



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

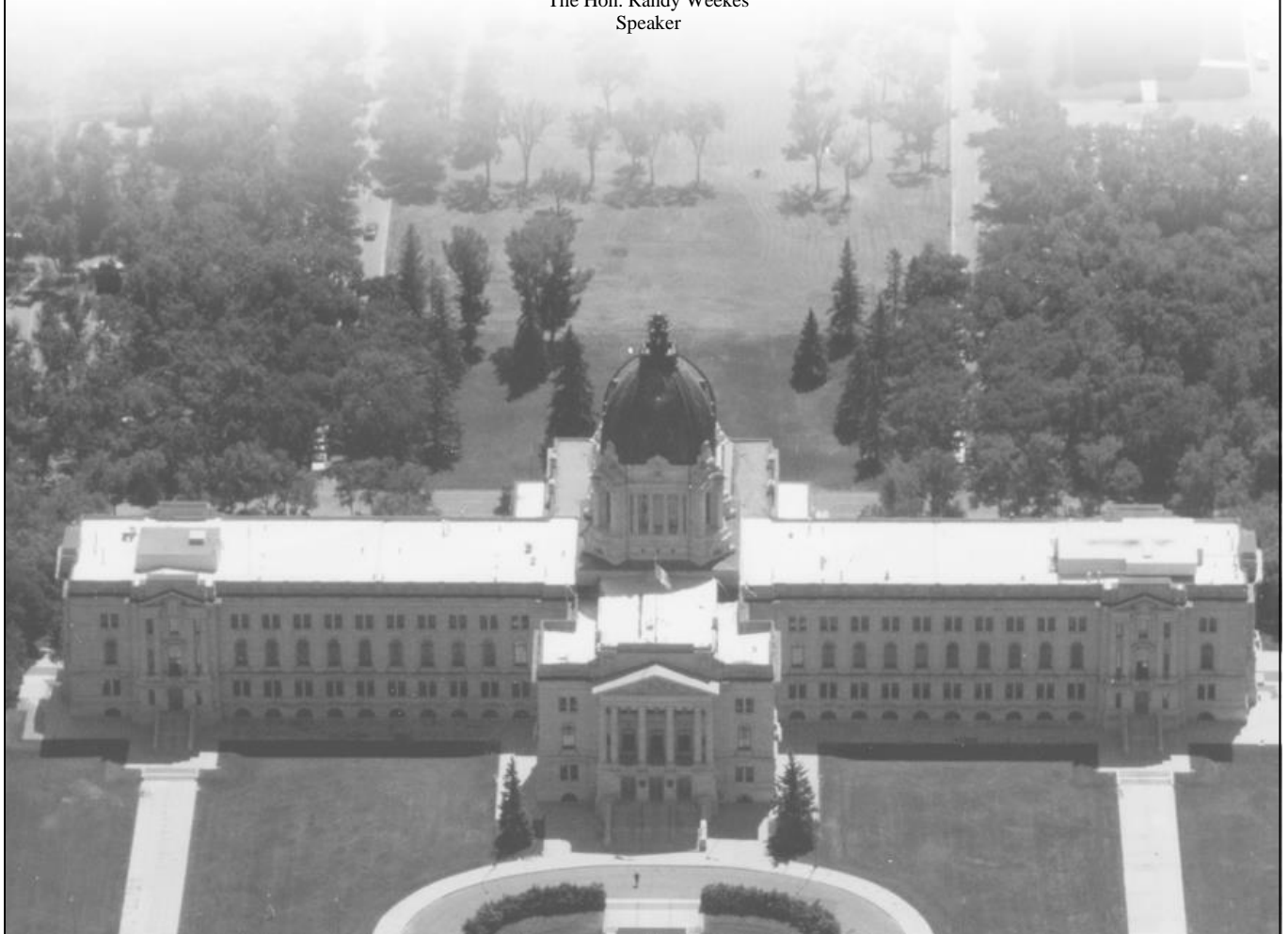
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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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

**Beck, Carla** — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

**Bonk, Steven** — Moosomin (SP)

**Bowes, Jennifer** — Saskatoon University (NDP)

**Bradshaw, Fred** — Carrot River Valley (SP)

**Buckingham, David** — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

**Burki, Noor** — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)

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**Cheveldayoff, Ken** — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

