



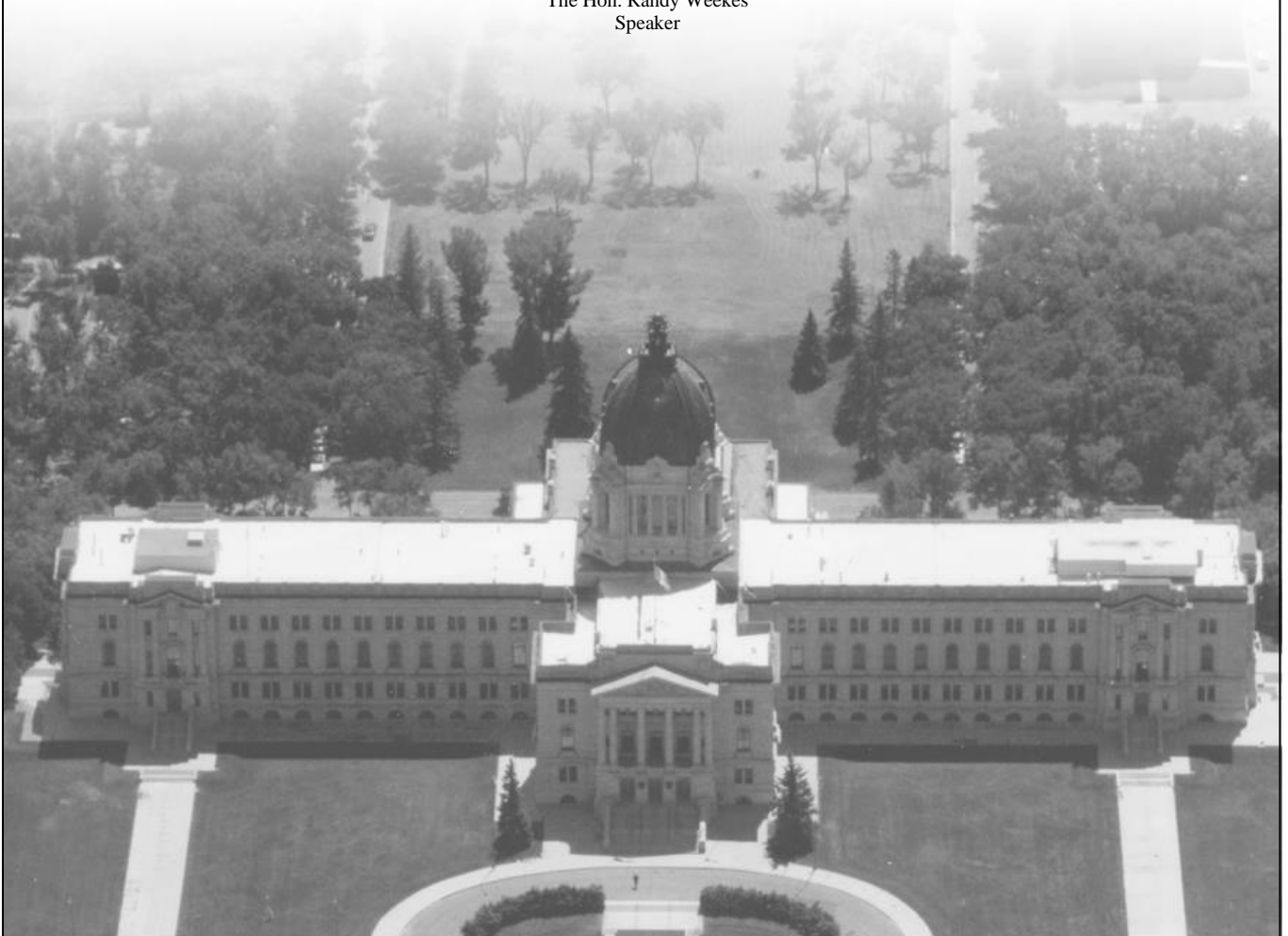
FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

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



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
4th 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

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Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)	Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)
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Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)	Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
Friesen, Marv — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)	Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)	Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)	Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP)
Hargrave, Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Harrison, Daryl — Cannington (SP)	Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)	Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)	Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
Kaeding, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)	Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)
Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	

Standings

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker.....	4623
Ross, L.	4623, 4624
Teed.....	4623, 4624
Eyre.....	4624
Young, A.....	4624
Hargrave.....	4625
Sarauer.....	4625
Clarke.....	4625

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mowat.....	4625
Buckingham.....	4626
Teed.....	4626
Young, A.....	4626
Sarauer.....	4626

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Saskatchewan Agriculture Student Scholarship Recipients

Harrison, D.....	4627
------------------	------

Remembrance Day Reflections

Wotherspoon.....	4627
------------------	------

Individuals Inducted into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame

Cheveldayoff.....	4627
-------------------	------

File Hills First Nations Police Service

Sarauer.....	4627
--------------	------

Funding for Second-Stage Shelters

Fiaz.....	4628
-----------	------

Shaunavon Shadows Vie for Provincial Title

Steele.....	4628
-------------	------

Honouring War Veterans

Carr.....	4628
-----------	------

QUESTION PERIOD

Hospital Capacity and Provision of Emergency Care

Beck.....	4628
-----------	------

Hindley.....	4628
--------------	------

Government Attendance at Conference of Parties 28

Beck.....	4629
-----------	------

Reiter.....	4629
-------------	------

Settlement of Lawsuit with Brandt Industries

Beck.....	4630
-----------	------

Hargrave.....	4630
---------------	------

Conway.....	4630
-------------	------

Reiter.....	4630
-------------	------

Parking Services at Regina General Hospital

Sarauer.....	4631
--------------	------

Hindley.....	4631
--------------	------

Crime Rates and Policing Services

Wilson.....	4632
-------------	------

Merriman.....	4632
---------------	------

Government Priorities and Fiscal Management

Wilson.....	4632
-------------	------

Harpauer.....	4632
---------------	------

Reiter.....	4633
-------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 148 — *The Film Content Information Act*

Eyre.....	4633
-----------	------

Bill No. 149 — *The Franchise Disclosure Act*

Eyre.....	4633
-----------	------

ROYAL ASSENT.....

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Access to Reproductive Health Care and Abortion

Mowat.....	4633, 4643
------------	------------

Friesen	4635, 4642
Teed.....	4637, 4642
Buckingham	4638, 4643
Sarauer (point of order)	4639
Carr (point of order).....	4639
The Deputy Chair of Committees (point of order).....	4639
Conway	4640, 4642
Ross, A.	4641
Keisig	4642
McLeod, B.	4643
Nerlien	4643
Skoropad.....	4644
PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS	
Regulation of Legal Firearms Possession	
Bradshaw	4644

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Today in my gallery I would like to introduce Nulee Menegbo who has recently joined my staff as a senior administrative assistant. Nulee is celebrating her birthday today.

Seated next to Nulee is her mother and role model, Victoria Menegbo, wife to the late Deebom Barikor Menegbo. Victoria is a fearless woman of God, instilling faith, integrity, and compassion to her children. Victoria works at the Regina Pioneer Village as a continued care aide.

Alongside Victoria are Dumsira and her husband, Beya Ngoy, sister Korle, and brothers Legbo and Menedum, the apple of his mother's eye. Nulee would also like to recognize her eldest brother Ton-Bari, younger sister Aleelo, and bonus sisters Benny and Pop-sira.

Please join me in welcoming them to the Legislative Assembly.

Also joining us today is Nathan Chay. Nathan joined the Legislative Assembly informational technology branch as a programmer analyst in June. Nathan is a recent graduate of the University of Regina with a Bachelor of Computer Science degree.

Seated with Nathan is Holly Schafer, acting principal director, IT [information technology] services.

Please join me in welcoming them to the Legislative Assembly.

I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request for extended leave.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in the Speaker's gallery, I'd like to introduce to you and through you, welcome extraordinary individuals here today from the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and inductees from the newly enshrined class of 2023. Joining us today are executive director, Erin Stankewich; Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame president, Trent Blezy; former president, Robb Elchuk.

And with them today are two inductees from the 2023 class who have made numerous contributions to sport in the province. Bernadette McIntyre from Bethune is a championship curler and has been serving the province for decades by volunteering and providing her expertise to numerous boards and committees. To

name just a few of her achievements, Bernadette has been part of the committee for the 2008 Scotties Tournament of Hearts, three Tim Hortons Briers, the 2001 Canadian Olympic curling trials, and the Canadian Wheelchair Curling Championships in 2016. Bernadette was the first female president of the Saskatchewan Curling Association and has been a trailblazer for women in sports.

We are also honoured to have Lorne Lasuita here today. Originally from Wynyard, Lorne has made numerous contributions to baseball, volleyball, gymnastics before making his mark in the provincial multi-sports. As part of Team Saskatchewan mission staff, Lorne has played an intricate role in numerous competitions on the local, provincial, national, and international stages, including serving as the volunteer administrating officer for the Team Canada mission staff at the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens. In 2023, Lorne's leadership and contributions were recognized through the creation of the Lorne Lasuita Saskatchewan Games Athletic Award. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to congratulate these individuals on their awards and thank them for their dedication and service to our province.

I'd also like to thank Erin, Robb, Trent, and their staff for the important work they do at the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and the work they do every day. There are currently 527 individuals and teams installed in the Hall of Fame, and collectively they represent 52 different sports and almost 150 communities throughout Saskatchewan. The province's history, its growth, its hardship, its faults, its achievements — they're all mirrored in the lives and the stories of these inductees. And the stories of its people and their strength are stories of Saskatchewan. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members in this House, it's an honour to join with the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport and welcome these folks from the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, as the official opposition critic for Parks, Culture and Sport. I want to make a special welcome to Erin, Trent, and Robb. Thank you for all the work that you do within this organization.

And I want to join with the minister and just make a special welcome to Bernadette McIntyre and Lorne Lasuita for your induction in the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame. Bernadette, while I was sitting here taking notes with the minister's introduction, one of my colleagues mentioned that you are a legendary organizer within your community. We just want to say a huge thank you for all the work that you do. The list is just truly, truly awe inspiring, the things that you have done in your time. And I just want to thank you so much for the work you've done, blazing a trail for women in sports. You're such an absolutely important role model for so many in our province.

