr. Speaker, the Premier has talked a bit about some of the investments that we have made as a government and we have acknowledged that there is more work to do. We acknowledge both the steps that we have taken in the area of mental health and addictions — record investments in this particular area year over year — and recognizing that we still need to fill some gaps there, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier spoke about some of the services that are available in schools. As an example, the youth mental health capacity building in schools, a program which is now in nine school divisions, and was recently announced by the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions that will be expanding to 14 divisions by next year. Mr. Speaker, just one of a number of initiatives with more to come. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, we have a record number of kids that are falling through those gaps in the system. Sarah's child is far from the only young person to die by suicide in Saskatchewan. Ten youths aged 19 and under have taken their own life this year alone — 10. Over the last five years, that number is 99. These aren't numbers. These are real people, Mr. Speaker. Every young person lost to suicide is a tragedy. When will we see real action from this government to address this crisis?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have invested in more funding for more staff to be able to provide

mental health supports for children and youth in this province: \$4.1 million for mental health workers in Saskatchewan. With these funds we've hired over 35 more FTEs [full-time equivalent] serving specifically children and youth, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to that we are actually also working with our partners at the John Howard Society on an integrated youth services model here for Saskatchewan which is being implemented in other provinces as well, such as in British Columbia, known as the Foundry there. I've had an opportunity to meet with those people directly on how that has benefited children and youth in that particular province. And, Mr. Speaker, we're working closely with the John Howard Society on that to establish integrated youth services initiatives in Saskatchewan in at least three communities to start.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, Sarah said it best today. What's being done isn't enough; what's being done isn't working. Mr. Speaker, it's well known that LGBTQ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning] youth are at an increased risk of suicide, and that for trans and gender-diverse youth, having the support of people in your life significantly reduces the risk of suicide.

But we don't see supportive policies coming from this government. In fact we see them doing the opposite. That's why a judge said that this bill will do irreparable harm and the Children's Advocate said that it violates the human rights code.

Does the Mental Health and Addictions minister realize that pushing forward with this bill will lead to more self-harm and suicide for vulnerable youth?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, this policy that we've brought forward and the legislation that I'm going to have an opportunity to introduce later today, we do believe that what it does is it creates a better environment for those supports to be offered to students. Whatever choices those students are making around identity, Mr. Speaker, what this legislation will do, what our policy does is it makes it mandatory for those supports to be provided.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I heard earlier the Leader of the Opposition, you know, question these policies as well. And I would point to some comments made from the director of education in the North East School Division:

Our administrative policy to consult with parents regarding family life and human sexuality is in line with the minister's request. Regarding the consent of name changes, we believe trusting relationships with students do not come at the cost of infringing on the trust of parents. Our goal is and has been to support students together with parents.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this policy, this legislation, it brings parents into the lives of children. That's who is best enabled to support children through difficult conversations and difficult decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Education went on the radio, said that everything is fine when it comes to the mental health supports in schools. He said, “We believe there are ample supports for children.”

I couldn't believe it. No one who knows a thing about the state of public education in Saskatchewan could believe it either. Today we have a mother who is quietly weeping up in the gallery. Does the Education minister still actually believe that there are ample supports for children in our schools when it comes to mental health?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, obviously nobody in this House, whatever side of the House you sit on, wants to see anybody feel unsafe or feel in danger or feel, you know, Mr. Speaker, like . . . You know, Mr. Speaker, I would just say this. The mental health supports in schools, the Premier outlined them, as well the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, we have worked hard to make investments so there are supports available in schools.

Is there more work to do? Absolutely there's more work to do. That's why we talked about expanding the mental health capacity-building initiative to more school divisions, Mr. Speaker. We have mental health first aid-trained people in every school. I point to the rapid access counselling announcements that we've made over the last several weeks. We're working to make sure that more supports are being added all the time so that children in our communities have access to help when they need it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, this minister believes some strange things, especially when we have a look at what the evidence supports. Let's look at that evidence from the government's own documents that show that over the last year, the last year, the government added less than one full-time counsellor in our schools, they cut two psychologists, and they have 66 fewer classroom teachers. Meanwhile enrolment increased in Saskatchewan by 3,840 students across the province.

Is this what ample supports look like from this tired and out-of-touch government? And how is this growth that works for everyone?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to staffing in our schools, I'd remind the member opposite that school divisions make those decisions on how to staff their schools and the supports available. I'd also remind the House that in June we added \$40 million on top of our operating budget to school divisions so that school divisions could make sure to make more investments in classroom supports around class size, complexity, to make sure that students in every community are supported, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Love:** — What an out-of-touch response from this brand new minister over there. Mr. Speaker, kids can't get the help they need through the health care system, and they certainly can't get access to the help they need through our schools. Thousands of students added to our school system, but teachers and psychologists have been cut back. It makes no sense.

Instead of listening to the member from Sask Rivers, who seems to be the one calling all the shots out of that Premier's office lately, why don't they listen to parents like Sarah, parents like Sarah, and make sure that vulnerable kids get the support when they need it and where they need it.

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, I'll pick up on something that the member just said in his question. And that is we do have thousands more students in our classrooms. We do have a growing province, something that, you know, when we were under the NDP we didn't see, Mr. Speaker.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would remind the members of a couple things. Mr. Speaker, I would remind them that we added the \$40 million in June for more classroom supports, more supports in school, and to help address the enrolment growth that we are seeing across our province.

[10:45]

Mr. Speaker, I would also remind the members opposite that supports exist for children not only in the school context. We talked about rapid access counselling. Rapid access counselling has just been expanded to 13 communities for children and youth. I myself checked out the rapid access counselling services the other day, how quickly I could get an appointment. I could book an appointment the next day. We have services available. We know there's more work to do and we're going to be looking at adding more to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased that this government has finally decided to start listening to parents and taking their concerns seriously. Mr. Speaker, in the last session I called on the government to bring parents back into their children's education, as they felt this government had pushed them out.

Mr. Speaker, my questions and concerns on behalf of parents fell on the deaf ears of this government in that last session. Then after the summer by-election, this government suddenly did an about-face, beating their chest that they instantly cared about parental rights.

Mr. Speaker, why did the government have to get embarrassed by Jon Hromek in the Lumsden-Morse by-election before they decided to do something and protect parental rights in education?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in case that member opposite missed it, the new member for Lumsden-Morse actually sits on this side of the House, and we were able to welcome him this week to the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I've said in this House before, I've said in media interviews, we've been hearing concern from parents over the last several months and years about wanting to be more involved in their children's education. Mr. Speaker, this has been something that we've heard from parents.

We've been working on . . . I know the previous minister, you know, in terms of preparing this specific policy, Mr. Speaker, we've been working on this for months. We are proud to introduce it. We're proud to call a session back here, a special session because we do believe that this is of utmost importance to Saskatchewan parents. And we sure hope that the NDP will take the opportunity to debate this bill and help explain their position of why they want to keep parents in the dark, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

#### Fuel Tax and Affordability Tax Credit

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government made a great show out of their opposition to the federal carbon tax but has failed to cut their own provincial carbon tax that exists in the form of the Saskatchewan gas tax.

Mr. Speaker, the provincial carbon tax costs Saskatchewan residents more at the pumps than the federal carbon tax. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation prairie director stated, "Saskatchewanians are now paying two carbon taxes that they can't afford."

Mr. Speaker, all the power is in the Premier's hands. He could cut his provincial carbon tax today, saving residents up to 15 cents at the pumps. Why hasn't he done so?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, there was decisions and discussion that we had as government and we chose to do the Saskatchewan affordability tax credit instead of doing a dedicated payment of any one particular thing, which allowed flexibility for all of the families and the individuals. It was \$500 per individual. It could be up to \$1,000 if you had a couple that benefited from that tax credit.

But in going to the fuel tax, Saskatchewan does have an excise tax on fuel of 15 cents per litre. So 100 litres, that would mean that they would collect \$15. When comparing that to the federal government, however, which is what the member opposite was going to do, they also have an excise tax which is 14 cents per litre. They have their carbon tax which is also . . . Sorry, the excise tax is 10 cents. The carbon tax is 14 cents.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These excuses are not acceptable. Alberta, Ontario, and Newfoundland and Labrador have all cut their gas tax to alleviate pressure on residents at the pumps. Mr. Speaker, where is the Saskatchewan advantage?

This is an oil and gas country. We are the second-largest oil-producing province in Canada. And yet our people pay the third, Mr. Speaker, the third-highest province-wide provincial tax in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier again: why hasn't he axed his provincial carbon tax? And will he commit today, before this Assembly, to axe it?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Perhaps the member opposite isn't aware the excise tax has been on fuel, the same amount since 1993 before there was a carbon tax. So it's too cute by half for her to call it a carbon tax.