**Clarke, Jared** — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)

**Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy** — The Battlefords (SP)

**Conway, Meara** — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

**Dennis, Terry** — Canora-Pelly (SP)

**Domotor, Ryan** — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)

**Duncan, Hon. Dustin** — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

**Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn** — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

**Fiaz, Muhammad** — Regina Pasqua (SP)

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**Friesen, Marv** — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)

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**Grewal, Gary** — Regina Northeast (SP)

**Hargrave, Hon. Joe** — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

**Harpauer, Hon. Donna** — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)

**Harrison, Daryl** — Cannington (SP)

**Harrison, Hon. Jeremy** — Meadow Lake (SP)

**Hindley, Hon. Everett** — Swift Current (SP)

**Jenson, Terry** — Martensville-Warman (SP)

**Kaeding, Warren** — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

**Keisig, Travis** — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

**Kirsch, Delbert** — Batoche (SP)

**Lambert, Lisa** — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

**Lawrence, Greg** — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

**Lemaigre, Jim** — Athabasca (SP)

**Love, Matt** — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

**Makowsky, Hon. Gene** — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

**Marit, Hon. David** — Wood River (SP)

**McLeod, Blaine** — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

**McLeod, Hon. Tim** — Moose Jaw North (SP)

**McMorris, Hon. Don** — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

**Merriman, Hon. Paul** — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

**Moe, Hon. Scott** — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

**Morgan, Hon. Don** — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

**Mowat, Vicki** — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

**Nerlien, Hugh** — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

**Nippi-Albright, Betty** — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

**Ottenbreit, Greg** — Yorkton (SP)

**Reiter, Hon. Jim** — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

**Ritchie, Erika** — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

**Ross, Alana** — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)

**Ross, Hon. Laura** — Regina Rochdale (SP)

**Sarauer, Nicole** — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

**Skoropad, Dana** — Arm River (SP)

**Steele, Doug** — Cypress Hills (SP)

**Teed, Nathaniel** — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

**Tell, Hon. Christine** — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

**Vermette, Doyle** — Cumberland (NDP)

**Weekes, Hon. Randy** — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

**Wilson, Nadine** — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)

**Wotherspoon, Trent** — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

**Wyant, Hon. Gordon** — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

**Young, Aleana** — Regina University (NDP)

**Young, Colleen** — Lloydminster (SP)

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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 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

### Question of Privilege

**The Speaker:** — On May 17th, 2023 I received a letter from the Deputy Government House Leader outlining an alleged contempt of the Assembly. On May 18th I stated that our rules did not allow me to consider the matter as there were issues relating to the timing of raising the matter of privilege. As the third session of the twenty-ninth legislature has resumed, I am able to rule on the matter.

On May 3rd I named the Leader of the Opposition for refusing to apologize for a statement she made in the Chamber. The Deputy Government House Leader, in her letter of privilege, alleged that the Leader of the Opposition committed a contempt of this Assembly by later circulating a fundraising letter that “challenged the authority and dignity of the Assembly” by mischaracterizing my decision for political gain.

I find that the statements made in the fundraising letter do not call into question my ruling or my actions, nor do they reflect upon the character of the Chair. Furthermore no evidence suggests that the fundraising letter has caused any interference with our proceedings.

As I stated on May 18th:

The threshold of proof required for a Speaker to determine a prima facie case of privilege is extremely high. Contempt of parliament is the strongest possible indictment of a member’s conduct. There must be clear and convincing evidence to establish a case of contempt.

With a lack of any evidence, I find that the prima facie case has not been established.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Introduction of Pages

**The Speaker:** — I would like to introduce a new Page who is here today. I’d like to introduce Debby Uwagboi. Welcome.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Lumsden-Morse.

**Mr. B. McLeod:** — It’s my pleasure today, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to the House three guests in the gallery. First of all Mr. and Mrs. Rod and Anne Appleby, who I will recognize later in the members’ statements. Thank you for being here today. And also my best friend, my confidante, and most importantly my wife of 42 years as of yesterday. Thank you, love, for being here.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to fix the rural health care staffing crisis. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that recruitment and retention of health care professionals is a particular issue in Saskatchewan’s rural health care facilities. And it’s leading to closures across the province of emergency rooms, acute lab and X-ray disruptions, Mr. Speaker, that people find out about on Facebook. We know that health care workers and their families are valuable assets to Saskatchewan communities and local economies and ought to be treated accordingly.

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 fix the rural health care staffing crisis.