And to Lorne Lasuita, the list of your accomplishments as well, just absolutely fantastic. I just really thank you so much for the leadership that you have provided. After hearing some of your . . . both of your achievements, I couldn't think of better folks to join that list of 527 names and teams. So I just want to ask all

members to join me in welcoming these esteemed folk to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so pleased to welcome, in your gallery, Sandy Baumgartner, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Saskatchewan Science Centre IMAX, and Amanda Baker from the board of directors of Creative Saskatchewan. If you can both give a wave.

They're here today, Mr. Speaker, as part of our introduction of *The Film Content Information Act* which will modernize film classification, remove cumbersome and expensive requirements for cinema operators, and ensure that Saskatchewan filmgoers continue to be able to make informed viewing choices. More on this to come.

Please join me in welcoming these guests, Mr. Speaker, to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from . . . Oh, sorry.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I would also like to welcome — ahead of Realtors Week which runs from November 13th to 19th — a familiar face, Cole Zawislak, I can see there, director of public affairs and communications for the Saskatchewan Realtors Association. And with him, Lane Boghean, Craig Adam, and Tom Liagridonis.

Welcome to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, to be on my feet welcoming more esteemed guests. As the official opposition critic for Parks, Culture and Sport, I want to join with the Minister of Justice and welcome Sandy Baumgartner and Amanda Baker to their Legislative Assembly. Some exciting legislation coming to the floor today, and I am excited to review through that with my colleague, the critic for Justice. And we are looking forward to seeing what changes are on the horizon in the Saskatchewan film industry.

And so I want to just welcome you all to your Legislative Assembly today.

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

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite and the Minister of Justice and welcome Sandy and Amanda to their Legislative Assembly.

I have to commend the work that Sandy and her crew is doing over at the IMAX. If everyone has the chance to go and see the deep space and the *Hubble* films that are being shown right now at the IMAX, Mr. Speaker, it'll absolutely take your breath away. So I'm encouraging each and every one of us here today to go and experience the IMAX because we do have a real gem here in the province of Saskatchewan.

I'd also like to join with the members to welcome the realtors. As many of you know, I was a realtor for a lot of years, worked with a lot of these fine gentlemen. So welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, I would like to start out by welcoming the good folks from the realtors here to your gallery and to this Assembly.

Lane, Tom, Cole, thank you so much for the leadership that you provide to — I think it's about 1,600 and counting — realtors here in the province, just the scope of work and the member services that you provide to those members who do everything from, you know, like property management, industrial, commercial, land development, farm. It's truly a remarkable scope of expertise that your members represent. And I know you have a proud history here in the province of over 100 years, and your organization just continues to model such innovation and inclusion and professionalism.

So I want to thank you for being here today, welcome you to your Assembly, and a special shout-out to Cole. It was always nice to see you in the building. It is even nicer to see you outside of the building, and I hope you're keeping well. So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these fine individuals to this their legislature.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, here for his sessional visit, seated in . . . God, I can never keep this straight. The west gallery . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . east, God. In the east gallery is my dad, Mr. Speaker, Don Young. No stranger to this Assembly and a regular, maybe not regular visitor but occasional visitor here to this beautiful building.

As members will be familiar with, my dad recently moved here from Alberta and has undertaken the proud role of dedicated grandparent. And on behalf of all people with young children,

Mr. Speaker, who have access to their parents, who have parents in their lives, let me say, God bless grandparents.

He's also undertaken a leadership role in the community as the director of the Cathedral Village Arts Festival. And as my dad is here from time to time, I was thinking on my feet, I'd take it as an opportunity to add a couple tidbits of information about him to the record, as he has had a remarkable life and career here in Canada, moving as an immigrant from Scotland originally.

And the fact that I would like to share today, Mr. Speaker, is — as he looks on nervously, let the record reflect — is that following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, which members will remember, my dad, who at that point was a documentary filmmaker, spent . . . was it almost two months? Two months? Longer? Longer than two months, Mr. Speaker, in the devastated city of New Orleans, not just connecting with a city struggling to rebuild, but doing that work with Bono and The Edge from U2 as well as the other two guys in that band whose names I shamefully can't remember.

But a remarkable, remarkable dad, Mr. Speaker, and I may be biased, but a great addition to Saskatchewan. So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming my dad to this, his legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce, sitting in your gallery, a long, long-time friend of mine. We've known each other probably over 30 years. He was the accountant for my late partner in the car business, Ted Knight. But Tom Liagridonis, Tom is heavily involved in the community. He's one of the main organizers in the extremely successful fundraiser, the night in Greece. So Tom and I have been friends for a long time and still are, and it's a pleasure to see him.

[10:15]

I don't often get to introduce people in the House. My wife refuses to come in anymore. But anyway, I'd like all members to join me in welcoming Tom to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — On the topic of introducing friends, Mr. Speaker — she's not going to be happy that I'm doing this — but I see a friend of mine seated in the east gallery — not Don Young, also a friend — but Aubrey Huber is here. She's a woman who I had the privilege of meeting back during our Y's Moms days when we both had newborns about four years ago. Through Sally Elliott's program we had the opportunity to meet and we've been friends ever since. She's here to watch legislative proceedings.

Her story is one that is a tale as old as time in this province. She's an American who met a Saskatchewan boy, fell in love, and they now divide their time with their family between Saskatchewan and Arizona mostly.

So she's here right now. It's always a pleasure to see her. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming her to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd just like to take a quick moment to acknowledge two women that have been meaningful in my life when I worked as the park naturalist at Wascana Centre Authority — of course Bernadette McIntyre, who was the CEO at the time, and then of course, Sandy Baumgartner, CEO of the Saskatchewan Science Centre. Had the privilege of working with both of these very, very talented women.

And so congratulations to you, Bernadette, on your induction to the Hall of Fame. You were an inspiration as a leader in the organization to me all those years, and I looked at the volunteerism that you did outside of your job and it was impressive. So it's very fitting to see you inducted.

And to you, Sandy, thank you for your commitment to science, to education, to students in this province. The Science Centre is such a jewel in this province, and your leadership in that role has been tremendous. I join with the member to get excited about the new laser screen at the IMAX. It is truly amazing.

So thank you to both of you for being here, and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to act on a suicide prevention strategy. It's been two and a half years since the passing of my colleagues from Cumberland's bill, *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act* — two and a half years, Mr. Speaker. Under the Act, the ministry is required to consult with community organizations and develop a meaningful suicide prevention strategy.

Mr. Speaker, we know that suicide remains a leading cause of death for individuals who are young in our province. We have so much work to do and we need to get to work to make that happen. It disproportionately impacts Indigenous people in our province and those in northern Saskatchewan, who are experiencing high suicide and overdose rates.

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 immediately work with community organizations and leaders in the North to develop Saskatchewan's suicide prevention strategy.

Today this is signed by individuals from Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: whereas the Trudeau Liberal-NDP [New Democratic Party] coalition carbon tax is one of the main causes of affordability issues and inflation in the nation of Canada; and that the federal government has signalled that the carbon tax does affect Canadians differently by issuing an exemption on home heating oil for Atlantic Canadian provinces; further that the people of Saskatchewan, 85 per cent of whom rely on natural gas to heat their homes, are unfairly left without support by the Liberal-NDP coalition, who continue to drive up the cost of living with their price on carbon:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to call upon the Government of Canada to immediately remove the carbon tax from all heating costs across Canada to reduce inflation and drive down the rising cost of living faced by all Canadians from coast to coast.

The below undersigned are residents of Moose Jaw and Balgonie. 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 of Saskatchewan to address the cost-of-living crisis. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan would like to bring to your attention the following: that inflation is at the highest it's been in more than three decades; that half of Saskatchewan residents were living paycheque to paycheque before transportation and food costs skyrocketed in 2022; that the Saskatchewan Party government's 32 new tax and fee hikes make life more expensive, all while harming struggling industries like tourism, culture, and fitness.

While other provinces have acted, the Saskatchewan Party government ignored our opposition call for gas price relief plans. Mr. Speaker, every day on the doorstep we hear from families struggling under the cost-of-living crisis. They are demanding action of this legislature.

I will 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 meaningfully address the affordability crisis in Saskatchewan.

I do so submit. My apologies, the undersigned residents live in Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise again to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for the funding of in vitro fertilization treatments here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, as all members in this House will be familiar, one in six are impacted by infertility or struggles to conceive, Mr. Speaker. And for the people out there dealing with

this, it is consuming. It's stressful. It's emotional. It takes a toll on mental health, on physical health, on relationships. And, Mr. Speaker, it also takes a financial toll.

And while we in this Assembly, while no member can solve some of those emotional challenges, we do have the opportunity to help, Mr. Speaker. And other provinces have seen the light on this, Mr. Speaker. Other provinces recognize that it makes sense. It makes moral sense and it makes economic sense to invest in people who live here in the province who are desperate to add to our population numbers and to grow their families here.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately move to cover the financial burden of two rounds of IVF treatments for Saskatchewan people experiencing infertility.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories of this petition today reside in Tisdale and Ridgedale. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the improvement of labour laws in Saskatchewan. Those that have signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: that even after the October 1st increase, Saskatchewan's minimum wage will remain the lowest in Canada at \$14 an hour. In addition, the opposition has twice introduced paid sick leave legislation since the onset of the pandemic, calling for a minimum of 10 paid sick days each year and 14 days during a public health crisis. Mr. Speaker, it's well known that paid sick leave has been proven to save employers money while making workplaces healthier and safer for all workers.

In addition 71 per cent of workers in Canada have experienced workplace violence and/or harassment, and in 2023 the Canadian Bar Association at their AGM [annual general meeting] adopted a resolution discouraging the use of nondisclosure agreements to silence whistle-blowers and victims of abuse, discrimination, and harassment in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, these provisions mirror the private member's bill, Bill 613, very reasonable provisions that we're hoping that the government will take a look at, the minister in particular, and choose to pass either in whole or in part.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to improve conditions for Saskatchewan workers by passing legislation to increase the minimum wage, guarantee paid sick leave, limit nondisclosure agreements which could silence survivors of workplace harassment, and require employers to track and report incidents of violence and harassment in the workplace.