Going back to the federal government's taxes, it's 10 cents for an excise tax, 14 cents for their carbon tax. Plus then they charge GST [goods and services tax] on the fuel cost and all of those taxes. So the federal government taxes that same fuel at \$33.

If you go back to the \$500 that that individual would have received from this government, that they could spend at their discretion where they had pressures. And let's just say that they burned 250 litres per month of fuel and they applied it all to that, that would give them over a year of excise tax fuel free.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

#### Support for the Health Care System

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health care is a prepaid service that citizens have paid into all their lives, and when they're needed, it is not there for them. Mr. Speaker, the citizens that built this province deserve the services that they have already paid into. Family doctors are nearly impossible to find. Seniors can't stay in their communities because of lack of long-term care locally and expanded wait-lists.

Mr. Speaker, can the government explain how their management of Saskatchewan health services have left those that have given so much to this province without basic health care?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is proud to have made record and historic investments into health care, including into a massive hospital project in the city of Prince Albert, where that member's constituents, Mr. Speaker, would be utilizing.

\$2.4 billion in health infrastructure since 2007; 45 major health projects, Mr. Speaker, across this province; and one of the most aggressive health care human resource recruitment and retention policies right across this country here in Saskatchewan that is seeing benefits today, hiring more staff at facilities right across our province, including in that member's constituency. Thank

you, Mr. Speaker.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill No. 137 — *The Education (Parents' Bill of Rights) Amendment Act, 2023/Loi modificative de 2023 sur l'éducation (Déclaration des droits des parents)***

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 137, *The Education (Parents' Bill of Rights) Amendment Act, 2023* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 137 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Sorry. Said no? All in favour say yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Yea.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed say nay.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Nay.

**The Speaker:** — The yeas have it. Standing vote. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 10:54 until 10:55.]

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the . . . moved by the Minister of Education moved the first reading of Bill No. 137. Will all in favour please rise.

#### [Yeas — 37]

Moe	Hindley	Reiter
Harpauer	Duncan	Tell
Wyant	Makowsky	Marit
Bradshaw	Kaeding	Cockrill
L. Ross	Eyre	J. Harrison
Carr	Hargrave	Buckingham
Skoropad	Fiaz	Dennis
Lambert	Ottenbreit	Francis
C. Young	Steele	Bonk
Nerlien	B. McLeod	Grewal
Goudy	Keisig	Lemaigre
Jenson	D. Harrison	Domotor
Wilson		

**The Speaker:** — All those opposed please stand.

#### [Nays — 12]

Beck	Vermette	Mowat
Love	Teed	A. Young
Burki	Clarke	Sarauer
Conway	Bowes	Ritchie

**Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 37; those opposed, 12.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First reading of this bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, next sitting of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### Motion No. 3 — Funding for Public Education

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Ms. Conway.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kindersley. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Francis:** — To speak to the bill, Mr. Speaker. The motion, I'm sorry.

[11:00]

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

**Mr. Francis:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter the debate on the proposed motion, Mr. Speaker. The Ministry of Education is investing 3.1 billion into education this year alone. This government has built 60 new schools across this province, while the members opposite have shuttered them in their time. And we are ensuring going forward that parents have the right to be included, not excluded, in their children's education.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now proceed to government motions. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont. No? Sorry. We've got to deal with the motion, right? We'll deal with the motion. So all in favour of the motion say yea.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Yea.

**The Speaker:** — Opposed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to . . .

**The Speaker:** — Just wait. Just wait.

### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

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

#### Extension of Sitting Hours

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am going to shortly move the motion that really extends the hours for the Assembly and gives the opposition 40 hours to debate this bill and also changes the days of sitting such that we will have full opportunity to canvass Bill 137.

With that, I move the following motion, Mr. Speaker:

That the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly, for the conducting of legislative business and the sitting times of the Assembly and of committees shall be varied on an interim basis for the remainder of the third session of the twenty-ninth legislature as follows:

(1) That notwithstanding rule 6(1) and 6(2), the ordinary times for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly shall be as follows:

Monday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Wednesday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Thursday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Friday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Saturday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Sunday, October 22nd, 2023: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.

(2) That notwithstanding rule 14(2), the ordinary daily routine proceedings shall be as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday:

Routine Proceedings  
 Statements by Members  
 Question Period  
 Ministerial Statements  
 Introduction of Bills  
 Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Friday, Saturday, Sunday:

Routine Proceedings  
 Introduction of Bills  
 Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

(3) That notwithstanding rule 14(3), the order of business for consideration of the Assembly day by day after routine proceedings shall be as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday:

Orders Of The Day

Written Questions  
 Motions for Returns  
 Government Motions  
 Government Orders  
 Motions for Returns (Debatable)

(4) That notwithstanding rule 61, requesting leave to make motions under rule 61 is not in order.

(5) That notwithstanding the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly, no notice is required for government motions, including but not limited to a government motion for the first reading of a bill.

(6) That notwithstanding the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly, immediately after a bill has been read the first time, the minister of the Crown presenting the bill may move a motion, without notice or leave, for second reading.

(7) That rule 93(1) is not in order and has no force or effect. Further, if a suspension of a bill occurred under rule 93(1) prior to the effect of this sessional order, that the suspension shall be lifted immediately and have no further force or effect.

(8) That notwithstanding the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly — but still subject to rule 68 — debate on any bill before the Assembly, standing committees, or Committee of the Whole shall be limited to the hours set out herein. Once debate has reached the maximum hours allowed, or if debate has sooner concluded, no further debate or consideration of any motion, resolution or resolutions, clause or clauses, section or sections, preamble or preambles, title or titles shall continue, and such questions shall be decided without debate or amendment.

a. 33 hours of debate for the second reading motion and any amendments thereto;

b. 5 hours of debate on any clause, title, preamble, or amendment thereto in a standing committee or Committee of the Whole;

c. 2 hours of debate for the third reading motion and any amendments thereto.

That the provisions of this sessional order shall come into effect immediately upon its adoption and shall expire at 8 a.m. on October 25th, 2023.

I so move.

**The Speaker:** — Will the members accept the motion as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Normally I say when I stand that it's an honour to get up and speak to motions, bills in front of this Assembly. Today is a different day. And I think the matter that brings us here this week is lending to different feelings than it normally does while speaking in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the motion that the Government House Leader has specifically provided, let me be clear. And we've been clear from the get-go. We are more than happy to get back into this legislature to debate the issues that matter to Saskatchewan families. We are always happy for more question time. We are always happy for debate time. We take our role here in the opposition very seriously, Mr. Speaker. We also welcome the chance to discuss and debate the state of education in this province, and I will have more to say about that later I believe, Mr. Speaker.

But with respect to these rule changes that are happening now, and let me be very clear. I don't know if members opposite, what they've been told and what they've not been told with respect to how special sittings occur, what happens in them, what the rules are, what the rules aren't. I mean I'll admit I don't think very many of us have been around for a special sitting before, aside from the one that we had to do during COVID, Mr. Speaker. And many of us who were here remember that experience and the urgent and special nature that that situation lent to a special sitting.

And in that instance there was a meeting of minds, I would say for the most part, on both sides. There was work that the government needed to accomplish in order to facilitate that work, passing of the budget, for example. The opposition was willing to work with the other side to make that happen in a way that ensured safety for members at the forefront, Mr. Speaker. This one in particular we've questioned and we question time and time again the urgent nature that the government finds themselves in to put this legislation forward, to pass it in the way that they wish to in terms of the rule changes.

In a special sitting a non-designated bill doesn't have the typical maximum hours that we would see in a regular sitting. Usually there's a max 20-hour time limit for debating legislation. At that point the government can pass the legislation. There's no ability for opposition members, for example, to talk a bill into its death, for example. A special sitting, and in this bill, there isn't that 20-hour limitation period. However there are lots of tools in the rule book as they exist that a government can use to end debate, to finish debate, Mr. Speaker. These rule changes, these limitations are not necessary to pass the legislation that this government wants to pass. They already have the tools in their tool box to pass this legislation.

I would argue they didn't need a special sitting to pass the legislation. There's no reason that I can see that they've been able to articulate that this bill couldn't have been introduced during the fall sitting like regular legislation where it gets debated out over the course of weeks, months. We come back in the spring. We pass that bill, similar to the Sask first Act, for example, Mr. Speaker, that we saw about a year ago.

The importance of that and why we value that here in the opposition at the very least, clearly not on government's side anymore, is the time that that allows for public input, the time it

allows for experts in the community, in the wider community, for citizens, for parents, for students, for experts who've lived this to be able to look at the legislation, scrutinize it, take an eye to this bill and provide government with feedback.

I ask government members, why do they want to limit the ability of the public to see this legislation prior to it being passed? That to me doesn't make any sense at all. I do not understand. We do not understand why this legislation could not be introduced during the fall sitting.