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

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition calling on the government to scrap the use of preferred first names and pronouns by students policy.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: queer and trans youth are at higher risk of homelessness, self-harm, and suicide when denied access to safe and inclusive learning environments; that the Ministry of Education’s use of preferred first name and pronoun by students policy directs educators to non-consensually out two-spirit, trans, and non-binary students under the age of 16 to their parents; that this policy is in direct contravention of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as it relates to gender identity.

This policy has been denounced by the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth. It was developed without public consultation, and is in direct contravention of evidence-based practices for supporting 2SLGBTQ+ [two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning plus] youth. I should know how to say that by now.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately reverse the Ministry of Education’s use of preferred first name and pronouns by students policy and instruct the Ministry of Education to publicly consult with educators, parents, students, and subject matter experts to develop and implement 2SLGBTQ+ affirming policy at all levels of our education system.

The undersigned reside in Unity, Regina, and Strasbourg. I do so present.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to restore direct rent payment for income support clients.

Yesterday was World Homeless Day. The purpose of this day is to advocate for improved policies and funding that can prevent and end homeless. This petition wants to bring to your attention that, unlike its predecessors, the SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program does not directly pay for housing and utilities and, since introduced, SIS has led to dramatic increases in rental arrears, evictions, and homelessness.

The Sask Party government was warned years ago that implementing SIS would lead to rental arrears, evictions, and homelessness and has ignored alarms from social workers, landlords, and housing and anti-poverty advocates. These unprecedented evictions and homelessness have led to people living in tents as we approach winter.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to restore direct payment of rent and utilities for income support clients.

It is signed by the residents of Regina. I do so present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan

**Mr. Steele:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, October is Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan. This month marks a very important time in our province — the time when farmers are wrapping up harvest, ranchers are gathering up the cattle and bringing in the feed, and our agribusiness continues to meet the demands of the consumer.

Mr. Speaker, our producers are the best in the world and continue to excel at every level. Whether it's technology, sustainability, increased production, we continue to show the world we are the best when it comes to agriculture. Mr. Speaker, we have what the world needs right here in Saskatchewan. As our producers, continue to work and keep up the global demand. And as well this government will continue to tell our story around the world, making sure that everyone knows that we have food, fertilizer, fuel, and everything the world needs.

It is my pleasure today on behalf of the government to thank our agriculture sector for continuing to be one of the best at building our province, protecting our lands. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all of us here today, the members, to take the time to thank the agriculture sector for their continued dedication in our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Tribute to Doug Wilson on National Coming Out Day

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On this National Coming Out Day I rise to pay tribute to a remarkable Saskatchewan resident — Doug Wilson, who made a lasting impact on our province.

Born in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, Doug Wilson was a writer, educator, human rights activist, and a tireless campaigner for equality and justice. Wilson taught in rural Saskatchewan before moving to Saskatoon as a graduate student, taking on the role of teaching and supervising first-year undergraduate students.

His journey was marred by countless hurdles and homophobic discrimination. As a result, Wilson's struggle paved way for queer and trans educators and students in Saskatchewan to teach and learn freely and proudly.

Wilson was one of the first openly gay candidates in a federal election, standing as a New Democrat in the 1988 general election. During the campaign he was diagnosed with AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome] and founded AIDS Action Now! Wilson passed away in 1992 at the age of 42.

As we remember Doug Wilson on the anniversary of his birth, October 11th, 1950, we cannot ignore the troubling reality of this government's attempts to roll back the very rights activists like Doug Wilson fought for.

Over the last few days, we have heard from hundreds of concerned residents who no longer feel safe in their schools, their workplaces, and their communities. As an opposition, we want to assure all residents we are committed to doing everything within our power to protect your rights and ensure that you feel safe and secure in your province. I'd like to ask all members to join me in celebrating National Coming Out Day.

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

#### Fire Prevention Week in Saskatchewan

**Mr. Grewal:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Fire Prevention Week in the province, which runs from October 8th to 14th. This week promotes fire safety and prevention. Testing smoke alarms, planning a fire escape, and practising fire drills are ways we all can help recognize Fire Prevention Week.

Mr. Speaker, this year's theme is "Cooking safety starts with you. Pay attention to fire prevention." Cooking is a pastime that brings families together. There are many great family memories made in the kitchen. The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency wants to remind you to be cautious in the kitchen and that unattended cooking is a significant fire risk. It's safer to stay in the kitchen while you are cooking. And don't leave the food unattended.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the fire departments around the province for hosting events to bring awareness to Fire Prevention Week. Many fire halls around the province will be

hosting open houses and barbecues this week to teach the importance of fire prevention. I ask all members to join me in recognizing Fire Prevention Week and to thank our fire departments for all they do for our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **TeensTalk YXE Provides Mental Health Resources**

**Ms. Mowat:** — October 10th is World Mental Health Day. World Mental Health Day serves as a poignant reminder of the inherent rights that every individual should enjoy when it comes to mental well-being. Seeking help should be easy, and the care provided should be consistently of the highest calibre.