Those who've signed this petition come from Leader, Regina,

and Wynyard. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Saskatchewan Agriculture Student Scholarship Recipients

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

Our grand prize winner: Caitlyn Spratt from Melfort. Caitlyn wrote an essay as part of her scholarship application. Her essay talked about the positive relationship between agriculture and the environment, referencing sustainable practices like zero-till farming, GPS [global positioning system] technology, and cattle grazing. Caitlyn will be awarded \$4,000 towards her post-secondary education at the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan.

We also have three runner-up winners, each of whom will be awarded a \$2,000 scholarship. Danielle Dyok from Saskatoon. Danielle also plans to attend the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan]. Katherine Andree from Val Marie. Katherine will attend Olds College where she will study agriculture management. Emery Cholin from Kerrobert. Emery is enrolled at the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the U of S.

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

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

Remembrance Day Reflections

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's a solemn honour to rise today to recognize the service and sacrifices of our veterans and the past and present members of our Canadian Forces for the freedoms and peace we enjoy today. The people of Saskatchewan have always answered the call to service whenever it's gone out. People from all over Saskatchewan have bravely served in every branch of our Armed Forces. That service touches so many families all across our province. My grandfather, for one, served in the Second World War with the Royal Regina Rifles. He landed on the beaches on D-Day and was wounded on February 18th, 1945.

Without question or hesitation, our women and men in uniform do their duty to combat tyranny and oppression. Many that served so honourably and courageously returned home forever changed by their experiences and the trauma that they endured. And we are forever grateful for those that never returned, for those that paid the ultimate sacrifice, and the enduring loss felt by their

families. They did so to defend the freedom, peace, and democracy that we are all afforded.

Remembrance Day is a time for us to reflect upon this sacrifice and service and to say thanks. So let us remember. Let us say thanks. And may our resolve for peace be strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Individuals Inducted into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past April 11 inductees were enshrined into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, class of 2023. As ambassadors and role models of our province, their accomplishments and contributions to sport will be acknowledged for many years to come.

Please join me in recognizing the following inductees: in the athlete category, multi-sport athlete Jaime Cruickshank Boyer from Saskatoon; Ryan Getzlaf from Regina for his many contributions to hockey; soccer player Joan McEachern from Lanigan; and hockey star Dr. Hayley Wickenheiser from Shaunavon. In the builder category, Lorne Lasuita from Wynyard was recognized for his contributions to multiple sports; Bernadette McIntyre from Bethune for her legacy in Saskatchewan curling; and Noreen Murphy from Saskatoon, champion softball player and coach. Whether it's on the rink, the field, or the court, or working as a builder behind the scenes, each individual plays a role. And we thank them for promoting the benefits of sport and recreation in our lives.

Our government is very proud to support the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, in partnership with Sask Sport, with funding from Saskatchewan Lotteries. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to invite everyone to visit the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame museum here in Regina to learn more about these inductees, see the artifacts, and learn more about our rich provincial sport history. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

File Hills First Nations Police Service

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today to recognize the work of File Hills First Nations Police Service for their service in Saskatchewan. During the summer I had the opportunity to meet with the board members as well as Chief of Police, Paul Avanthay, who graciously took the time to show me the work they are doing in their community.

[10:30]

File Hills is Saskatchewan's first and only self-administered police service. They serve five First Nations communities located in the Treaty 4 tribal territory: Okanese First Nation, the Peepeekisis First Nation, Carry The Kettle First Nation, Star Blanket First Nation, and Little Black Bear First Nation.

Their mission is to incorporate a culturally sensitive police

service that reflects the traditional practices of the five First Nations while working in conjunction with other established police services to ensure that quality policing is ongoing. As we strengthen our future generations with the efforts of truth and reconciliation, organizations like these are playing an important role in the community to educate and promote safety.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in thanking File Hills First Nations Police Service for their commitment to upholding First Nations principles in their policing model. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Second-Stage Shelters

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month our government announced an investment of \$108,000 in operational funding to support second-stage housing in Regina and Prince Albert. This is in addition to the \$876,000 which was allocated to five second-stage shelters across the province as a part of our three-year funding agreement — SOFIA House, Regina; Adelle House, Saskatoon; YWCA Turning Points, Saskatoon; North East Outreach and Support Services, Melfort; and Sapohewan, La Ronge. It is essential that victims are supported, and that's why this government has expanded investment in the second-stage housing.

Mr. Speaker, this funding will support intervention and counselling services for women and children leaving interpersonal violence. Second-stage housing provides longer term support, safety, and stability for women and their children to break the cycle of violence and help them rebuild their lives.

Mr. Speaker, the initial funding for the Prince Albert Safe Shelter for Women and YWCA Regina [Young Women's Christian Association Regina] brings government's total three-year investment into second-stage housing to \$984,000. Our government will continue to work with these great organizations to break the cycle of interprovincial violence and abuse. With the appropriate support in place, we can help families heal so they can live their lives to the fullest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Shaunavon Shadows Vie for Provincial Title

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday the Shaunavon Shadows punched their ticket to the provincial finals in front of a large hometown crowd, beating the defending nine-man provincial champion, the Melfort Comets, 37-28. The Shadows will now play Lumsden on Saturday in hopes of securing the 4A nine-man provincial title.

This group of young men had a strong season. They started with three straight wins in which they defeated their opponents by 47 points each. This led them into conference playoffs, where they faced the Moose Jaw team with a win, and the Shadows moved onto the next round where they defeated the team from Indian Head.

This would set the stage for a matchup at home again with Melfort. They defeated the Melfort Comets also, ending their 17

winning streak. The Shadows have played some tough competition on their road to provincial finals, but this team is determined to reach their goals. The team last qualified in the finals in 2017.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to encourage and congratulate the players and the coaches and the families on their dedication to the high school sports in the province. Go Shadows. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Honouring War Veterans

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saturday is Remembrance Day, a day for us to celebrate and give thanks to all the veterans across Canada — past, present, and future. We are so fortunate to call this great country home. I had the honour of serving as a commissioned officer in the Cadet Instructor Cadre for 17 years. This gave me the opportunity to work directly with veterans across the province. The experience truly gave me insight into what it meant to them, these individuals who served with honour and pride.

Over a million Canadians left this country in 1939 to defend freedom, and less than 40,000 remain with us today. Time marches on, Mr. Speaker, but our resolve to keep their sacrifice, service, and memories current is always top of mind. We are reminded that freedom is not free.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical that we educate today's youth on what our forebears did to preserve freedoms that we all enjoy today. That is why our government is extremely proud to continue to provide 1.5 million annually to veteran service club support programs. This will help ensure that our veterans are comfortable in their clubs and can continue to engage with their communities.

On November 11th, we will take the time to reflect on what our veterans have provided us all with — the freedom to serve the people of Saskatchewan. Lest we forget.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Hospital Capacity and Provision of Emergency Care

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver on health care, and nowhere is that more clear than at St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon. Yesterday we learned that there are so many patients being treated in the hallway that it's actually creating a fire hazard, blocking fire exits.

How is that acceptable to this government? And when will we see a real plan to deal with the crisis in our emergency rooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatoon hospitals are experiencing high volumes at this time. We are aware of that. We've been working closely with leadership at the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] and at the Ministry of

Health to implement a number of measures to help address the pressures there, Mr. Speaker.

I can inform the House that the SHA is undertaking a number of operational enhancements to alleviate the capacity pressures in the hospitals in Saskatoon. What we're experiencing right now is not acceptable. It's not what we would want to have for health care in the hospitals in our largest centre in this province, Mr. Speaker. There is work being done around the staffing of the cardiac short-stay units, operating some additional flex beds at Royal University Hospital as well.

But recognizing that we have to address the challenges with pressure currently facing St. Paul's and working closely with leadership there on other potential opportunities to help improve patient flow in our facilities, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, after 16 years of this tired and out-of-touch government, things haven't gotten better in our health care system. They've gotten worse. We've heard from staff at St. Paul's that this is not, as the minister suggested, a one-off event, that these fire code violations happen all the time because this hospital is over capacity and treating patients in the hallway all the time, Mr. Speaker.

To the Minister of Health: how many other times has it been the case that the hospital has been so over capacity that it's created fire code violations?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I would begin by thanking all the doctors, the nurses, all the health care providers, paramedics that are delivering this very important service to people of Saskatchewan, including in the city of Saskatoon.

And I would also point out some of the initiatives and the investments that this government has made to address pressures and to build capacity in our hospital network, Mr. Speaker, such as adding 64 more acute and complex care beds that have been added to hospitals both in Saskatoon and also Regina. These were previously opened on a temporary basis, but we have now added \$20 million to make sure that these are ongoing, fully funded additional complex and acute care beds in our major centres, Mr. Speaker.

And continuing to work with our officials in the Ministry of Health and with the SHA. I had the opportunity earlier this week to speak to the CEO of the SHA about this and other issues as well to identify what other steps can be taken to address the pressures that we are facing at our hospitals in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government Attendance at Conference of Parties 28

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, clearly this government isn't focused on the things that matter, like health care. Instead we see them focused on their own wasteful pet projects. While they fail to

make the investments needed to ensure that our ERs [emergency room] meet fire code, they're wasting nearly a million dollars on a pavilion in Dubai.

Mr. Speaker, yes, the government needs to tell Saskatchewan's great story. And yes, we should be proud of our workers and our industry. But the Sask Party government does not need to spend nearly a million dollars of public money for a pavilion in Dubai. How does the Premier justify this, the most expensive trip in the history of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, let's get the facts straight. The vast majority of that cost that the NDP are talking about is not for travel, Mr. Speaker. It's for a pavilion, promotional, and office space for the companies, the 40-plus companies that are going to be accompanying the Premier on that trip.

Our government has a very different approach . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, they're chirping from their seats because they don't want to hear the answer. Our government has a different approach to the economy. We believe that we should be helping companies promote themselves around the world because when they're successful, that creates jobs here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP criticize everything. The member from Nutana criticized the Premier in a previous COP [Conference of Parties] for not attending. Now the members opposite are criticizing because he is attending. Mr. Speaker, we clearly don't agree with the NDP, but you know who else doesn't agree with them? The companies in the mining sector, the companies in the agriculture sector, the companies in the oil and gas sector. Because they want the Premier around the world, helping them to promote their industry because when they're successful, they create jobs.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the minister was so eager to deliver those canned lines that he forgot to listen to the question. We're not opposed to the government going to the conference. We're opposed to the Sask Party government spending nearly a million dollars on the pavilion in Dubai.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Alberta is going, but they're not spending nearly a million dollars for a pavilion. They have agricultural producers too. They also have a mining and an energy sector to promote. So why should Saskatchewan taxpayers be on the hook for a million dollars, when Alberta's able to do this without spending that money?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, you know what, that brings to mind . . . I did hear the question that the member asked and it brought to mind when we first formed government in 2007, the premier of the day, Brad Wall, used to talk about the different trips that the members opposite used to go on.