Now typically a special sitting would be called, Mr. Speaker, if there was some sort of crisis going on. If it's economic, if it's you know, wartime, Mr. Speaker, these are examples of when a special sitting is typically called. Sometimes you see it with respect to labour issues, so economic, I would say, Mr. Speaker. I asked government members what is the economic or public safety crisis they're trying to address with this special sitting. And again, why could this legislation not have been introduced in the fall so it could have gone through its regular scrutiny process that we're not seeing here?

And now we're seeing, in addition to the fact that they've called a special sitting, government passing or will be passing . . . Because we're in the opposition, we understand that we're not going to win this vote. Government can change the rules in this way that they've done without consent from the other side, which is what we are seeing.

And we are seeing the government, despite having the tools in their tool box that they need already to pass this legislation through a special sitting, change the hours of sitting so that, well they can say, oh we're giving extra time. We're giving 40 hours. You want scrutiny? I'll give you scrutiny. Instead of 20 hours we'll give you 40 hours. That's great, Mr. Speaker. But we're going to give you those 40 hours over the course of, you know, three or four days.

[11:15]

To call that extra time, extra scrutiny, is an absolute joke. And it's a farce and it's a slap in the face to democracy in this province, Mr. Speaker. Especially, especially, Mr. Speaker, when we're talking about a piece of legislation that is going to use the notwithstanding clause to trample on the rights of Saskatchewan children, Mr. Speaker. This isn't just a regular bill. And again, this isn't just a bill that's dealing with some sort of public safety or economic crisis. If it is, you know, have the courage to say that. It's to trample on the rights of children, Mr. Speaker.

This is an important discussion and an important debate that the wider public is having, Mr. Speaker. This government is seeking to limit that debate and limit that input. And I can't see a reason why other than for political purposes, Mr. Speaker. So we are seeing a government willing to call a special sitting in an unprecedented way, Mr. Speaker — thanks for making history, guys — changing the rules of procedure, ripping up our rules of procedure, Mr. Speaker, even though they don't need to pass this bill — way to go, guys — and doing it for the purposes of using the notwithstanding clause to trample on the rights of Saskatchewan children.

That's not us speaking hyperbolically, Mr. Speaker. The Children's Advocate, the independent officer of this legislature whose job is to ensure that we are thinking about these things as decision-makers, we are thinking about how decisions that happen in this Chamber affect children in this province, she's already said she has concerns about this bill.

The government's response to that is to limit debate on this bill to a few days. This bill will pass, Mr. Speaker. As much as we wish it wouldn't in the opposition, this bill will pass regardless of these rule changes. But also with these rule changes, this bill will for sure pass by the end of next week. We understand that. We know that.

All we would at least, at least ask from this government is that they at a minimum allow as much time as possible for scrutiny on this bill by the wider public for feedback, for input, for consultation, as they would allow the boilermaker amendment Act, for example, Mr. Speaker. Do they think that that bill deserves more scrutiny than this bill, Mr. Speaker? It defies logic and it defies reason unless, Mr. Speaker, unless, Mr. Speaker, you think about it from the mindset of a government that is solely, singularly focused on partisan political gain, Mr. Speaker. Then it all makes sense.

And don't get me wrong. Like I said, we're happy to have more question period. We will continue to bring people into this gallery who are sick and tired of a Sask Party government that isn't listening to them, Mr. Speaker. We will keep doing that work, Mr. Speaker, because they certainly aren't. They're not listening, Mr. Speaker.

They're listening to the member from Sask Rivers. That's for sure. They laugh when we say that but boy, did they jump fast when they saw the Lumsden-Morse by-election results, Mr. Speaker. They laugh again but boy, if any of them were door knocking during those by-elections, they would have heard from families like we did, who are struggling to make ends meet, who are working multiple jobs just to pay their bills, Mr. Speaker. They would have heard from the seniors who are scared because they don't know where they're going to be living in six months because the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] refused to take over their facility. This government refused to take over their facility through the SHA, Mr. Speaker.

But boy, you don't see any quick action on that from these guys, Mr. Speaker. Not at all. We do not agree with how the Sask Party is using their majority to ram through what is half-baked legislation in a ham-fisted and undemocratic way, Mr. Speaker.

Like I said before, this sitting, this passing of the legislation in this expedited way is historically used very rarely and in very emergent situations. This government cannot explain to us what the emergency is. In fact I don't think we've still heard the Premier give an example of when a parent learned about their child using a pronoun at school that they were not happy with. They still haven't provided that example. So I ask, where is the emergency? What is the emergency that you're trying to address? It's absolutely, wildly disappointing. Any deadline this government has given themselves to pass this bill is arbitrary. It's for their own gain, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, we do have the injunction decision that happened. The

injunction decision is of course temporary, pending the outcome of the court action, Mr. Speaker. I ask this government why they want to pre-empt court action. Is it because it serves their own personal, political interests, Mr. Speaker?

And since I'm on my feet, I do want to say something about that Premier's tweet and his comments about judicial overreach, Mr. Speaker. What a disgraceful thing to say, Mr. Speaker. That is a shot across the bow to our rule of law in Saskatchewan. It's questioning the authority of our judiciary, and it's absolutely inappropriate. And every member opposite should understand the importance of what that type of language does to judicial confidence and our democratic system in this province, especially every member of the bar that's a Sask Party MLA.

As I've said, these rule changes will stifle debate. It'll prevent the public from weighing in. It'll prevent any sort of thoughtful, considerate consultation on this bill.

Let's go through the motion in a little bit finer detail, Mr. Speaker, because the Government House Leader went through it fairly quickly while he was reading it. I want government members to fully understand what they're standing by in this special sitting, Mr. Speaker. The rule changes will allow for the . . . I'm just reading subsection (1) here, Mr. Speaker:

That notwithstanding rules 6(1) and 6(2), the ordinary times for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly shall be as follows:

Monday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Wednesday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Thursday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Friday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Saturday: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.  
 Sunday, October 22, 2023: 9 a.m. — 11 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, and it goes in more detail about what will be occurring on those days, and I'll touch on that in a little bit more later, but I wanted to express the reason behind this, the extension of time, like I've said, the purpose behind it for government members is to . . . well they're saying that they will allow for 40 hours of debate, which they will say is more time than we're typically allowed. That'll be about, you know, ish, 12 hours of debate each day on that bill.

And I'll say, in this province debate is a loose term, Mr. Speaker, because I'll be very interested to see if members opposite engage in this so-called debate, Mr. Speaker, if members opposite are going to stand up and speak at all on this bill or if it's just going to be opposition members speaking on this bill.

Because you see if you look, if you look at *Hansard* in other provinces for example . . . I was over the course of the summer looking at some *Hansard* in Alberta about a piece of legislation that they had. You actually see government members, opposition members engaging in something I would call a little bit more like debate than you see in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. You see government members standing and speaking on adjourned debate during the bill, and then you see opposition members standing and speaking on adjourned debate. And sure, you see more opposition members than government members speaking, but



you do see some government members actually speaking on this bill, Mr. Speaker.

The point of why I was talking about the hours in particular, Mr. Speaker, is we'll get through those 33 hours in about three days or so. So this government is saying that — like I said before, the boilermaker Act should have more time with the public before it gets passed, before this pronoun Act, Mr. Speaker — that three days is enough time for the public to look at it, to think about its impacts, its consequences, unintended, intended consequences, and then allow it to go to a vote, Mr. Speaker. That's what this government is saying with these hour changes.

We are here to work. We will work. But what we all need to understand, what that government needs to understand is the impact that this will have on the public's ability to be able to participate in their democratic right to review legislation, to provide feedback to their government, to provide input to their government, especially — and I cannot emphasize this enough — especially when you're talking about a bill that will use the notwithstanding clause to override the rights of children, Mr. Speaker.

So like I said, you know, you've got several days here. But those 33 hours are not going to take several days, as I am assuming that they're not going to allow us to adjourn debate on the bill, you know, any times or 10, 12, 13 times, so that it does allow for the course of days, weeks, months like this government usually allows during regular sitting for regular bills. Again I ask, what's the rush? Where is the urgency? Why the need to act so quickly? I mean this government doesn't act quickly on a lot of other things, and we saw that today in question period, Mr. Speaker. Maybe if this member from Sask Rivers starts talking about it, we'll see the government act quickly on it.

Now again, let me go back to the government motion:

That notwithstanding rule 14(2), the ordinary daily routine proceedings . . . shall be as follows . . .

I think there's a typo here, Mr. Speaker. It says:

That notwithstanding rule 14(2), the ordinary daily routine proceedings in the shall be as follows . . .