Today I want to highlight Taryn and Pam Hutchings and TeensTalk YXE. TeensTalk YXE was founded in October 2022 by Pam and Taryn Hutchings, a mother-and-daughter duo from Warman, Saskatchewan. Taryn suffered an extreme mental health crisis beginning in August of 2022, which left her admitted 12 times to the in-patient psychiatric unit, totalling more than 90 hospitalized days. During the crisis, Taryn and Pam noticed a gap in services in Saskatoon. Where were the supports for youth struggling with mental health? Why wasn't there more education and accessible information?

Together they decided to create the community they desired. They created TeensTalk YXE. They've partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association Saskatoon, Evolve Counselling & Wellness, and Self Wellness Warman, and the goal is expanding mental health resources for teens in Saskatoon and area. They run a monthly sharing circle and have introduced a line of swag to get the teens talking about mental health. I picked up a T-shirt that says "I can do hard things" from ttyxe.ca.

On World Mental Health Day, I ask all members to join me in thanking Taryn and Pam for their community leadership and working to fill the very real gaps that exist for kids and families who need support in our community.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Lumsden-Morse.

#### **Recognition of Former Volunteer Fire Chief**

**Mr. B. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize former volunteer fire chief, Rod Appleby. Rod Appleby moved to the village of Caronport in 1979 to teach high school and at the same time began serving as volunteer firefighter. He became fire chief in 2008. Rod has worked to grow the department to ensure his team has the resources to respond to emergencies.

[13:45]

He was instrumental in developing rural emergency site numbers in the RM [rural municipality] of Caron. This innovative emergency planning was the first of its kind in Saskatchewan. Many RMs have since adopted this method of quickly identifying rural locations and providing emergency routing and site plan data.

Rod assisted with transitioning to a new fire chief in April of this year and has maintained his duties as a regular firefighter and first responder. In 2019 Rod received the Governor General's Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal. Caronport Fire and Rescue and surrounding municipalities recently held a gala to recognize Rod for his faithful service of 44 years. A common phrase that Rod will often say is "maybe I can help you," along with an occasional dad joke to ease the tension in traumatic situations.

I ask all members to join me in thanking Rod Appleby, seated by his wife and my wife, who does have a name — Marlie Beth — for his significant and continuing contribution to his community and our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Stanley Cup Comes to Davidson**

**Mr. Skoropad:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the town of Davidson hosted several special guests this summer. One is 32 years old, weighs 215 pounds, and stands 6 feet 4 inches tall, while the other is nearly a century older, weighs 37 pounds, and stands a mere thirty-five and one-quarter inches tall.

Mr. Speaker, on August 2nd the streets of Davidson were lined to cheer on Arm River's very own Brayden McNabb and catch a glimpse of Lord Stanley's Cup. Following the parade, a massive wave of supporters filled the Davidson AGT Centre to help celebrate this very special homecoming event.

Fans and well-wishers, both young and old, Mr. Speaker, wrapped around the entire rink, eager to meet Brayden McNabb of the Vegas Golden Knights and get a chance to touch the cup.

As someone who has not forgotten his roots, McNabb stayed for hours until everyone had an opportunity to share in the occasion. In fact, Mr. Speaker, one might suggest that Brayden's own NHL [National Hockey League] journey began when he was a boy and had the good fortune to touch the cup when it was brought home to Davidson by Tampa Bay's Cory Sarich in 2004.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder how many young people Brayden inspired that summer afternoon in Davidson. And so, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to help me to thank Brayden McNabb for remembering his roots and helping to inspire our Saskatchewan youth. Thank you.

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

#### **Increase in Building Permits in Saskatchewan**

**Mr. Francis:** — Mr. Speaker, yet again we have received more great news about our provincial economy. As you heard from the member from Lloydminster yesterday, we saw 13,700 new jobs created compared to the same time last year. And I'm pleased to report Saskatchewan's economy is once again leading the nation.