But they didn't actually participate, Mr. Speaker. They'd fly

over. Apparently doesn't want us to have a pavilion, help the companies promote themselves. Instead they'd like to, I guess, fly over — the NDP would — sit in the back row and steal muffins. No. We're going to help our companies promote.

Mr. Speaker, again let's understand the difference in the two approaches. Our government believes that companies should be promoted by this government, that we should help them because when they're successful they spend billions in investment, create jobs. The NDP believes that government should own all the jobs. That's completely different, and I hope the member has another question because I'd like to give an example of that very thing, Mr. Speaker.

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

Settlement of Lawsuit with Brandt Industries

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, tired, out-of-touch talking points, entitled to their entitlements. Mr. Speaker, these members should know how poorly this plays out with the public, how bad a look this is. And it's a bad look when governments also spend millions of dollars to cover their own mistakes.

Earlier this summer, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government settled the lawsuit of its own making, for \$11.6 million. How does this government justify spending \$11 million of public money for yet another of their mismanaged deals?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the member opposite for the question. The lawsuit, of course, between the Government of Saskatchewan and Brandt and the Provincial Capital Commission has all been settled. And, Mr. Speaker, all issues relating to the former site and CNIB [Canadian National Institute for the Blind] lease have been resolved and no further construction will be pursued at the location.

Mr. Speaker, it allows the Government of Saskatchewan, Brandt, and CNIB to finally put this behind us, and allow us to do right by CNIB and find them new space in an existing government building. Additional details of the settlement are covered by a nondisclosure agreement and will not be disclosed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the price of the Sask Party putting this behind them was \$11.6 million for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Here are the facts, Mr. Speaker, and surely the facts still matter. The Sask Party gave one of their largest corporate donors a sweetheart \$1-a-year deal to build an office tower in our public park. They rewrote the rules to make it happen, and they only pulled the plug after enormous backlash from the residents of Regina.

[10:45]

Now they expect Saskatchewan people to pay more than 11 million to that same corporate donor because it all fell apart. That's 11 trips to Dubai, Mr. Speaker. For what? Lost revenue from the first sweetheart deal for a buck a year, Mr. Speaker? It's absurd. How does this government justify settling out of court for over \$11.6 million?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the minister answered that question. And they're talking about bad business deals. Mr. Speaker, here's a bit of a history lesson for some of the newer members. When the NDP were in government — again the difference between how this government approaches industry and the NDP did — they thought they should own everything.

In my area, Mr. Speaker, the NDP of the day, the government of the day decided that they should start a potato company. Yes, a potato company. And to be fair, be fair, they actually did grow a lot of potatoes. But what they forgot is, you actually have to have a market. You have to sell the potatoes somewhere. So, Mr. Speaker, that didn't work. So what we were left with as taxpayers, we were left with piles of rotting potatoes and a few drunk seagulls, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, our government's role, as I said, we believe we should be helping companies, we should be helping them be successful, helping them import. When the members opposite were in government, when they travelled the world they bought companies in Guyana, in Australia, in Nashville. Our Premier travels the world; he helps those countries promote Saskatchewan. They're investing billions of dollars — many examples of that recently — and they're creating Saskatchewan jobs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the minister doesn't want to touch the question, and I wouldn't want to either if I was him. He wants to talk about something that happened when I was 10 years old. Pathetic, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan people work hard for their money. They want their public dollars to go to pay for things they rely on like health care, like education, like highways, like housing, Mr. Speaker, the public services that we all count on, the public services that that government has done so much to dismantle and neglect. But when they see this tired and out-of-touch government wasting public dollars on out-of-court settlements, then getting up and giving garbage answers like that and making backroom deals, bending the rules for their friends, Saskatchewan people know it isn't right, Mr. Speaker.

How does the minister justify settling this case for \$11.6 million — I'll ask the question again — instead of making investments in the things that matter to Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This settlement of course avoided a potentially long and costly

lawsuit. Canadian National Institute for the Blind and Brandt Properties cannot bring any future claims against the Government of Saskatchewan and the Provincial Capital Commission. The location has been reclaimed into the green space of Wascana Centre.

The settlement also included costs of demolition, removal and disposal of hazardous materials. Mr. Speaker, we will move forward working with both organizations and improve the lives of people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, not only will they not answer the question, they can't even decide over there who should provide a response. Hot potato, hot potato, Mr. Speaker.

There's only one reason why this tired and out-of-touch government would settle this case without going to trial. And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker: they were afraid about what documents, what testimony would come out in court. Some maybe wouldn't blame them. The emails, the affidavits, the cross-examinations — well all of that would have brought out into the light of day for everyone to see what actually went on here, Mr. Speaker.

Why should Saskatchewan people have to pay one of the Sask Party's biggest donors \$11.6 million to cover up what really went down in this dirty Sask Party deal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've already stated, this settlement avoided a potentially long and costly lawsuit. But it does allow the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and Brandt Properties to continue to move forward, as well as the government.

The location of course has been fully reclaimed into a green space at the Wascana Centre, and that settlement of course included all the demolition that needed to take place, the removal and the disposal of any hazardous materials, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, this allows Canadian National Institute for the Blind to move into an appropriate space for them and to continue on the good work that they do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Conway: — No details, Mr. Speaker. Silence is golden, I understand, but it certainly doesn't come cheap for the people of Saskatchewan, I guess.

But here's the thing, Mr. Speaker. Here's the thing: 138 million on AIMS [administrative information management system]; 75 million on Linkin; 25 million on MiCase; 1 million on a trip to Dubai; 20 million for a marshals service; 40 million a year on a new tax agency, Mr. Speaker.

The point is a hundred million there, a hundred million here — it all starts to add up. They ask, how's the NDP going to do it? How is the NDP going to rebuild this province and make the public

services that people rely on work again for the people of this province? That's how we're going to pay for it, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the member opposite forgot to ask a question. That was more just a statement. We work well with the private sector, many companies. And we work well with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. We settled this agreement so that they can move forward with the good work that they do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Parking Services at Regina General Hospital

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, talk about tired and out of touch. This government is wasting millions and millions of public dollars on waste and mismanagement — 138 million for a failed IT program in the SHA, tens of millions more for IT projects in the Ministry of Social Services, and a million more for a pavilion in Dubai. But while they're wasting money hand over fist, they're nickel-and-diming Saskatchewan people.

Look no further than the Regina General Hospital in my constituency. Parking at the ER used to be free, but now people have to pay. How does this tired and out-of-touch government justify nickel-and-diming ER patients when they're wasting so much public money on their own mismanaged projects?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, for convenience and accessibility of parking at SHA facilities, there is parking that is provided. There were some changes made last month I understand by the SHA. It's my understanding that this aligns the parking practices at the Regina emergency departments with that of all three hospitals in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

What I would also like to mention though, Mr. Speaker, is we have, when it comes to parking, a pretty significant project under way right now, investing in a new hospital parkade for the Regina General Hospital, \$500,000 in this year's budget. And construction is now under way. We were there — the Premier, myself, several MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] — at the groundbreaking ceremony not that long ago. A significant investment in that constituency here in the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, how does that answer help people who are trying to go to the ER today? When someone pulls up to the ER in an emergency, there's no time to waste. It's an emergency and they need to get in to see a doctor immediately.

Sick or injured patients don't have time to fumble with change or an app on their phone. They should be able to focus on getting in and getting the health care that they need. Why is the Sask Party forcing patients to pay out of pocket while the costs of their own

waste and mismanagement keep piling up?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Mr. Speaker, when patients or family members are visiting the emergency department parking services, the paid parking in the quick-access stalls is only, will be enforced for those that exceed 60 minutes. We understand that these are significant challenges, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, they don't want to talk about the real issues of the day around some of the positive investments that are happening in Saskatchewan. I guess, Mr. Speaker, I guess they're opposed to the new parkade for the city of Regina, expanding more access for patients and families in this province.

You know part of the reason, Mr. Speaker, that we actually are building this parkade . . . We had a lot of parking over on the east side of Regina many, many years ago. What was the name of that hospital again? The Plains hospital. Plenty of parking for the staff and the patients at the Plains hospital until the NDP decided to show up and put the locks on the doors, Mr. Speaker.

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

Crime Rates and Policing Services

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will continue to push for action on the crime epidemic we are seeing in our province. The single greatest jump in violent crime recorded in the province was in 2019, one year after the Premier took office. The violent crime rate has risen every year since.

Under this Premier, violent crime has risen 35 per cent in Saskatchewan. In the rural areas surrounding Prince Albert, from 2018 to 2021 violent crime increased by 200 per cent. Last year in Prince Albert, the overall crime and violent crime rate was the highest ever recorded. A study by the University of Waterloo found last year Saskatoon had the second-highest violent crime rate out of Canada's 40 largest cities.

Mr. Speaker, where is the law and order? This certainly isn't protecting the people of Saskatchewan. What is the government doing to address the crime epidemic that has gripped this province?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And this government does take crime in our communities very serious. That's why just yesterday we introduced and had second reading on the Saskatchewan marshals service, which is doing exactly what that member across there is asking for, Mr. Speaker, is more police officers, more officers out in the field to make sure that our communities are safe.

That's why we have our crime reduction team; that's why we have our highway trafficking team. Mr. Speaker, these are the teams that are out there that are doing an amazing job on the front line facing down criminals and being able to make not just our communities safe, the home safe, but also our highways safe.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government Priorities and Fiscal Management

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our health care services are in shambles. Our crime rate is out of control. The tax burden is crushing. And yet this government's only answer is to always brag about the millions they are spending.

Mr. Speaker, a noted conservative politician once said, some people confuse cost with value. If you listen to Trudeau and the NDP, they brag about the cost of their programs: my program has more billions than your program. There is no other field that judges its success by how expensive it can be.