Maybe that's right. I don't know.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday:

Routine Proceedings  
 Statements by Members  
 Question Period  
 Ministerial Statements  
 Introduction of Bills  
 Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Interesting, Mr. Speaker. There are two things missing here. Introduction of guests won't be happening anymore. Petitions won't be happening anymore during the special sitting once these rules pass. I mean talk about limiting public input into the works of this legislature, Mr. Speaker. Talk about limiting public engagement into this legislature, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're

seeing in these rule changes, Mr. Speaker.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday:

Routine Proceedings  
 Introduction of Bills  
 Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Interesting. Now question period is gone, Mr. Speaker.

(3) That notwithstanding rule 14(3), the order of business for consideration of the Assembly day by day, after routine proceedings shall be as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday:

Orders of the Day  
 Written Questions  
 Motions for Returns  
 Government Motions  
 Government Orders  
 Motions for Returns (Debatable)

(4) That notwithstanding rule 61, requesting leave to make motions under rule 61 is not in order.

Mr. Speaker, so they've removed the ability for any member, including the members of the opposition, to make any sort of emergency motion while we're in special sitting. Huh, talk about limiting input and ability for us to do our job, Mr. Speaker. Of course we're going to speak out against these rule changes, Mr. Speaker.

[11:30]

(5) That notwithstanding the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly, no notice is required for government motions including, but not limited to, a government motion for the first reading of a bill.

So these rules are suspending the ability for us to have any notice of a government motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So typically . . . And we saw that with this government motion, as well as the bill, that the rules require that there be two days' notice prior to the introduction of a motion, including a bill. That's what we saw here. That's why we're talking about this right now. Government gave two days' notice.

Now with the suspension of the rules, and there is no knowing . . . There's no limitation to what this entails. It's not like, yes, we have this bill in front of us right now, but for the duration of this special sitting the government can move any government motion on anything, any bill on anything, without notice, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If that's not undemocratic, I don't know what is, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

(6) That notwithstanding the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly, immediately after a bill has been read the first time, the minister of the Crown presenting the bill may move a

motion, without notice or leave, for second reading.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a clear example of the government trying to limit as much time as possible for this bill to be in front of the public eye before it goes to a vote. Typically, as you well know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if a bill is read the first time, it then will be adjourned until the next day, the next sitting day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which provides I mean at least 24 hours between the moment a bill is introduced and the moment a bill goes for debate for all of us as legislators, as well as the public, to actually see the bill before debating it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This removes that at least 24 hours, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the rules. And again we have this bill. We're talking about this bill, but it's not limited to the bills that have already been presented. It's not limited to the motions that have already been presented, Mr. Speaker.

Talk about undemocratic. Talk about a government trying to ram through legislation with as little oversight, with as little public eye as possible, Mr. Speaker. The reason why we do not support . . . Let me be very clear. The reason why we do not support these rules, the reason why I'm talking right now in the way that I am is we, in the opposition, fully believe . . . Well if we believe in democracy first of all, we believe in the ability and the importance of the public to have as much time as possible to see this bill, to analyze this bill, to provide feedback on this bill.

I'm not just doing this because I love talking in the Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I don't actually very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I fundamentally believe in the importance of stakeholder engagement in legislative drafting, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I fully believe in the importance of stakeholder engagement, of public engagement in reviewing bills, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we in the opposition are committed to doing what we can — which we understand is limited in the best of days, will be even more limited with these rule changes — to providing the public what this Sask Party government is not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is as much time as possible to look at this legislation before it gets passed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's why we're talking about this government motion right now. That's why we don't support it, and that's why I'm talking on the floor right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Subsection (7) of the rule changes, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

That rule 93(1) is not in order and has no force or effect. Further, if a suspension of a bill occurred under rule 93(1) prior to the effect of this sessional order, that the suspension shall be lifted immediately and have no further force and effect.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is an interesting one. I'm going to speak to this a little bit. Now I do not claim to be an expert in the rules of procedure. I try my best. I lean heavily on those who came before me and the wisdom of veterans, the veterans who came before me as well as our staff.

And I want to give a shout-out to the staff member I work closest with, Mitchell Bonokoski, who works in our House services side of things, opposition House services side of things. We don't call it House services, but that's what I called it right now. He's an

amazing guy. I've talked about him before in this Assembly. He's smart. We work as a team, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And he does it all while navigating parenting a toddler, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I give a shout-out to him and I give a shout-out to his partner, Tyne.

But he loves the rules, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He loves the rules — huge fan of talking about procedure, a bit of a bigger fan than I am, to be honest, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I thank him for working with the Clerks as well, whom I'm forever in debt to, their wisdom and their knowledge and their ability to help guide me through my role, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But yeah, when Mitch is not doing rescue ops on Wascana Lake through his side job, side hustle with the navy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he's explaining to me this rule that government through this rule change is getting rid of, rule 93(1), the suspension of a bill.

With kudos to Mitch, he showed me the last time this bill or this rule had been invoked, and I would say the importance of this rule being invoked . . . What it would do is you can invoke suspension. It pauses essentially discussion on a piece of legislation for three days. Now why would that be used? I would say, again, in order to facilitate broader public consultation and discussion prior to it going on to its next stages, for example, or being debated further. It's typically, I would say, legislation that's of a controversial nature that requires further discussion.

Perhaps something that should be used in this instance maybe wouldn't have needed to be used in this instance, had this government, you know, taken this bill as seriously as they took the boilermakers amendment Act, and allowed it as many days as that bill, and gone through its regular legislative process from the fall sitting to passage in the spring sitting, Mr. Speaker. Three days for the public to at least see this bill would have been a little beneficial, I would say, in the eyes of the public.

The last time this rule was used was back in 2005, Mr. Speaker. It was the member from Indian Head-Milestone when he was in opposition, actually, and it was on, I will say, a controversial bill at that time, Bill No. 87, *The Trade Union Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read a bit of that member's speech into the record. I want government members to know truly what rules they're removing, what unprecedented take they are making by amending these rules today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he says . . . Trying to decide where to start. Start here. He says:

So, Mr. Speaker, as I say, there are grave concerns from the business community with this Bill. There are grave concerns by employees and employee groups with this piece of legislation. Employee groups that have been in front of the Labour Relations Board that have asked for decertification and been denied will no longer have the opportunity to resubmit their decertification wishes to the Labour Relations Board without waiting a certain period of time.

I mean, the window to apply for decertification is very narrow as it is. And then when you look at this piece of legislation that denies them an extra year, it could be up to three years before an employee organization has the right or

ability to go in front of the Labour Relations Board to decertify. So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, it's not just business that we're hearing concerns from. We're hearing concerns from employee groups as well, Mr. Speaker.

I think the biggest issue though, on this piece of legislation, is the fact that we don't know who's calling for it. The minister won't stand in her place and tell us who's wishing for this Bill to go forward.

We talked to labour groups and we talked to businesses, and neither have said that they had any consultation with this government prior to this Bill being introduced in November, Mr. Speaker. And I don't believe that this Bill should go any further until proper consultation has taken place.

And until the employers and employees of this province know the impact that this Bill will have on their work sites, Mr. Speaker, I would, pursuant to rule no. 74 [as it was at that time], I hereby request that proceeding on Bill No. 87, An Act to amend The Trade Union Act be suspended for three sitting days.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the rule that this government is removing for the purposes of this special sitting. A rule that was used in 2005, Mr. Speaker, by the member from Indian Head-Milestone, now the Minister of Labour, to provide for more opportunity for public consultation, public dialogue on a bill that was controversial at that time. A bill that, in his words, they had questions about who was calling for the legislation, and they had questions about who was consulted on it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sounds familiar on this side, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again I say — and we've said this; members of the media have said this — they cannot tell us who has been consulted on this. We know who hasn't. They still haven't told us who called for this. And that's an interesting conversation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I mean, as we all know, it was reported in the media and everyone was following quite closely the litigation that had occurred. And the government's own affidavit said that the Ministry of Education had received 18 letters, 7 of which were from parents, Mr. Speaker.

[11:45]

Yet we've heard the Minister of Education say in question period that his office alone has heard — well, it depends on the day — hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, millions, billions. Sometimes I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I'm trapped in an Austin Powers movie. It begs the question.

We've also heard the Premier say in media that that affidavit was wrong, which is quite a thing to say when it's your own government's evidence that's been submitted into court as fact, that you are now questioning the evidence that your legal team has brought forward on your own behalf. And now we have the Minister of Education saying multiple times that that affidavit was incorrect. It's quite a thing. It's quite a thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to see.

Oh yeah. Yeah, the math. The math . . . And my member, my colleague beside me, who I think did a very good job yesterday doing the math on what that statement from the Minister of

Education would mean in terms of actual volume per day of feedback they'd be receiving . . . I mean, 49 days since the introduction, it would be about 400 messages now, I believe I heard. Back to my point . . . That 400 messages a day, let me be clear, is what he's saying they've received.