Mr. Speaker, today we have seen building permits increase not by 10 per cent, not by 20 per cent, no not 30 per cent, no not even 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker, but a whopping 59 per cent compared to the same time last year. This increase is also ranking us first among the provinces. Contrary to the negativity of those

members opposite, Mr. Speaker, what we see under this government is an economic record and a province to be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, it is clearer than ever that Saskatchewan is the best place to live, work, and raise a family. While the members opposite continue to talk down the economy, on this side of the House we'll continue to be optimistic about the future of this great province.

Mr. Speaker, these indicators tell the real story. We are seeing international investment that is leading to job creation right here at home. And, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly why we're seeing population growth that we have never seen before and most certainly we would never have seen that under those members opposite. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Effect of Cost of Living on Parents

**Ms. Beck:** — Now the Premier says that he wants parents to be more involved in their kids' education, that he wants them to join the SCC [school community council], to attend parent-teacher conferences, to contact their school board. I couldn't agree more. But how, Mr. Speaker, are parents who are working two and three jobs and struggling with the cost of living supposed to find the time to do that?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We're here in this sitting to pass a piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, a piece of legislation reaffirming what was already happening by policy or by practice in many school divisions across the province, and that is to include parents in their child's education. That's the belief of this government, is that we are going to provide every opportunity to include parents in their child's school, in their child's classroom, in their child's education, Mr. Speaker. We don't understand why the NDP [New Democratic Party] want to leave parents in the dark.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, we know that parents want to be involved in their children's education, and the Premier has recently figured that out. The parents who are working multiple jobs for the lowest minimum wage in the country and who are worried about putting food on the table need some time to be able to do that. If the Premier wants to empower parents to be more involved in their kids' classrooms, he should be working to make life more affordable. When will we see some urgent action from that government on that front?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Is it now the policy of the NDP that when there are two working parents in a family that they do not prioritize being involved in their child's education? Is that the policy of the NDP?

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the Premier wants to compare notes on being involved in children's education, I'm happy to compare records. But, Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government has simply lost the plot. Parents are worried, and they're worried right now. They're worried about finding health care. They're worried about their kids not getting the supports that they need. And they're worried, Mr. Speaker, they're very worried about paying their bills.

But instead of delivering what parents are asking for, this Premier has chosen to sow division. Again, how are parents who want to be fully engaged supposed to do that when so many are struggling just to put food on the table?

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Well certainly, Mr. Speaker, this government prioritizes not only the inclusion of parents in their child's education, in their child's life, of which we believe, Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of parents in this province are already doing. And we want to ensure that those avenues are open for continued involvement in their child's education, Mr. Speaker. We don't understand why the NDP's policy is to keep those parents in the dark. And that is their policy, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the affordability in the province of Saskatchewan, the strongest thing that parents and residents of this province can do, Mr. Speaker, is to ensure that they never again elect an NDP government in this province, a government where, a government where, Mr. Speaker, a family of four would start getting taxed at \$26,000 of their household family income.

Today under a Saskatchewan Party government, Mr. Speaker, that taxation starts at \$56,000, saving each and every family making between 50 and \$100,000 about \$2,500 in provincial tax each and every year.

With respect to becoming involved with their families, when it comes to the active family benefit of which I had the opportunity to join with the member from Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, to highlight at the lakeview civic centre, Mr. Speaker, the active family benefit is there specifically for families to involve their children in extracurricular activities — in band, whether it be sports, whatever that might be, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that promotes families and parents being involved in their children's education and their children's life, unlike the NDP who choose, Mr. Speaker, their policy is to keep parents in the dark.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, he's lost the plot again. But if he needs a list, there are so many things that this government could be doing today to address the cost-of-living crisis. They could offer relief on utility and tax hikes. They could fully fund school divisions and scrap the lunchroom fees. They could raise the minimum wage. But, Mr. Speaker, no. They're not choosing to do any of that. Instead, they're choosing to divide and to distract with the notwithstanding clause.

My question again is to the Premier. When will he finally deliver some cost-of-living relief to Saskatchewan families?



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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With respect to that, each and every year in our budget annualized is over \$2 billion in affordability measures, Mr. Speaker. I would point to the gas bills going down, as announced not too long ago, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to schools, under the NDP government there was education property tax revolts in this very building, Mr. Speaker, and in this province because of the underfunding of our school divisions.

Minimum wage has increased, on our commitment a number of years ago, just the other day, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to supporting families, Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to support the engagement of families in extracurricular and an active lifestyle, through incentives like the active family benefit, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to continue to keep taxes low on behalf of the families that ultimately live in this province.