Imagine if a restaurant said, "Come and dine with us. Don't worry about the terrible service, the ugly ambience, or the bad food, but we'll charge you \$500. It's the most expensive show in town. Therefore it must be the best." That would be how a restaurant would advertise if it was using Liberal-NDP logic. Mr. Speaker, that sounds awfully familiar. Can the liberal government opposite . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — It's very interesting. There was no question in the member opposite's comments. She just did a ramble which actually, quite frankly, is more than she ever had to say when she was in government and had the opportunity to bring forward her opinions. We never heard anything from her, Mr. Speaker. It was crickets every single day.

But, Mr. Speaker, again I'm very interested what her plan is because she has taken the NDP playbook of being able to do a lot of criticism without giving one single idea of what her party has for a plan and furthermore how they're going to pay for it.

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems this government has forgotten about the growth that works for everyone, as it was surprisingly missing from the Throne Speech. They are now all about building and protecting. Building what, Mr. Speaker? Our rural communities have not been built up. They've been hollowed out and in decline for years while this government did nothing. They have done the least for the hard-working rural people that built this province.

The only thing that has grown for everyone, Mr. Speaker, is crime, the cost of living, and the tax burden. Could this government not find any of that growth that they keep talking about? Maybe they've misplaced it. Perhaps the Finance minister can find it amongst her strings-attached deals with Ottawa that she's so fond of.

I ask the Premier: is it growth that works for everyone? Or is it build and protect? Or will it be a new slogan next week?

[11:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, there was some long rambling in there but not a lot of questions. But I did hear her talk about growth, so I can give some examples of what happened with growth. I come from the municipal sector. Growth in revenue sharing for municipalities; growth in capital; more highways, more hospitals, more long-term facilities. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

How about growth in population? How about StatsCan today telling us that the GDP [gross domestic product] in Saskatchewan was the best in the country at 6 per cent last year? The growth continues, Mr. Speaker.

That's why our government's proud to continue to support Saskatchewan businesses. That's why the Premier and Trade and Export Development minister are helping Saskatchewan businesses promote themselves around the country, Mr. Speaker. It is build and protect, Mr. Speaker, and we're proud of it.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 148 — *The Film Content Information Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 148, *The Film Content Information Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 148 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 149 — *The Franchise Disclosure Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 149, *The Franchise Disclosure Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 149 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

I have been advised that His Honour the Administrator is here for Royal Assent. All please rise.

[At 11:04 His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne. His Honour then gave Royal Assent to the following bill.]

ROYAL ASSENT

His Honour: — Pray be seated.

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

Clerk: — Your Honour, the bill is as follows:

Bill No. 147 - *The Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Amendment Act, 2023*

His Honour: — In His Majesty's name, I assent to this bill.

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

[At 11:06 His Honour the Administrator retired from the Chamber.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Access to Reproductive Health Care and Abortion

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be entering into debate today, and at the end of my remarks, I'll be moving a motion. Specifically what we're talking about here today is getting a confirmation from this Assembly, and particularly from the Government of Saskatchewan, that everyone in Saskatchewan deserves access to reproductive health care — and you know, expecting a commitment from them on this front — including abortion; and that the Assembly opposes the implementation of measures requiring parental consent for minors accessing abortion.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, last month we saw this government plow ahead with an emergency session on pronouns in order to tear up the Charter, Mr. Speaker. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms exists to protect minority groups, and instead we've seen this

government using the notwithstanding clause.

Mr. Speaker, I said this in my Bill 137 speech, but I took a minor in political studies and I remember learning about the notwithstanding clause in school. And I didn't think that I would witness it being used in this way. And it's incredibly disappointing, and this government is on the wrong side of history, Mr. Speaker.

And let's be clear, people are speaking out about this decision to trample on the rights of trans and gender-diverse kids. And they aren't going to accept the Sask Party going down this destructive path. The amount of people just in the last two months who have told me that it's time for the Sask Party government to go, that their time is up, Mr. Speaker, is overwhelming.

And we see it here every day in this Assembly. We see it in question period. We see it every time they stand up. They're entitled, Mr. Speaker, and they think they know better than the people of this province. They forget that this is Saskatchewan, that we are on the prairies and that prairie spirit was built on grit, determination, and looking out for one another, Mr. Speaker. They want us to turn selfish and they want us to think about ourselves. But that's not who we are around here.

And folks are already sounding the alarm about what else this government has on its agenda. People are not going to stand for it. The Sask Party used their majority to ram this through, and Saskatchewan people are smart and they're asking what's next. They're asking whether the notwithstanding clause will be used on women's rights, on abortion, and what else this government is willing to do to satisfy the extreme right, to pander for votes in this upcoming election, Mr. Speaker.

And this recent use of the notwithstanding clause came as a bit of a surprise, Mr. Speaker, because this government had not spoken out about these issues prior to this summer. But what they have spoken out about is women's reproductive rights. And so there's reason for this concern, Mr. Speaker. We know how this Premier feels about abortion. We know that the Premier was endorsed by an anti-choice group called RightNow during his leadership run and that his feelings on this have not changed, Mr. Speaker.

There's a lot going on in the world right now, and the US [United States] Supreme Court decision to roll back *Roe v. Wade* shows us that the fight for reproductive rights is never over. And people know, people have been watching keenly what's going on in the US elections this week to see how this decision is playing out in the States.

We know this isn't just a fight that we're seeing in the United States. The same political forces determined to overturn hard-won reproductive rights in the United States also exist here in Canada. Yesterday there was an article in *The Guardian* entitled, "'Abortion is a winning issue': rights victories in 2023 US elections raise hopes for 2024." And here they're talking about the fact that there's been a string of successes in abortion rights this week, raising the hopes for this to be an issue that will galvanize people for what is right in 2024.

More than a year after the US Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, handing states the power to decide if and how

to ban abortion, voters have again overwhelmingly rejected attempts to curtail access to the procedure . . .

In Ohio, the only state to hold an anti-abortion-related ballot referendum in 2023, more than 56% of voters agreed to enshrine the right to the procedure into the state constitution. In Virginia, Democrats won back full control of the state legislature after Republicans campaigned on the promise of a "sensible limit" that would ban most abortions past 15 weeks of pregnancy. In Kentucky, the incumbent Democratic Governor, Andy Beshear, bested his anti-abortion Republican opponent. And in Pennsylvania, in a race dominated by talk of abortion, Democrats won a seat on the state supreme court.

They love to look at the US, Mr. Speaker, for inspiration. This is not a winning issue. The Sask Party government is not working to ensure access to abortion in our province, and in fact it is the opposite.

And several cabinet members, several members on their side, are anti-choice, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan now has a Minister of Justice who has publicly stated she is anti-choice. That's the person at the centre of law-making, Mr. Speaker, and that is terrifying. They have several anti-choice members, including the member from Willowgrove, who has been incredibly outspoken about the fact that it is nearly never acceptable for a woman to get an abortion. Not leaving it up to the women, Mr. Speaker, incredibly out of touch with where the people of this province are.

I'm only 37 years old; I'll keep saying that because my birthday's coming up soon. So I'm still feeling young and like I'm not quite 40, and I've taken for granted that access to abortion would be available and accessible in my province. I grew up believing that women deserve autonomy over their own bodies and in a woman's right to choose.

This shouldn't be a radical concept, but I've now witnessed so many attempts to limit reproductive rights. I was the Health critic in 2019 — it feels like it's been awhile here, Mr. Speaker — when we fought for this government to cover Mifegymiso, medical abortion.

At the time, the minister of Rural and Remote Health — I remember this very well — the member for Yorkton, he said he would do everything in his professional capacity to limit access to abortion, Mr. Speaker. It's shameful. I remember that time very well. I remember spending entire question periods talking about this issue, Mr. Speaker, and I remember people across this province speaking out.

And now I'll note, Mr. Speaker, the member from Yorkton is not in cabinet, Mr. Speaker. And they need to learn from these lessons, Mr. Speaker, that this is not where the people of this province are at.

[11:15]

We were successful in that fight along with many additional voices and after countless days of dominating question period with this work. But the work is so far from being over, Mr. Speaker. There are so many issues with access to abortion

services right here in our province, and Mifegymiso is one of them.

Mifegymiso isn't widely available. There's concerns about which pharmacies actually carry it, which doctors will actually prescribe it, whether folks have doctors and pharmacies in their communities that will provide it, and we constantly hear about access being a concern. And we know that people still need to travel to Regina or Saskatoon to get a surgical abortion and that there are barriers to that system as well. And it's alarming, considering the teen pregnancy rates in Saskatchewan, that this wouldn't be a priority for this government.

And, Mr. Speaker, where are the people of Saskatchewan at? Eighty-five per cent of people in Saskatchewan believe in a woman's right to choose — 85 per cent. Despite this, the government does not work to expand access. I have attended many rallies in support. And I want to make it crystal clear to government politicians, who largely do not reflect the demographic makeup of this province in that they are disproportionately male, Mr. Speaker, that they need to keep their hands off our uteruses. They have the ability to make that commitment today, so I really look forward to what they have to say.

We need to protect abortion services that we have now and demand expanded access. It can be hard to keep fighting. In 2023 we think, why should we have to keep fighting? But we owe it to our mothers and our grandmothers who fought to keep up the battle. We owe it to our daughters and our nieces that represent the future of this province to keep fighting. And Saskatchewan New Democrats will continue to fight for a woman's right to choose and for increased access for reproductive services.

We're putting in the work right now not only by speaking out, but my colleague from Saskatoon University, the critic for the Status of Women, has three times introduced a bill before this legislature that would prohibit protesting outside of facilities that provide abortions or access to abortion counselling services. This government passed legislation that prohibited protesting around hospitals during COVID, showing that they've already done some of the work on this. Why won't they protect people and providers and pass a bill that they've let die on the order paper? She's introduced it three times. Other provinces have taken this step. BC [British Columbia] introduced bubble-zone legislation in 1995, Mr. Speaker. That was 28 years ago.

Those accessing abortion services and the staff providing them have a right to do so without encountering verbal abuse and harassment. And we need to expand access to abortion, not limit it. And last year we called on the government. We had a big rally outside. We were joined by Planned Parenthood Regina, Abortion Is Healthcare, Saskatoon Sexual Assault, the Regina Abortion Support Network, and other abortion providers who took to the front steps to argue that we need to expand access, that we need to take women's health seriously, establish surgical abortion centres in Saskatoon and Prince Albert, and work with expanding access for women in rural and remote communities.