Now again going back to my point, he's also said in question period that prior to the introduction, they've been working on this for a long time. They've been getting lots of consultation and feedback. Yet oddly, when that exact issue is part of the court application, you're not seeing any of that presented as fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You've got the legal team saying one thing, and you've got their clients, the government, saying something completely different, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Who are we supposed to believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Subsection (8) states:

(8) That notwithstanding the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly — but still subject to rule 68 — debate on any bill before the Assembly, standing committees, or Committee of the Whole shall be limited to the hours set herein. Once debate has reached the maximum hours allowed, or if debate has sooner concluded, no further debate or consideration of any motion, resolution or resolutions, clause or clauses, section or sections, preamble or preambles, title or titles shall continue, and such questions shall be decided without debate or amendment

- a. 33 hours of debate for the second reading motion and any amendments thereto;
- b. 5 hours of debate on any clause, title, preamble, or amendment thereto in a standing committee or Committee of the Whole;
- c. 2 hours of debate for the third reading motion and any amendments thereto.

That the provision of this sessional order shall come into effect immediately upon its adoption and shall expire at 8 a.m. on October 25th, 2023.

There's your arbitrary deadline, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the government: October 25th. They don't want this to mess with their Throne Speech day, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again I say, why does this bill need to be passed before October 25th, 2023? What's happening on that day that the government is so concerned about? What if this decision would have . . . And I wonder because we don't know, the public doesn't know when a court is going to render their decision. What would this government have done if this decision would have come out on October 20th? I imagine, based on the actions of this government, we would have seen an even more undemocratic move to pass this bill as quickly as possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again I ask the question, why can't this bill go through the regular process? Why wasn't this bill introduced in the fall to be passed in the spring? Where is the urgency that the Minister of Education claims exists, Mr. Deputy Speaker? As he said, you know, there are policies that are occurring in different places, that

sort of thing. What is the urgency? Where is the emergency here? Why this deadline? Why this limiting of debate?

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a lot that is emergent and urgent in this province that this government could have called a special sitting for but sure hasn't been moving very quickly on. Let's consider the crises facing Saskatchewan people where the government did not deem necessary to convene an emergency legislative sitting and introduce sweeping changes to our rule book to get legislation passed as quickly as possible because, boy, it's an emergency that's happening here . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yeah, COVID, that was one. Yeah.

But how about the cost-of-living crisis, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Do they think that this is not something that's happening in Saskatchewan? Talk about out of touch. Talk about old and tired. Talk about not listening, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I mean we hear from it. We hear about it.

Time and time again we bring it, the concerns to the legislature. People who are worried about how they're going to pay their grocery bills, which keep going higher and higher. How they're going to pay their gas which, you know, the member of Sask Rivers brought up in question period today — gas is not getting any cheaper, Mr. Deputy Speaker. How they're going to pay their mortgage bills. Don't see the government saying boo about that.

While at the same time this is a government that had no problem passing over 30 tax hikes and fees on the backs of Saskatchewan residents, while at the same time downloading responsibility, more and more responsibility onto municipalities. So at the same time, we're also seeing our property taxes go up each and every year. That is a Sask Party government failing — let me be very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We also have the lowest minimum wage in the country, but that is not an emergency according to these Sask Party government MLAs. We have families right now in this province . . . You can go to the food bank in Regina, you can go to the food bank in Melfort, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you will see families there who work full-time who cannot pay their bills and rely on the food bank to feed their families, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But that's not an emergency according to this government. That doesn't necessitate an emergency sitting, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's not a problem in the eyes of this government. They can slow walk the solutions to that one, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What about the real crisis in our classrooms and the failings in education, Mr. Deputy Speaker? No emergency sitting for that. And I thank my colleague from Saskatoon Eastview for doing a bang-up job of hearing from the needs of parents who reach out to him, teachers, educators concerned about the state of their schools, concerned about students having classrooms in the hallways.

I heard over the course of the summer, a school where there is a teachers' lounge that's been converted to a classroom. I had actually my old high school basketball teacher approach me at an event, Mr. Speaker. Basketball coach, math teacher approached me at an event. I was not a good basketball player. It's actually a sad story. I got in in grade 9, didn't make the cut in grade 10 — tragic end to my very short-lived basketball career.

**An Hon. Member:** — Too many fouls.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Too many fouls, yeah. I'm always elbows up. You know me.

She came to me at an event to say that her granddaughter is in kindergarten. She's a retired teacher. She's been retired for a while now. She goes and volunteers in her granddaughter's kindergarten class three days a week because that kindergarten teacher has 31 kindergartners — 31 — and one EA [educational assistant]. So she saw the need. She stepped up. She volunteers her time so that these kids can have the supports that they need.

Can you imagine? I cannot fathom trying to navigate the chaos that is 31 six-year-olds. I can barely handle the chaos that is my one four-year-old, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is like kudos, kudos, kudos to teachers in our province, kudos to those kindergarten teachers in our province. They are truly doing the Lord's work. But kudos — and shame on this government — to the families, to the parents who have to volunteer their time because this government cannot provide the supports that these students need so that they can succeed and thrive in our province. That's not an emergency according to this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The hole in the roof at the school in Saskatoon that shut down class and daycare. I'll tell you, when my daycare shuts down, it blows up my whole life. I feel for those parents and I feel for those kids when their routine gets disrupted because of this government's failure, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

June 6th, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That was the day members from this Chamber, opposition members, government members went together, toured that school. June, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They saw with their own eyes the problems in that school — tarps hanging from the rooftop, flooding, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is acceptable in the eyes of this government. That is not an emergency, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Two hundred parents have reached out to this government — 200. Not 7 of 18. Two hundred. But boy you don't see the government acting very quickly on that, do you, Mr. Deputy Speaker? You sure don't, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We have seen through this government an erosion of supports in the classroom which has resulted in a worsening of graduation rates. Don't even get me started on the worsening of Indigenous graduation rates in this province. But boy, that's not an emergency according to this government. That's not something that needs to be acted on quickly according to this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Kids wanting to use a different pronoun is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They want parents to be more involved in the classroom and to know what's going on in the classroom. We do too, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We would like them to know about the erosion of supports in the classroom because of this government, the overcrowding of classrooms because of the failures of this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have a high school in my riding that had to remove one of its . . . Oh my goodness, what's it called, the class? I took it actually. I was very lucky to have taken . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, when you get . . . The AP classes, there we go. The advanced placement classes. I took English and calculus in grade 12. Did

not get the credit for English for university. That's okay. Got the credit for calculus though, which saved me from ever having to take a math class again, which was for my personal benefit for sure.

[12:00]

These are important opportunities for students in our province, Mr. Speaker. Those AP classes have been taken away in some of our schools. I hope government members realize that under their watch, Mr. Deputy Speaker, none of this is considered an emergency according to this government.

We have seen, just this fall, student fees go up under this government. Seven hundred dollars. One parent alone had \$750 in fees that they had to pay, Mr. Speaker. This is all well, you know, during a cost-of-living crisis. Families are living paycheque to paycheque. They're doing what they can to make ends meet. They're wondering about how they're going to pay their groceries, how they're going to pay their bills, how they're going to pay their mortgage.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the highest mortgage arrears in the country, but that isn't an emergency according to this government. That doesn't require urgent action according to this government. Again I say, maybe when the member from Sask Rivers starts talking about it, boy, maybe these guys will jump pretty fast into action.

You know, I was looking today, because I remember the day that the government announced this policy back in August, I believe. That same day I read that in the news and then I read that the day before in Broadview there had been a domestic murder-suicide, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yet another Saskatchewan woman lost their lives to intimate partner violence.

I remember this because the first thing I thought when I read the government's announcement was, wow, they're really focused on the important stuff, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have the worst domestic violence rates in the country, second-worst sexual assault rates in the country, the worst intimate partner homicides in the country. And the day after we lost another Saskatchewan resident to intimate partner homicide, this government didn't say a thing about it. This government announced this pronoun policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Talk about out of touch, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when most of us have at least one degree of separation from somebody that they know that have been affected by gender-based violence if they have not been affected by it personally, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Talk about out of touch, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And what did they do when they announced that policy? They removed third-party educators from the schools. Do you know who that includes, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Sexual assault centres. Do you know what they were teaching, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Healthy relationship education. The Ministry of Justice funds them to do that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Now the Ministry of Education is preventing them from doing that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they are still preventing them from doing that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Are they even talking to each other around the cabinet table, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Preventative education is one of the most important ways that we

can lower the rates of intimate partner violence in this province, yet this government has decided to remove those educators from the classroom. Why? For what purpose? Shame. And I don't use that lightly.