And we are going to ensure that we are fixing policies that were already in practice in many of our school divisions, either by policy or by practice, Mr. Speaker, of involving parents in their child's education, unlike the NDP who continually stand up and say that they are going to keep parents in the dark when it comes to their children's education.

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

#### Response to Education Policy

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, we don't want to keep parents in the dark, but that government wants to keep kids in the closet. And that's what this is about.

Yesterday in question period, Mr. Speaker, while speaking on the topic of the proposed pronoun policy, the Education minister said, and I quote, we have heard from tens of thousands of people, parents who are supporting this policy. How many parents did he hear from exactly, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question because, Mr. Speaker, my minister's office alone has heard from thousands of people, whether that be calls or emails or letters, Mr. Speaker. I know that members on this side of the House in their constituency offices have heard from hundreds and thousands of people in their own constituencies, Mr. Speaker.

At the end of the day, the policy that we've put forward, the legislation that we're going to be introducing tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, it comes from Saskatchewan parents. This is based in supporting Saskatchewan parents, being involved in Saskatchewan families. That's what this policy is about, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why the members opposite want to keep parents in the dark.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — And again I don't know why this government wants to keep kids in the closet. Mr. Speaker, it's a simple question for the minister. Yesterday it was tens of thousands, today it's hundreds or thousands or he's not sure. Let's simplify. How many parents did he hear from?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from all of the thousands of parents and people in this province that I've heard from, that members on this side of the House have heard from, Mr. Speaker, again, you know what they had in common? Nobody wanted to be less involved in their child's education.

That's what this policy is about, is ensuring that as children navigate difficult conversations, difficult decisions, Mr. Speaker, that the right for parents to be involved, the right for parents to be included, it's included in there, Mr. Speaker. That's what our legislation is all about, Mr. Speaker. That's why we're moving forward with it. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Still no clear answer from that minister, Mr. Speaker. But if we're being charitable, let's say 20,000 as tens of thousands. So 18 letters before they announce the policy, seven of which were from parents. There were 49 days between the release of this policy and yesterday's question period. Hoo, that new minister has been busy, Mr. Speaker. That means there must be an average of at least 408 messages a day every day, seven days a week, Mr. Speaker.

It strains credulity, Mr. Speaker. Did the minister receive more than 400 messages a day every day on this policy asking this government to strip kids of their Charter rights?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member opposite for the question. We have been busy, Mr. Speaker. We've been busy listening to Saskatchewan parents, not just over the last 49 days, but over the last number of months and years, Mr. Speaker, we've heard.

I hear from members on this side of the House regularly, Mr. Speaker. They may be meeting with constituents on another issue, Mr. Speaker, and the topic of involvement in their child's education comes up. That's what's important to parents and families across this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this policy and what it means has been absolutely torqued by this NDP opposition, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're not saying that children can't make decisions around changing names or pronouns, Mr. Speaker. What we are saying though is before that's going to be recognized by a school division, parental consent is required. Mr. Speaker, that's including parents in education. The NDP members opposite want to keep parents in the dark.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — We don't want to keep parents in the dark. We don't understand why this government wants to keep kids in the closet, Mr. Speaker. This minister has a problem keeping his facts straight.

Here's a quote from the day this minister was sworn in: Cockrill said he has heard from parents who did not know that their child was going by a different name or a pronoun at school. New Health minister Everett Hindley said he has not heard a similar story from a parent.

And we know that the Premier couldn't provide a single example of this when he was asked on the radio last week. So who are we supposed to believe, Mr. Speaker — the Premier, the Minister of Health, or that new Education minister who's really struggling right off the hop?

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

[14:00]

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, you know who we can believe and you know who this government does believe, Mr. Speaker? Saskatchewan parents, Saskatchewan families who want to be more involved in their child's education.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, this policy, this piece of legislation — which, by the way, we haven't even seen yet because they denied its introduction in the House yesterday, Mr. Speaker — this policy is about involvement of parents in children's education. That's what parents want in this family. It's what families want in this province, Mr. Speaker. That's why we're moving forward with this. The members opposite want to turn that light switch off and keep parents in the dark.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — We don't know why this government is trying to keep kids in the closet. We support parental involvement, a bill to support parental involvement.