These folks often have to take two-day trips for safe abortions and navigate a disjointed and uneven process. Mr. Speaker. It's faster for some women in the United States to cross state lines than it is for women in remote Saskatchewan communities to get

medical help when they need it. We need action on this front, Mr. Speaker.

So what is next? We know that the MLA for Saskatoon Willowgrove has said that he has a firm belief in parental consent for abortions, Mr. Speaker. This isn't something that they're hiding in the closet. This is something that they have been open about, Mr. Speaker.

So let's look at the United States, where this is left up to the states, and how this is working. Are we going to see parental consent coming forward? Well, Mr. Speaker, in 2017 they tried to do this. They tried to introduce legislation that would force girls to get parental consent to get an abortion, and they found out there were multiple constitutional issues with this approach, Mr. Speaker. And it doesn't work in the States. We know that girls are more likely to access their parents and talk to their parents when they're teenagers, but we know that most of the time if they don't talk to their parents, they have a very good reason for not doing that.

One study showed that 22 per cent of teenagers who did not tell a parent about their abortion decision feared that if they told their parents they would get kicked out of the house. And this we've seen borne out in Colorado, Mr. Speaker, and it's not a model that we need to be following. It jeopardizes teenagers' health. It unfairly singles them out, and it puts them into very difficult situations, Mr. Speaker. And the argument that a teenager needs parental consent to have an abortion but to not have their parents involved in giving birth, Mr. Speaker, is outright ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, my time is running up here. We know that the Canadian Paediatric Society is not supportive of this move. We want to hear from the members opposite.

But with that I will move my motion:

That the Assembly supports the rights of all Saskatchewan people to access reproductive health care, including abortion; and further,

That the Assembly opposes the implementation of measures to require parental consent for minors accessing abortion services.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Fairview:

That the Assembly supports the rights of all Saskatchewan people to access reproductive health care, including abortion; and further,

That the Assembly opposes the implementation of measures to require parental consent for minors accessing abortion services.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I rise in this House today to speak to the motion put forward by the

member from Saskatoon Fairview. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government once again reiterates that abortion is an ensured service under the federal *Canada Health Act*. And we continue to follow the guidelines of the health Act in Saskatchewan.

Reproductive rights are about personal autonomy. They are about the fundamental principle that individuals have the right to make decisions about their own bodies without coercion, discrimination, or violence. Saskatchewan, like other provinces, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and territories, funds hospital and physician costs related to access reproductive health care.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government's job is to provide capital funding for construction of new health care facilities and maintenance of the current facilities. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's not the government's job to interfere with the practices of physicians and the confidential conversations that go on between patients and their health care providers. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Ministry of Health has no role in decisions regarding patient care. It is up to the physician in discussion with the patient to determine treatment for a patient regarding their reproductive health.

The health and well-being of all Saskatchewan people is very much a priority of our government, with record investments in health care year after year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This year's budget has dedicated a record-setting \$6.9 billion to health care funding options to access health care. This budget included many investments that I'm particularly proud of and will serve the constituents of my constituency, Saskatoon Riversdale, very well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Three million dollars for the Saskatoon urgent care centre project. This is particularly close to my heart, Mr. Speaker, and I had the pleasure of bringing greetings at the announcement earlier this year. This is a partnership with Ahtakakoop First Nation. And I look forward to the opening of this facility taking pressure off emergency departments and providing mental health and addictions supports as well, but also providing more health care for the people of my community and surrounding communities, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Funding for the future ICU [intensive care unit] expansion at the Royal University Hospital and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, \$8 million for the renovation of the St. Paul's Hospital front entrance and healing centre. This is another one of many great announcements in my community. And I have heard concerns over my three years being elected and even my years prior to being elected as a candidate, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it is a priority of our government to listen to the concerns of our constituents and the people in our province. And I'm excited to say that this project is getting done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government is also focused on continuing to provide a better quality of health care through our four-point health human resources action plan, unlike the members of the NDP opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who don't have a plan. And we see that over and over again. They criticize and criticize with no plan. I'm not really sure what they would do, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It seems like the same old NDP.

On April 1st of this year our government enhanced the rural physician incentive plan to attract and retain more family

physicians in the rural and remote communities of our province. And just about a week and a half ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had the privilege to attend a postgraduate medical education celebration and awards night and bring greetings on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan. I had some amazing conversations with resident doctors and some very experienced doctors as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, particularly with a doctor from Melfort, who did such a great job of explaining how his life has changed for the better serving in our rural communities and how important our retention program is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this plan was initiated by our government in 2013 to incentivize recent graduates to practise in rural and northern Saskatchewan, and now has been extended to include physicians in the Saskatchewan international physician practice program. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is improving health care across our province, to residents in rural and remote areas of our province.

Expansion of the scope of practice for pharmacists to be able to prescribe medications, including birth control and morning-after medication, also improves access for those who are unable to see a health care practitioner in their community, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We are fortunate to live in this province with such a great provincial drug plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Saskatchewan drug plan is one of, if not the most comprehensive, drug plans in Canada, with over 5,600 medications listed in the Saskatchewan formulary. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's 44 per cent more medications available at reduced cost to Saskatchewan residents than when we formed government in 2007, medications that we are happy to help provide to Saskatchewan people who need them the most. Many of these medications added since we formed government are life altering for those who need them.

In our latest budget, the drug plan portion of the health care budget was nearly \$400 million. That's an increase of nearly 145 million to the drug plan funding since coming into office in 2007.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are affordable birth control options in Saskatchewan. The Ministry of Health funds several sexual health clinics in Saskatchewan. These clinics provide a multitude of services, such as education, pregnancy testing, and free condoms to promote safe birth control. And again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we follow the Canadian health Act in being able to provide these services.

Multiple community-based organization partners also provide counselling services, including inexpensive birth control options. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank these community-based organizations, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I work closely with a number of them in my community and in fact was even chatting with one of them this morning.

[11:30]

They do such great work in our province and certainly in my area and surrounding areas, and I'm just so very thankful for what they do each and every day. Their work is incredibly important to creating healthy outcomes for Saskatchewan people. Access to quality maternal health care is essential to protect the well-being

of pregnant individuals. It is crucial to ensure that all expectant mothers receive the care they need to have healthy pregnancies and safe deliveries. We will continue to ensure safety in our communities by investing in programs that will help eliminate interpersonal and sexual violence in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will invest \$27.5 million in funding support for victims of interpersonal violence in 2023-2024. This includes 8.9 million to support 12 provincially funded transition houses and three enhanced residential programs that support immediate shelter needs for victims fleeing domestic violence; 984,000 for a three-year commitment to second-stage housing that will help provide new funding for counselling and intervention supports; 1.7 million to sexual assault service providers across the province; 1 million in capital funding to the YWCA in Saskatoon to support second-stage housing units.

To finish my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are proud of the progress we have made in providing record capital funding, building new health care facilities, and enabling access to birth control and education. Our government will continue to make these investments in health care for the betterment of all Saskatchewan people, and I will not be supporting motion put forward. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to rise today and join on this very important debate:

That the Assembly supports the rights of all Saskatchewan people to access reproductive health care, including abortion; and further,

That the Assembly opposes the implementation of measures to require parental consent for minors accessing abortion services.

In my remarks today I want to make it very clear where the Saskatchewan NDP stands on these issues, and where I join my colleagues and stand on this debate. We support women, trans, nonbinary folks, and people with uteruses' right to access reproductive health care including abortion, and we support equitable access to reproductive health care for all Saskatchewanians.

I challenge this government, I challenge all members in this House to pledge to support access to reproductive health care including abortion, and ensure that no policy ever infringes on the human rights of minors to access reproductive health care and abortion.

Mr. Speaker, I will start my remarks off by saying this: we know that inequitable access to reproductive health care, including abortion, more prominently impacts Indigenous, Black and other people of colour, the 2SLGBTQIA+ [two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual, plus] community, immigrants, young people, those working to make ends meet, and people with disabilities.

Protecting abortion access is an urgent matter of human rights and justice. Study upon study has shown that limiting access to

reproductive health care disproportionately affects these communities. And now I know the government will say, I haven't read that study, as they usually do. But there is no excuse for any government minister to deflect in this way.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the queer and trans community, as we enter into this debate I hope to elevate the voices of this community to give members of my community the justice they deserve to support all trans and nonbinary folks and folks with uteruses who need access to equitable access to health care and are not seeing it in Saskatchewan. And as a cisgender male I hope to join all women and all pregnant people as an ally in the fight for more equitable access to reproductive health care, including abortion.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to centre Indigenous voices, voices of Black Saskatchewanians and other people of colour, queer and trans voices, voices of immigrants, voices of young people, and the voices of folks with disabilities in our health care system so we can continue to ensure the most vulnerable in our society have access to health care when and where they need it, no matter where they live in our great, vast province. I urge this government to make this centring of these voices a priority. I urge this government, Mr. Speaker.

We have called numerous times for better access to reproductive health and have called on the government to fix inequitable access to abortion. We've put forward private members' bills calling for the government to enact safe zones around abortion-providing hospitals and health facilities. Anyone accessing these health facilities should be able to do so in a safe manner and be supported.

We have advocated for universal access for the medical abortion pill, Mifegymiso. After countless days pressing the government and seeing the minister of Rural and Remote Health ejected from the cabinet, we were successful in having this secured.

On access to reproductive health care, my colleague, the member from Regina University, has presented petitions on IVF [in vitro fertilization] treatments for folks looking to conceive. So many people looking to start a family have to turn to IVF to conceive. One in six families looking to conceive struggle with infertility. These individuals in Saskatchewan face down tens of thousands in medical bills that have to be paid out of pocket. We have called on the government to join with other jurisdictions in Canada and help Saskatchewan residents start a family right here instead of forcing them to go into debt or to leave the province to start the family they're dreaming about.

Last year we saw the horrible news that *Roe v. Wade* in the United States was being rolled back by a far-right Supreme Court. I think we as Canadians breathed a sigh of relief, thinking that access to reproductive health care and abortion access continues to be accessible to all Canadians. But the fact is, when you look a little closer at our reproductive health care, it isn't as equitable as it might seem.