Instead of seeing emergency action, government moving quickly to seriously address this issue, calling a recalled sitting so we can pass legislation to address this issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is what this session's being recalled for. Talk about out of touch, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

About our collapsing health care system, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . And I give a shout-out to my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, who's done great work . . . Fairview, Saskatoon Fairview. Apologies. Saskatoon Riversdale pre-2020. Our critic for health, Saskatoon Fairview. My mind went back a few years, I guess. I'm sort of time-travelling here. Shout-out to my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale . . . Fairview, who's done great work on this. It's a big file, for sure. I don't even fully understand the amount of work that that ministry does, I will say, and the critic does in trying to keep track of all of the feedback, all of the concerns from citizens who come to our offices, who come to that member's offices, who's reached out to government and had no response.

The true failure is in our health care system, Mr. Speaker. We have the longest surgical wait-list in the country, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member did a fantastic job yesterday talking about the waits for mammography services in this country. I have someone close to me who is currently waiting for an MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] because she has a potentially cancerous cyst in her body, in her ovaries. How long is the wait for that? Six months. Six months, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The private system? No different, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The anxiety this government puts people through because they can't get a handle on the health care crisis in this province is appalling, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Under this government's watch, life expectancy has dropped two years. In our modern society, we should never see this happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yet under this government, Saskatchewan citizens are living two years less than they were 16 years ago.

Oh boy, but you don't see them jumping up real fast and acting urgently to solve that problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's no emergency sitting, we need to recall the legislature, we need to completely change the rules, let's rip up the rule book, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because we need to address the fact that citizens in this province are living two years less average than they were prior, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we know what part of the problem is. We've got an addictions crisis in this province. We have a mental health crisis in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You can see it. You can see it. You only have to drive through any community in this province at this point to see the devastating toll that addictions are having in our communities, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But boy, you don't see this government recalling the sitting, ripping up the rule book to address that issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We have a housing crisis in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you can see it. You can see it everywhere — but boy you could really see it in Saskatoon and Regina — while at the same

time Sask Housing has one in four units sitting empty, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Regina's downtown was literally on fire, due in part to this housing and addictions and mental health crisis, right when this government was pushing forward with this pronoun policy. That's all they were talking about, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But you don't see any urgent action on that front, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Ask your constituents, what are you worried about right now? And boy, I'll be shocked if you don't hear affordability, health care, mental health, addictions, housing, public safety, Mr. Deputy Speaker — but not a peep in terms of urgent action, in terms of recalling the legislature on any of those fronts, do you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It's a real, real shame from this government that any of the crises that I'm faced with, any of these multitude of issues that I know we're all hearing about aren't being addressed. Singularly focused on passing this bill.

And I say again, why the urgency? Why on earth is this bill not going through the regular process? Why isn't it being introduced in the fall for passage in the spring? We can disagree, and trust me we disagree on the contents of the bill, the purpose behind the bill. The harm, I don't think there should be a disagreement. I think it's fact the harm that this bill will cause to children, especially vulnerable children exploring their identity, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But boy, we should all agree on the importance of this legislature and the importance of the work that needs to be done here.

And like I said, you know, there are reasons perhaps why a condensed bill deliberation time, I will say, is warranted. Of course there's times when we both consent to legislation, we get the urgency of it, we all pass it very quickly in a day. Like I said, there are times when perhaps in war, you know, perhaps in like economic crisis times when a truncated session, sitting, a truncated bill scrutiny process is appropriate. This, you would think we would all agree, this by all stretch of the imagination is an important piece of legislation. This cannot fall under wartimes, economic crisis, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They cannot give a reason for why this bill has to be passed before October 25th, Mr. Speaker.

And like I said before, they cannot point to a single family who's had a personal experience of a child wanting a different pronoun name, pronoun, and them not being informed of it and then being upset about it. Even if they could, I would argue, that still doesn't warrant an emergent, truncated passage of a bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is not an emergency. On what planet can they argue that this is an emergency, Mr. Deputy Speaker? This is why we're fighting these rules. This is why we disagree with these rules.

[12:15]

Members opposite should be ashamed of themselves for going through this process the way they have. Even, like I said, let's put aside our differences on the contents of the bill. Let's put that aside. But honestly, to rip up the democratic process in this way, to rip up the parliamentary process in this way, to pass a bill in less than a week, to purposely limit the ability for the public to be able to review and consult on legislation is very disappointing,

Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I suppose they would argue perhaps that the . . . and I think I've heard perhaps the Premier saying this in the media, that the decision, Justice Megaw's decision is the reason why this bill needs to be passed and needs to be passed so urgently. This is their response to Justice Megaw's decision. I will say, Justice Megaw is a very well-respected judge. And this is why I get very upset when I see what the Premier has said in his tweet. "Judicial overreach," as a term, is a dog whistle. It's Trump politics and we should not allow it in this province.

Here's what Justice Megaw said about this policy. This is what caused the government to jump and act in the way that they have. This is what has caused the government to amend the rules in the way that they have. He says . . . This is around, "Is there likelihood of irreparable harm . . ." And this is his conclusion on that portion. It's part of the test in an injunction application. He says at paragraph 98 . . . Actually I'm going to start at paragraph 97, why not:

At this stage of the inquiry, I am not asked to weigh the evidence submitted and determine which is to be accepted and which is to be rejected. It may be the Court is asked to engage in that process when the substantive issues of the *Charter* challenge are considered [at a later date]. Rather, what the court is asked to do here is to determine whether on the whole of the evidence tendered, UR Pride has established a risk of irreparable harm to the individuals affected by this Policy.

On the whole of the evidence, I am satisfied that those individuals affected by this Policy, youth under the age of 16 who are unable to have their name, pronouns, gender diversity, or gender identity, observed in the school will suffer irreparable harm. As indicated, counsel for UR Pride has identified that it is expected this is a "minority of a minority" of individuals. This identification was not disagreed with by counsel for the Government. That therefore means that a very limited number of individuals in the school system in Saskatchewan may be irreparably detrimentally affected by this Policy, and a further limitation of that number will be affected by an inability or an unwillingness to obtain parental consent to entertain these issues. The harms identified by the three experts tendered by UR Pride illustrate quite forcefully those risks of irreparable harm.

Counsel for the Government made reference to an assertion that a lack of enforcement of the Policy would enable a 6 year old child beginning elementary school to ask and obtain the right to be identified by a name, pronoun, or identified by a gender other than that assigned at birth. Respectfully, I find this argument lacks persuasiveness and to be without foundation or basis on the materials that are before the court on this application.

There is no indication in the materials that any students as young as six years old are looking to engage in this discussion. Furthermore, there is no indication that teachers or any other educational professionals either have been asked or will be asked to engage in this discussion, and there is no indication that these teachers and other educational

professionals or other professionals within the school system such as nurses or guidance counsellors would even consider engaging in the discussion with a child of such tender years. Counsel for UR Pride characterized such assertions as little more than “fear-mongering.” I do not adopt that submission, but I do query why it has been raised in an evidentiary vacuum.

I’ll pause there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and comment on that a little bit.

This again goes to our comments about the evidence that was tendered in court versus, I would say, the evidence that’s being tendered in this Chamber by the Minister of Education. Now there are different rules in terms of what can be said in the Chamber versus in a courtroom, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Now things that are said in a courtroom as evidence must be backed up with fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not necessarily in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So when I hear the Minister of Education tell me that the ministry has received hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, billions, trillions, I point to the evidence that was used by this government in court to defend their actions.

Because obviously this government wanted this injunction application to fail. They’re going to put their best evidence forward. They’re not saving evidence for later, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They didn’t do it. They couldn’t do it. They couldn’t show any example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they would have if they could because they didn’t want this injunction application to pass. Obviously they’re going to put their best evidence forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Courts have a higher threshold for what can be said than this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Justice Megaw goes on to say:

As has been referred to previously in these reasons, I am also mindful that the Government appears to continue to advance a requirement restricting the use of pronouns for students under the age of 16 without parental consent, in the absence of any legislative or . . . legal authority.

This is what they’re using. They hear this. They don’t hear, we need to consult more; we need to figure out . . . [inaudible] . . . say, okay, well let’s put some legislative or legal authority in.

He goes on to say:

Again, the prohibition on the use of pronouns is not part of the actual wording of the Policy regarding these individuals. As a result, it would appear the Government is intent on restricting such an action in the absence of any legitimate authority in this regard. This observation will require further argument at the hearing on the substantive constitutional issues. At this stage the pronoun restriction does not appear to have governmental authority.

They heard that and they said, we’ve got to recall this sitting. We’ve got to get that legislative authority and we need to pass it as quickly as possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They didn’t see this decision and think, oh, let’s take this back. Let’s consult further. Let’s consult a bit more broadly. Let’s figure out if we’re doing the right thing here.

He goes on to say:

This observation strengthens the concerns regarding irreparable harm. There was no indication given whether the word “pronoun” was either inadvertently missed by the drafters of the Policy, or somehow ought to be read into the wording of the Policy. Simply put, it is not there now. The attempts therefore to restrict or control a student’s use of particular pronouns is unsupported, potentially, by any legitimate governmental action.