Is this bill, Mr. Speaker, going to address the one in four children living in poverty in this province? Is this bill going to address the lack of mental health support that parents so desperately want for their kids in school? Is this bill going to address the collapsing roof at the École française in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker? Is this bill going to address the fact that parents out there are working multiple jobs, unable to make ends meet, who don't have time to watch their kids grow up? Mr. Speaker, is that what this bill is going to address?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Mr. Speaker, what this bill does address is parents' request in this province to be involved in their child's education. As I stated yesterday, Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has stated, as the previous minister has stated, there's numerous things that already require parental consent in our schools, Mr. Speaker — field trips, administering medication, Mr. Speaker.

Why would parents not be included in such important and crucial decisions as a child potentially choosing to change their name

and pronoun, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, that's what this policy is about. It's about connecting parents and families and supporting Saskatchewan families. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Conway:** — Mr. Speaker, the Education minister says that tens of thousands of parents have asked for this bill, Mr. Speaker, but he needs to get his story straight. He's telling stories that the Premier, that the Health minister can't corroborate. His math doesn't add up, and he's failed his first test.

And this matters, Mr. Speaker. It matters. This is supposedly the justification for this government recalling the legislature to invoke the notwithstanding clause on a matter a judge says will cause irreparable harm to our youth. Those are the facts. So when will the Education minister get his straight?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cockrill:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about facts, Mr. Speaker, let me bring some facts to the table around this policy, Mr. Speaker.

As the Premier said earlier and as I've indicated in media interviews, these policies were already in place explicitly or in practice, Mr. Speaker, in numerous school divisions around the province.

So are the members saying what was already in place in numerous school divisions is not good for the rest of the province, Mr. Speaker? That doesn't make any sense at all, Mr. Speaker. What we're doing with this policy is we're taking policies that were already in place — again, explicitly or in practice — in school divisions and making that consistent across all 27 school divisions, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that's a pretty reasonable approach.

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

### Access to Mammograms

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Regular mammograms are a crucial tool in early breast cancer detection. Women in Saskatchewan between the ages of 50 and 75 are recommended to get a screening mammogram every two years, but experts in the US [United States] and Canada have recently started calling for the at-risk range to be expanded to women in their 40s.

A 40-year-old woman in Saskatchewan couldn't get a screening mammogram if she wanted to. Will the minister follow expert advice and lower the minimum eligible age for regular mammograms to 40?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We can take a look at this, can have the discussion with our officials in the Ministry of Health. Mr. Speaker, just on this topic of mammography services here in the province of Saskatchewan, I

can inform the House that there are currently eight locations in Saskatchewan that provide mammography services, and additionally the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] has a mobile unit which travels to 40 communities across this province to offer these services.

We're working very hard with our partners in the SHA and with the Ministry of Health to make sure that we're maximizing all the resources that we currently have and ensuring that we have strategies in place to improve mammography services right across this province. And on this particular issue we'll have discussion with our officials about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, breast cancer is the second-leading cause of death for women in Saskatchewan. We lose over 100 people a year. Hundreds more are put through invasive, life-altering, and expensive treatment because it wasn't caught in time. Why is the minister taking a wait-and-see approach to the lives and well-being of hundreds of Saskatchewan women?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to cancer care in this province — the diagnosis, prevention, diagnosis and treatment — it is integral for us as government and for our health care providers to ensure that we're providing all of those services as quickly as possible in order to save lives.

Mr. Speaker, we've been working to enhance the services that we have across Saskatchewan, whether it's for mammography, whether it's for prevention, whether it's for early detection and treatment, Mr. Speaker, at a number of our hospitals across this province. Mr. Speaker, I can inform the House that advanced diagnostic mammography services are provided at the Pasqua Hospital in Regina and Saskatoon City Hospital in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, again we work very closely with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. This is a priority for us as a government to make sure that we're always looking at how we can improve and enhance services for patients that are diagnosed with cancer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — I can't fathom how the minister hasn't yet looked at this, Mr. Speaker. It shows where they value women's health. And we know we've seen a track record, Mr. Speaker, from this government of not valuing women's health.

Mr. Speaker, not only is that minister not expanding access to mammograms, he's reducing it. In 2016-17 there were over 38,000 mammograms performed across the province. In 2022-23 there were only 28,000, Mr. Speaker. That's 10,000 fewer mammograms. It couldn't be further from what the minister is saying right now, Mr. Speaker.