And we must stay vigilant at building more access, more equitable access for all Saskatchewanians, because right now that is not the case. And in the face of *Roe v. Wade* being rolled back, we demand that the Saskatchewan Party government commit to addressing inequities to reproductive health and abortion access,

inequities that are affecting rural and remote Saskatchewanians the most.

We have called on the government to start fixing Saskatchewan's uneven patchwork of abortion services by introducing a province-wide intake system and establishing surgical abortion centres in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. Women in rural and remote communities often have to undergo two-day trips for safe abortions. And those in urban centres have to navigate disjointed and uneven access.

Saskatoon and Prince Albert do not have surgical abortion centres akin to what exists in Regina, and without a central intake system, women outside self-referral zones like Regina have fewer options for discreet medical advice and often have to obtain a referral from their local doctor.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think what's most worrying though is this government's willingness to use the notwithstanding clause to roll back hard-fought human rights. The government has shown a complete disregard for Charter-protected rights, having rolled back the human rights of children, specifically queer and trans youth. Bill 137 that included the notwithstanding clause was a product of their failed pronoun and gender naming policy that was lambasted by the Children's Advocate, lambasted by a Saskatchewan Human Rights Commissioner — who resigned over the topic — lambasted by teachers and youth and so many folks concerned about queer and trans youth and their well-being.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this legislation will cause irreparable harm. This is legislation that will only increase the mental health and suicide crisis within the queer and trans community. And, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the youth of that community, and we are talking about a minority within a minority.

So today we ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker: whose human rights will we see rolled back next? Because when we look at this caucus and we look at this government, they are more fractured and divided than ever on the topic of reproductive health care and access to abortion. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, following that, one really has to ask where the government stands on reproductive health care and abortion.

And you know, they are very fond of quoting any number of our members, so I'm going to do a little quoting of their members today. While the Sask Party's on record aiming at restricting reproductive rights and access to abortion, the Saskatchewan NDP caucus has always called for safe and expanded access.

Dear Sask Party, we can read your quotes too. Let's take a peek at the choice comments some of your members have been putting out into the world, to end off my debate portion. First I'm going to start with the member from Saskatoon Willowgrove, a former leadership contestant, was interviewed by RightNow, an advocacy group that works to elect pro-life candidates. In it he states unequivocally, "Abortion should be restricted to when the life of the mother is in jeopardy, and even then only on a case-by-case basis."

In the same interview he echoed his firm belief in parental consent. This quote goes on: "I believe that there should be parental consent for any major procedure for children under the age of 18." Would this government use the notwithstanding

clause to do just that? Who's to say what rights they will trample next?

Next we have the MLA for Yorkton, at one time the minister of Rural and Remote Health, ejected from his caucus over comments he made to a pro-life convention encouraging convention-goers to continue their battle. And he said that he would use every single tool in his tool box to advance their agenda. Now we don't see that member sitting on the cabinet benches, but we still do see him sitting in government leadership. Where does this government stand on this issue?

Next we have our Minister of Justice, the heart of law-making in our government. An anti-choice advocate and regular contributor to pro-life news for over a decade, she's referred to advocating for abortion rights as some sort of psychological cover and puts Canada's laws on abortion akin to the eminent company of North Korea. She is later quoted in the article that's on RightNow . . . No, sorry. This is an article she wrote for a pro-life news article:

Doesn't it simply make sense on every level — psychological, humanist, legal — that while abortion should be available for the first trimester or so, more serious hurdles should be put in place after that, considering what we know about fetal development and rising survival rates?

Well, Minister, I would also dare you to unmuzzle your caucus as we discussed Bill 137, as only three members of that caucus rose to speak on it. I hope that you would continue to unmuzzle your caucus on their true beliefs around reproductive access and abortion care.

Where does the Sask Party stand on reproductive health care when so many members continue to foster pro-life beliefs? The anti-choice and pro-life movement is alive and well in this caucus. The Saskatchewan NDP affirms our commitment to reproductive health care through this debate, and we'll be seeking the exact same commitment from the Sask Party . . .

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to rise in the House today to speak to the motion put forward by the member for Saskatoon Fairview. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when it comes to the motion, I think we can all agree, whether it is reproductive health care or access to services, investing in health care is important to all Saskatchewan people. This government has made significant investments in our health care system. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the improvements have been made and continue to be made to ensure services for all residents. In order to provide services for people, we need investments in people and equipment and facilities.

Since 2007, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan has invested more than 2.4 billion in major capital projects, building improvements, and equipment upgrades for our health system, including 338 million in the '23-24 budget. Mr. Deputy Speaker, these investments support health facilities to continue meeting the needs of a growing province to help us to provide the services needed including reproductive health.

The 2023-2024 budget includes the following funding for major

capital projects planning: 98.6 million for the Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert, 7 million for the Regina urgent care centre, 3 million for the Saskatoon urgent care centre, 38 million . . .

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I'd ask that the member opposite stick to the motion. It's very clear that it's about reproductive health care including abortion and the implementation of measures to require parental consent. This minister is just reading talking points about general funding for hospitals. He needs to stick to the motion.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I believe the member . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Order, please. Order. I believe the member is . . . Why is the Deputy House Leader on her feet?

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would argue that this is a topic of health care so he is just speaking to that point.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I believe the member is talking about health care and I ask the member to resume the debate.

[11:45]

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I was talking about the Regina urgent care centre, an important investment of \$7 million. And \$3 million for the Saskatoon urgent care centre, 38 million for the Weyburn hospital project.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, funding has been allocated for early project planning for the following priorities: 250,000 for Rosthern Hospital, 250,000 for Battlefords district care centre, and 250,000 for Esterhazy's integrated facility. Mr. Deputy Speaker, all of these investments lead to better services for all Saskatchewan people. Saskatchewan, like many other provinces and territories, funds hospital and physician costs related to access to reproductive health care.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, progress continues on the four pillars of Saskatchewan's health human resources action plan to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain more health care professionals, including nurses. Having high-quality health care professionals helps all Saskatchewan people access not only reproductive services including abortion, but services in general.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are so fortunate to have the good drug plan that we do here in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan drug plan is one of the most comprehensive drug plans in Canada with over 5,600 medications listed in the Saskatchewan formulary. There are also affordable birth control options available in Saskatchewan. Multiple community-based organization partners also provide counselling services including inexpensive birth control options.

The Ministry of Health, Mr. Deputy Speaker, funds several sexual health clinics in Saskatchewan. These clinics provide a

multitude of services such as education, pregnancy testing, and free condoms to promote safe birth control. Expanding the scope of practice for pharmacists to be able to prescribe medications, including birth control and morning-after medication, also improves access for those who may not be able to see a health care practitioner in their community.

The decision to fully fund Mifegymiso in Saskatchewan is consistent with other Canadian jurisdictions. Mr. Deputy Speaker, effective June 2019, it became covered at no cost for eligible Saskatchewan health beneficiaries. A number of supports related to assisted reproduction are covered including physician services, lab testing, some genetic testing or counselling service, and ultrasound examinations for fertility investigations. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this includes tests and examinations for all people. The provision of these services do not require prior approval, and there is no age restriction on these services.

In Saskatchewan, individuals pay for contraceptives according to their coverage, copayment, and/or deductible. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are programs available to ensure cost is not a barrier to treatment for those with low income or high drug costs. People on income assistance are eligible to receive listed contraceptives at \$2 or no cost, depending on eligibility, as are those under 18 years of age who are eligible for coverage under the family health benefits program.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the next four years the Government of Saskatchewan plans to invest almost 1.8 billion in health care infrastructure. And our plan to develop a new two-year physician assistants master program to begin in the fall of 2025 will support all Saskatchewan people in providing health care services. New training opportunities at Gabriel Dumont Institute are being offered to Indigenous students, including a phlebotomy program and an Indigenous birth support worker program.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, health and reproductive rights are personal. Our government will continue to provide services under the *Canada Health Act* and to invest in the services that people need. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts on abortion and contraceptives: abortion continues to be a covered medical procedure under the *Canada Health Act*. Saskatchewan will continue to follow the *Canada Health Act* by providing that service and funding related to hospital and physician costs. Reproductive rights are very important, and I will continue to be a strong voice for Saskatchewan people.

Accessibility. Our government is always looking for ways to provide greater access to health services. That's why Mifegymiso was added to the Saskatchewan formulary on September 5th, 2017. Effective June 2019 it became covered at no cost for eligible Saskatchewan health beneficiaries.

The decision to fully fund Mifegymiso in Saskatchewan is consistent with other Canadian jurisdictions. Individual pharmacies stock drug inventory based on demands. If Mifegymiso is not available, the pharmacy will typically order it from their wholesaler and have it delivered the next day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, contraceptives coverage programs are available to ensure cost is not a barrier for those with low income or high drug costs. People on an income assistance are eligible to

receive listed contraceptives at \$2 or no cost depending on eligibility, as are those under 18 years of age who are eligible for coverage under the family health benefits program.

Contraceptive options such as condoms are available at no cost from many community-based organizations across Saskatchewan. And the Ministry of Health and Saskatchewan Health Authority provide funding . . .

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Hearing from my colleague the Health critic and Saskatoon Nutana, they've canvassed very well some of the barriers to access. We still see some of the inequities here in Saskatchewan. I think I'm going to speak a little bit about the history.

But I just have to say, you know, it's disappointing to hear the members opposite spend the balance of their time on this very serious motion on talking about capital investments and general health care spending, and really offering no comfort to the people of Saskatchewan that they strongly believe in a woman's right to choose, a woman's right to access reproductive care, and that this stunt they've pulled with Bill 137 isn't going to translate into turning the clock back on this issue here in Saskatchewan in minors seeking abortions or reproductive health care here in Saskatchewan. We've seen absolutely no comfort coming from this government about where they stand on that.

It's hard to talk about the history of the struggle for abortion access without talking about the United States. In the US, abortion rights were guaranteed we know for decades by a 1973 decision, *Roe v. Wade*, which was important for American women but also made US an accessible place for abortions to folks in Canada who . . . and particularly in Saskatchewan in the days when no access was available. I recall my mom, who is a provider, talking about those early days of her practice where women had to exclusively cross the border into North Dakota and Montana to seek abortion access, Mr. Speaker.