Again they heard that, and boy, they jumped quickly, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not for the rising rates of intimate partner violence. Not for the cost-of-living crisis, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not because it is nearly impossible to get a family doctor in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. No, that’s not why they jumped, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think it’s fair to also go into the balance of convenience and public interest considerations that the judge, that Justice Megaw spoke about in his decision as well. He says:

It is at this stage that counsel for the Government directed the bulk of opposition to the granting of an interlocutory injunction in this case. It was fairly, and practically, observed that it is on this issue that injunction applications with respect to the *Charter* issues are ultimately determined. In that regard, it was asserted that UR Pride has misunderstood and therefore misrepresented what the Policy does. It was asserted that the existing *status quo* was a hodgepodge of policies and approaches to gender diversity.

We’ve also heard that from the Minister of Education in the last couple of days.

He further submitted that UR Pride’s *Charter* challenge was far from a “slam dunk” as he indicated UR Pride purports it to be. Finally, he submitted that the response to be accorded governmental action renders the granting of an interlocutory injunction inappropriate (perhaps unavailable) and the matter must await a final determination on the merits. Then, the Government argues, even if the governmental action is found to have been in breach of the *Charter*, the court can craft a specific and nuanced response to such a breach rather than simply impose the blunt remedy of a complete prohibition on such governmental activity.

I first review the Government’s position that UR Pride has misconstrued or misunderstood the Policy by arguing that it results in an “outing”, “mis-gendering”, “dead-naming” requirement. Rather, it has argued in support of the Policy that its overall tenor is to provide support to students [we’ve heard this from the minister too] who wish to engage in name, pronoun, or gender identity changes. That support involves the student’s parents, and those parents will only be contacted once the student is ready for such contact to occur. It is further asserted that UR Pride has mis-stated the Policy by suggesting there cannot be one on one conversations between students and teachers on the issues raised by the Policy, when there is no such prohibition in those conversations contained in the Policy.

I find that I am unable to accede to the Government's arguments that UR Pride has either misconstrued or misunderstood the Policy in advancing its arguments. UR Pride has not suggested in its materials or submissions that there cannot be one on one conversations between a teacher and a student regarding names and gender identity. Rather, UR Pride has simply relied on the wording of the Policy to submit that the teacher is unable to use the name or gender identity sought for by the student without first obtaining parental consent.

He goes on to say:

In terms of the argument regarding "outing", I understand UR Pride to be submitting that a young person under the age of 16 must engage in the choice of electing between being "outed" to their parents in order to obtain the necessary consent, or remain closeted due to an inability or unwillingness to seek that parental consent. It is the choice that the student must make due to the Policy and not to a mandatory "outing" requirement which UR Pride seeks to advance.

This is the decision that the government wants to change, to tear up the rules over, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is the decision that this government has decided requires urgent action, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again not mental health, not addictions. This. This decision.

[12:30]

It goes on to say . . . I can't remember if I read this paragraph:

It follows, that when considering the balance of convenience, I am unable to determine that UR Pride has mis-construed the Policy based on the material filed.

I think I already read this.

It advances the constitutional arguments based on the alleged violations of the rights of the youth as a result of the impact, in its entirety, of the Policy.

The Government then argues that the *status quo ante*, prior to the implementation of the Policy, was a mixture of different policies that was causing confusion with a cohesive approach to this very difficult issue. In support of this prong of the argument . . . [there's parts of the affidavit] and the parental consent provided, as well as the affidavit of Corrine Pirot who speaks to her interaction with parents when dealing with a student presenting with this difficult and complicated issue. Reference is made similarly to the affidavit of Nicholas Day.

However the Government has made no attempt to explain what the actual policy of the Ministry was, nor what different policies were being enacted at the school division level.

We also haven't heard much about that in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What a good and important reason to have as many days, weeks,

months as we have for the boilermaker amendment Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for this legislation so that school divisions who have been tackling this issue can look at it and determine how their policies have fit in this, how it doesn't, what are the problems that could result from this legislation.

What a really great reason to treat this bill as seriously as we treat the boilermaker amendment Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's almost as if they don't want the public to be able to do that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's almost as if they don't want the experts to weigh in. But boy, experts have been weighing in already, Mr. Deputy Speaker, anticipating this legislation. And boy, it's been a resounding chorus of concern is probably the nicest way I can put it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think I'm going to move on for now on to that topic of concerns that have been raised by experts and why it's important to not change the rules so that experts like this one, like the Children's Advocate who's weighed in with concern but has not yet seen the legislation because it was just introduced an hour ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's the first time the public has gotten to see it. It's the first time opposition members have gotten to see it. I haven't gotten to see it yet because I've been busy talking about how terrible these rule changes are, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But the advocate did weigh in on the policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I think it's important to show what the advocate has said on this so far because it goes to our argument about why it's important for there to be as much time allowed on this legislation — in terms of days, weeks, months — as is allowed for the boilermakers amendment Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so that experts can weigh in and voice their thoughts, opinions, concerns.

She says, and this is in the policy review, *Use of Preferred First Name and Pronouns for Students* that was put out by the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth in September of 2023. She states:

The primary reasons cited by the ministry for the implementation of this policy have been to ensure parental inclusion and involvement in the education of children, including in the decision of young people to alter their name and/or pronouns within the school environment, and to standardize approaches across the province.

The advocate agrees that parental/guardian inclusion in education and relationships of trust between families and schools is essential to creating an educational environment in which the best interests of children are served.

The advocate recognizes the right of a child to be cared for and guided by their parents or legal guardians, as is acknowledged throughout the UNCRC. However it is critical that this be understood from a child rights perspective.

I'm going to read that one more time:

However it is critical that this be understood from a child rights perspective. Children are human beings with their own rights and legally recognized ability to make certain personal decisions in accordance with their maturity and



capacity.

I'll pause there for a minute. There is nothing in the policy . . . I haven't seen the bill yet, but this is why it would be good to allow some time to be able to scrutinize this bill on whether or not there is a mature minor exemption, for example, as you see in health care in some other pieces of legislation. Wouldn't it be important to have experts weigh in on that, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

She goes on to say:

The care and guidance provided by parents/guardians is of utmost importance to the growth and well-being of children, however, must be exercised in accordance with respect for the rights of children and their evolving capacities. Furthermore, as the duty-bearer under the UNCRC, the government has a legal obligation, as signatories to the UNCRC, to ensure the rights of children are respected, protected, and fulfilled within all child-serving systems.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, now the UNCRC [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child] that she's speaking about is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. I query government, I ask them whether they still support the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, or does that not matter to the government anymore? Or does it not matter when it serves their partisan political purposes, Mr. Deputy Speaker? That's my question.

She goes on to say,

From this foundation, the advocate had three objectives in undertaking this policy review: (1) the exploration of whether the rights of children and youth have been fully considered in the development of the policy; (2) whether requiring consent infringes upon the rights held by children under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018*, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the UNCRC, and Saskatchewan's Children and Youth First Principles.

Saskatchewan's own policy, this government's own policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

And (3) whether the government's worthwhile objective of parental inclusion could be achieved in a way that does not infringe on or unnecessarily limit the rights of the child under these laws and principles.

Now apologies to Hansard because I keep forgetting to say "quote" and "end quote" and I'm going to make their lives a little bit more difficult because of my absence. Apologies.

Now I'm going to skip to her conclusion, her recommendations. She states:

For the reasons cited in this report, the Advocate for Children and Youth concludes that the implied refusal to use the preferred first name and pronouns of a student under age 16 in the absence of parental guardian consent without a determination of the student's capacity to consent for themselves is a violation of their rights to gender identity and expression, contrary to law, and/or is improperly discriminatory. Provincial reliance on a broad commitment

to parental rights on its own does not override the rights of a child.

She then goes on to make two recommendations for the government to take a look at to amend.