Ten thousand chances to save lives. Why are we not seeing urgent action from the minister to increase screening mammograms from across the province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I detailed some of the steps that we currently have taken and the services we do have offered in this province when it comes to breast cancer prevention, detection, and treatments, Mr. Speaker, and where we offer these services, making sure that we can offer that as close to home as possible for women right across Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, we continue to make enhancements to this very important area of health care. And, Mr. Speaker, in order to help maximize the availability of mammography services right across our province, we have a number of strategies in place such as a target of recruitment of medical radiation technologists in this year, Mr. Speaker. We've increased the number of training seats in that particular field by 20, Mr. Speaker, so that we can train more health care workers in this very valuable area of our health care workforce to make sure that they are providing the service that we need to women across this province when it comes to breast cancer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, their strategies are leaving Saskatchewan women behind. There's been no increase in services. There's been a decrease in 10,000 screening mammograms, Mr. Speaker, 10,000 in a year. How are we not at least back up to pre-pandemic levels?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As in all areas of health care, we are working to reduce wait times that are present right across this province, whether it's for surgeries and whether it's for cancer, and making sure that we limit those and make it so that people can access the care that they need as quickly as we can.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I said previously, we've had a number of initiatives we've put in place to make sure that we're offering these mammography services to women right across our province. But we know that there's more work to do, and through the ministry and through our partners with the SHA and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, we'll be working to enhance those procedures and those initiatives and detection programs as well, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we can get people the services that they need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Life Expectancy and Provision of Health Care

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, Stats Canada recently released the latest numbers on life expectancy. Saskatchewan is trailing behind the national average again. That's not new. We've been living shorter lives than the average Canadian for two decades now. But now we're going backwards, Mr. Speaker. Since 2017 Saskatchewan life expectancy has actually decreased. Our lives are two years shorter.

When will we see urgent action from this government to turn this

around?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a number of areas within the health care system where we have made some significant investments and advancements to improve care for people right across this province, Mr. Speaker.

Whether it's for women that are faced with breast cancer or other individuals facing other life-threatening complications across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we have made some significant investments into capital in this province, into hospitals, into long-term care facilities, into the construction of new urgent care centres in our province, and to human resources in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Over the past 25 months, 86 family physicians and 139 specialists have been recruited to Saskatchewan, for a total of 225 more physicians, Mr. Speaker. These are significant numbers just in that one area alone. And we have other successes as well, and we are going to continue to do that work to make sure that we build the very valuable health care workforce that we have in this province.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — So I guess the minister is fine with our life expectancy dropping, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are going backwards on life expectancy. That is a fact. With all the advances in science, in medicine, in care around the world, we are living shorter lives now than we were 16 years ago.

The Sask Party government has already driven up the cost of living, the cost of PST [provincial sales tax], and the cost of power rates. Will the minister admit that this tired and out-of-touch government's approach is now costing us years of our lives?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the opposition chooses to ignore some of the significant investments that this government has made into communities right across this province to improve life expectancy, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a new hospital for mental health in North Battleford. The Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, which did not exist when those members were in government. Mr. Speaker, a new integrated health centre in Shellbrook, a new LTC [long-term care] in Swift Current, a new hospital in Moose Jaw, upgrades and investments into the provincial laboratory, a hospital in Humboldt that the members opposite never got a chance to finish — well didn't even start that actually, Mr. Speaker — a new health facility in Moosomin, addictions treatment beds for youth right across this province, Mr. Speaker. I could go on and on.

And these are a number of different investments. And I would just argue, Mr. Speaker, where would this province be without those investments, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — This is not a time to be cute, Mr. Speaker. Two years, two years of our lives being lost, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Health seems to not care about that at all. To simply talk about his investments is embarrassing, Mr. Speaker. People are dying under his watch. It's been 17 years that they have been in power. What are they doing to address this, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Mr. Speaker, this government has made a number of investments into health care. And I just started to go down that list, Mr. Speaker. We have had a number of significant investments into health care across this province, Mr. Speaker.

A little over a year ago we launched a very, very aggressive health human resources four-point action plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain health care workers, Mr. Speaker, which have had benefits in hiring staff right across this province here in Regina, in Saskatoon, in Prince Albert, in rural communities and remote communities right across this province, Mr. Speaker.

Just one example, Mr. Speaker: 250 new, permanent full-time positions in health care. Over 200 of those have already been filled, Mr. Speaker, in communities right across this province. And I would dare the opposition to go into those communities where they've hired these staff and tell them that that doesn't matter, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask leave to move a motion regarding the provision of 40 hours of debate on Bill 137 and modification of the sitting times and dates.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Leave is not granted.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. J. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:16.]



# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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