Now I'll first start off by saying if this bill was going through the regular process — fall sitting, passage in the spring sitting — there would be time to be able to look through these recommendations, analyze them, and determine whether or not the government has in fact taken these recommendations back, used them in the creation of their bill that has just been introduced, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It would also provide the opportunity for the Children's Advocate herself to take the legislation, compare it with the policy, compare it with her recommendations, come forward to this government with another report on her recommendations, based on her earlier analysis. There is not going to be enough time for the Children's Advocate to be able to make a written report to this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Government wants this bill passed, and it will be passed in less than a week, absolute max, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again, we do not support these rule changes. We do not support these rule changes coming into effect today because we believe that it's important that the Saskatchewan people have the right to have as many days as possible to look at this legislation and to provide feedback to their elected representatives, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This government is trying to stop that from happening. They're trying to limit that from happening. That's for sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again I ask, why do they think it's more important that they get public feedback on the boilermaker Act than they do on this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker? That's why we don't support these rule changes. That's why we don't support these rule changes passing today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If this government would have had their way, this bill would have passed first day, second day. Who knows, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Like I said before, we understand this government has all the tools in their toolbox to pass this legislation. It will pass. We cannot defeat it. We cannot talk out the clock on it. We cannot kill a bill through what is known in the States as filibustering. We cannot do that here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Government has the tools they need in their toolbox, even during a special sitting, to call the question, so to speak, to end debate on a piece of legislation. They have that ability. They don't need to change these rules. Like I said before, they haven't given a logical explanation for why they needed to call a special sitting to pass this bill. But even though they've decided that, they still don't need to change these rules to pass this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

They are further limiting debate, further limiting eyes on this bill by doing this. They will continue to say 40 hours is twice the amount than regular bills, 40 hours double than 20 hours, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You're talking about 40 hours stretched over 12-hour days. That's what, four days? Four days of scrutiny on this legislation. Four days for busy families, busy parents struggling to make ends meet — trying to get food on their table, trying to make supper, get their kids to soccer — to take a look at this legislation and then to reach out to their elected

representatives on their feedback.

I again ask why? Why is this government so desperate to limit feedback on this bill? Why is this government so desperate to ram through this bill before October 25th? What's the deadline? Is it because of this injunction application decision? The substantive hasn't even been argued yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The substantive hasn't even been argued yet.

[12:45]

Like I said, there are a few different ways they could have reacted to this injunction application decision. They could have taken it seriously, taken the policy back, gone back to the drawing board, reached out, consulted with school boards, with SCCs [school community council] throughout the province, with parents more broadly, with students who have lived experience that should be valued and respected, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

That's not what they did. That's not what they did, Mr. Speaker. They announced again this was judicial overreach, that they're recalling the sitting to emergency pass legislation on this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That was their response to this decision.

I mean, that wasn't their response to the Children's Advocate Act and their concerns. It was the response to that portion of the decision that said this was done in the absence of legislation, not the portion of the decision that talked about irreparable harm, not the portion of the decision that said this government couldn't point to any issue, not to the part of the decision that talked about how this will be affecting the smallest portion of the province. It'll say a small portion of the province but a very important portion of the province, a vulnerable portion of the province of which this policy will have a massively detrimental effect on, Mr. Deputy Speaker. For everybody else, it won't affect them at all. For most of us, this policy won't change their lives. But for them — for them — it will. And for them is why the Charter of Rights and Freedoms exists. That's why its value is important, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'll tell you right now, with respect to the notwithstanding clause, I won't go into too much detail of it around here, that Allan Blakeney didn't anticipate, didn't expect, wouldn't agree, based on the writings that he's made and the speeches that he's made. Oh the member from Kindersley wants to speak for Allan Blakeney. I sure hope he's going to get up and speak on this bill once it's up for debate. I'd really like to hear his views on Allan Blakeney and the Charter. I'd really like to hear his views on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. Let's see if he can actually substantively speak to this bill. I'd love to hear his thoughts aside from his just chirping from his seat.

What I was going to say is that I do not believe that Blakeney, the drafters of the Constitution, the drafters of section 33, created section 33 so that government bodies could use it to trample on the rights of children, that government bodies could use it to trample on the rights of a very small population of very vulnerable children, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In fact, the Children's Advocate talked about how vulnerable this population is. In her report that I was mentioning earlier, she said:

In general, suicide is the leading cause of death among young people aged 15 to 24 years, and Saskatchewan often

finds itself at the top of the list in this regard. Transgender and gender-diverse youth, however, are at even higher risk than the general population, being over seven times [seven times] more likely to attempt suicide than their peers who identify with their assigned gender. A previous suicide attempt is one of the biggest risk factors for a later death by suicide.

Almost two-thirds of the transgender and/or nonbinary youth surveyed across Canada by the University of British Columbia in 2019 reported having self-harmed . . . and/or seriously considered suicide . . . within the past year. In the prairie provinces (i.e. Saskatchewan and Manitoba), 94 per cent [94 per cent] of the transgender and nonbinary youth surveyed reported experiencing an emotional or mental health concern lasting at least 12 months . . .

The prairie provinces had the highest rate of youth in Canada who changed schools or started homeschooling due to lack of support for their gender at school . . . Data specific to Saskatchewan shows that, among all students in Grades 7 to 12, 2SLGBTQ+ students felt the least supported and most isolated across the domains of family, friends, community, and school.

What does this government do in response to that? What does this government do when they hear that 94 per cent of the transgender and nonbinary youth in this province surveyed reported experiencing an emotional or mental health concern lasting at least 12 months? They alienate them further. They other them further, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Minister of Education likes to talk about mental health supports in the schools. And he seems to be saying that they're plentiful. Ample supports, I believe he said, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Does he really feel that there's ample supports and the supports that exist are sufficient if 94 per cent of transgender and nonbinary youth surveyed reported experiencing an emotional or mental health concern lasting at least 12 months, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

If two-thirds of the transgender and/or nonbinary youth surveyed across the province reported having self-harmed or seriously considered suicide, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was this government's response to that jumping into action? Creating a comprehensive, serious mental health strategy in this province? Particularly paying attention to the most vulnerable people, most vulnerable youth in our province? Nope. You see them recalling the sitting, ripping up the rule book, so they can ram through this policy.

This is a hard issue to talk about. And like with gender-based violence, I think, nearly all of us have a personal connection to the mental health crisis in our province. I think we've all experienced it, some more intimately than others, and I acknowledge that. I know that. Because of that, shouldn't a government be actively ensuring that everything that they do in every ministry is helping and not harming that situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Shouldn't they be following the do-no-harm approach? Shouldn't they be following the approach on the top of the door that Premier Brad Wall put up? Leave things better than you found them. I'm paraphrasing.

Let's ensure that we are helping and not harming. Let's ensure

that we are lowering this rate, not raising this rate. And how do we do that? I mean, we would say scrap this policy, but at the very, very least — at the very least, Mr. Deputy Speaker — give the public some time. Give the experts some time to look at this legislation, to provide feedback to this government; parents to look at this legislation, to provide feedback to that government, to provide feedback to these elected members, the constituents that we all represent in Saskatchewan; at the very least to allow students, to allow youth to provide feedback to the government. So at the very least, if this government is heck-bent on passing this legislation, that they do so with the least amount of harm possible, at the very least. That's what we're asking for.

Again, that's why we don't support these rule changes. That's why we don't support these rule changes passing today. It is important to our democracy to allow as many eyes as possible on this legislation for as many days as we can, understanding . . . We understand we can't stop this legislation, but we believe in the importance of public scrutiny and input in their democratic process, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Forty hours over the course of a few days is not what the public wants us to be doing, is not proper scrutiny on a legislation. Again, the Children's Advocate cannot draft and analyze a new report with recommendations over the course of a couple of days, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I feel like this is a very reasonable thing to state. I cannot believe I have to state these things.

Again, to members opposite, you already have the tools. They already have the tools in their tool box to pass this legislation during a special sitting. They do not have to do it this way. We do not have ability to defeat this legislation, but we believe in the importance of public feedback. We believe in the importance of public input. We believe in the importance of our democracy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's why we're standing up.

I know my colleagues are going to have a lot to say about this substantive bill. Even though again, like I said, this government has actively and will actively limit the ability for us to be able to get that public input, for them to get that public input, there's still a lot to say about this legislation. That's for sure.

Although we disagree with the bill, we welcome the discussion because we know how important this piece of legislation is. We at least know it's more important than the boilermaker amendment Act. I'll tell you that right now. Very important piece of legislation, sure, for a lot of people. Don't get me wrong. But it's also not using the notwithstanding clause to override the Charter rights of children, Mr. Deputy Speaker, last time I checked that piece of legislation.

I think for any government that's choosing to use the notwithstanding clause in any instance, that should be done thoughtfully, that should be done carefully, and that should be done with pause because it's a serious thing to do and it should not be taken lightly, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're talking about the foundations of our democratic system.

I'm not saying that the notwithstanding clause should never . . . there's no instance where it could ever be used. Don't get me wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again I don't support it being used to trample on the rights of kids. That's for sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But broadly speaking it should be done thoughtfully and

it should be done with consultation. To ram through a piece of legislation that does that in addition to everything else is absolutely disappointing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I know we can't stop these rules from passing eventually. I understand that. But we felt it was important to stand up for democracy, to stand up for the public's right to participate in their democracy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The time now being 1 o'clock, this Assembly stands adjourned until 1:30 on Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

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Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

**Hon. Tim McLeod**  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,  
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

**Hon. Don McMorris**  
Minister of Government Relations  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister Responsible for  
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs  
Minister Responsible for the  
Provincial Capital Commission  
Minister Responsible for the  
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

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

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

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

**Hon. Christine Tell**  
Minister of Environment

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