Then last year, 50 years after that initial decision, *Roe v. Wade* was overturned by the US Supreme Court. Of course we know that the court's fundamental makeup was changed by Donald Trump's appointment of conservative justices. This gave individual states free rein to decide whether and how to restrict abortion access or ban it outright. And while since then we've seen huge wins for access, even in red states, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this week's election results in Ohio guaranteeing abortion access in a landslide, and Democrats winning in both Virginia and Kentucky, support the notion that favouring abortion access is something that most people believe in, Mr. Speaker.

And indeed the campaign to defeat *Roe v. Wade* was led by far-right, evangelical Christian groups in southern states like Mississippi and Alabama, ironically states with the highest infant and maternal mortality rates. And hundreds of thousands of women wanting abortions live in states now where it is banned, sadly.

Going out of state will be challenging for people of colour or limited financial means, migrants, minors such as the 10-year-

old rape victim who was prevented last year from crossing state lines for an abortion. People like that, the member for Saskatoon Willowgrove has gone on the record saying he doesn't believe should have access to abortion, Mr. Speaker. He has said very clearly, unless the mother's life is in jeopardy, and even then on a case-by-case basis. This is an extreme view we see coming from members of that Sask Party government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The option of medical abortion is already illegal in 32 states. And I recently heard of one state that is now using a lab test to detect Mifegymiso in the blood to identify women who may have caused their own miscarriages, and thus face legal sanction. So despite the support for abortion access remains strong across North America, we must not take it for granted.

And this government's record on this is troubling at best. We have, as my colleagues have pointed out, now a Justice minister whose record on this issue is clear as day. She is anti-choice. She has expressed anti-choice views. We have the member from Saskatoon Willowgrove — no exceptions unless a mother's life is at risk, and only then, it should be on a case-by-case basis. We have a premier who is endorsed by anti-choice groups. So at best we have a Sask Party government that evades, equivocates on this issue.

Even now during this debate, they can barely get to the topic. They finally land on the topic with two minutes remaining. They're not comfortable with this topic. Their heart is not in it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And now with what we've seen with invoking the notwithstanding clause to trample on the individual rights of vulnerable children, the people of Saskatchewan can't help but wonder: notwithstanding what they think about pronouns, who are they coming for next? This is an extreme action from this far-right Sask Party government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In Canada prior to 1969 abortion was illegal in Canada. It was done clandestinely. In the '60s, abortion and birth control were not talked about. If a woman got pregnant, she was sent away to a home for unwed mothers or, if she had money, to a clandestine abortion clinic out of country rather, Mr. Speaker. We know that restrictive abortion laws do not stop women from getting an abortion they want or need but do make it more difficult, more expensive, more dangerous.

In 1969 Pierre Trudeau brought in the *Criminal Law Amendment Act*. It quickly became apparent though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it had not solved anything. It legalized abortion only under very restrictive conditions — only in hospital and only if the pregnancy posed a, quote, danger to health or life of the woman. This was determined by a three-doctor therapeutic abortion committee, invariably male, who never actually had to meet the patient and were under no obligation to explain their decision to the patient or the doctor. Hospitals had no obligation to have such committees and most did not. And most obstetrician-gynecologists wouldn't perform the procedure.

The restrictive law was thought to be responsible for 2,000 deaths annually in Canada from illegal "botched" or self-inflicted abortions — the single highest cause of maternal mortality in the country. Nineteen out of twenty requests to this committee for abortion were refused by doctors even before they even reached

hospital boards. And an estimated 20 to 40,000 women were hospitalized in Canada every year with complications with illegal abortions. We cannot go back, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There were clearly documented cases of forced sterilizations of Indigenous women requesting abortion or unwanted hysterectomies in return for abortions. Those who could access the procedure faced constant moralistic lecturing about the sanctity of life, humiliating treatment, and lonely solo bus rides across the borders to expensive clandestine clinics, never knowing what awaited them.

As a teenager, my mom recalls listening to her mother, a psychiatrist, dictate letters to this committee on behalf of women needing abortions, arguing for a broad definition of health to include social and mental health issues.

[12:00]

Her most ingrained memory was a case of a 12-year-old child impregnated by her 17-year-old brother, referred to the then professor of obstetrics at University Hospital, Saskatoon, who after a 15-minute assessment stated: “She was a healthy little girl who knows the difference between right and wrong.” Her request was denied, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is the history of abortion in this province.

These cases account for my grandmother and then my mother becoming pro-choice advocates, and eventually in my mother’s case, a provider of abortions. For me, the formative moment came in the ’90s in Saskatchewan when I was a child. Canada was not spared the violence often associated with American battles for reproductive choice.

Between ’94 and ’97 there were three high-profile shootings of Canadian physicians who were abortion providers. Dr. Garson Romalis was the victim of a sniper attack, eating breakfast in his Vancouver kitchen. He narrowly survived. Two other Canadian physicians were victims of AK-47 rifle attacks in Ancaster, Ontario, Dr. Hugh Short, and Winnipeg, Dr. Jack Fainman.

Here in Saskatchewan, providers like my mother and Dr. George Carson were told by police to take different routes home on their way home from work, and were made to wear bulletproof vests. During family dinners, we were told to close our blinds and we did, Mr. Speaker.

The perpetrator of these shootings was James Kopp, an anti-abortion fanatic who was subsequently found living in Ireland, protected by pro-life organizers. He was eventually convicted of the murder of the American abortion provider Dr. Barnett Slepian in New York. However he was probably not the perpetrator of the attack on Dr. Morgentaler with garden shears in 1983 or the bombing of his Toronto clinic in 1992. Out of these events we saw terms such “pro-life” fittingly changed to “anti-choice,” Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to say before I end . . . I had a lot more to say, but 10 minutes sure does go quick, especially when you’ve gotten used to being on your feet for seven hours during emergency sittings.

Speaking of that emergency sitting, I think that this issue is alive and well because what we’ve seen from this government —

despite the fact that they stood up in their debate and said, well this is a personal decision, this is a personal right — we saw that they had no concern for the personal decisions or personal rights of vulnerable kids just weeks ago in this House, Mr. Speaker, when they invoked the notwithstanding clause to trample their rights. So again, we need a clear commitment from this government that women, that minors seeking abortion or health care are not next.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise in this House today to speak on the motion put forward by the member from Saskatoon Fairview. Mr. Deputy Speaker, an abortion is an insured service under the federal *Canada Health Act*, and all provinces, including Saskatchewan, must adhere to this Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, first and foremost, reproductive rights are very personal. They are about the fundamental principle that individuals have the right to make decisions about their own bodies without coercion, without discrimination, and without violence.

Saskatchewan, like other provinces and territories, funds hospital and physician costs related to access reproductive health. The Ministry of Health has no role in decisions regarding patient care. It is up to the physician, in discussion with the patient, to determine the treatment for a patient regarding their reproductive health.

The health and well-being of all Saskatchewan people is very much a priority for our government, with record investments in health care year after year. This year’s budget has dedicated a record-setting \$6.9 billion to health care funding that supports access to health care. Initiatives such as investment into our health care human resource action plan is a top priority and supports increased access for all Saskatchewan people.

On April 1st of this year, our government enhanced the rural physician incentive plan to attract and retain more family physicians in rural and remote areas of the province. This plan was initiated by our government in 2013 to incentivize recent grads to practise in rural and northern Saskatchewan, and now has been extended to include physicians in the Saskatchewan international physician practice program. This will improve all health care access to residents in the rural and remote area of our province. The training expansion is part of Saskatchewan’s health human resources action plan which aims to recruit, train, incentivize, and retain health care providers in a key range of professions.

New training opportunities are being offered for Indigenous students, including a phlebotomy program and an Indigenous birth support worker program now available at Gabriel Dumont.

Expansion of the scope of practice for pharmacists to be able to prescribe medications including birth control and morning-after medication also improves access for those who are unable to see a health care practitioner in the community.

The Government of Saskatchewan is expanding the scope of practice for pharmacists, nurse practitioners, and advanced care

paramedics which allow these professionals to provide additional services, optimize their skills, and improve patient care throughout the province. Expanding scope of practice in these three professions will serve to strengthen our health care teams, improve patient access to health services, and help build additional capacity within our health care system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are fortunate to live in a province with a provincial drug plan. Fifty-six hundred medications are now listed in the Saskatchewan formulary. Mr. Speaker, that is 44 per cent more medications available at reduced cost to Saskatchewan residents than when the Saskatchewan Party formed government in 2007. Many of these medications added since we formed government are life altering for those who need them. In our latest budget, the drug plan portion of the health care budget is nearly \$400 million. That's an increase of nearly \$145 million to the drug plan funding since coming to office in 2007.

There are affordable birth control options available in Saskatchewan. The Ministry of Health funds several sexual health clinics in Saskatchewan. These clinics provide a multitude of services such as education, pregnancy testing, and free condoms to promote safe birth control. Multiple community-based organization partners also provide counselling services, including inexpensive birth control options. Some of these benefits may qualify for rebates upon submission.

Mifegymiso was added to the Saskatchewan formulary on September 5th, 2017. Effective June of 2019, it became covered at no cost for eligible health beneficiaries. The decision to fully fund Mifegymiso in Saskatchewan is consistent with other Canadian jurisdictions. Individual pharmacies stock drug inventory based on demands. If Mifegymiso is not available, the pharmacy can typically order it from their wholesaler with next-day delivery.

Access to quality maternal health care is essential to protect the well-being of pregnant individuals. It is crucial to ensure that all expectant mothers receive the care they need to have healthy pregnancies and safe deliveries.

In Saskatchewan, a number of supports related to assisted reproduction are covered, including physician services, lab testing, genetic testing, or counselling services and ultrasound exams for fertility investigations. These tests and examinations are for both males and females. Once fertility problems have been diagnosed, certain procedures to assist in establishing a pregnancy, such as artificial insemination, are covered. The provision of these services does not require prior approval, and there is no age restriction.

Our legislation defines insured services that are medically required services. The Saskatchewan formulary lists a variety of birth control options, including oral contraception, hormone injections, and intrauterine devices. In Saskatchewan, individuals pay for contraceptives according to their coverage, copayment, and/or deductible. These programs are available to ensure cost is not a barrier to treatment for those with low income or high drug costs.

People on income assistance are eligible to receive listed contraceptives at \$2 or at no cost, depending on eligibility, as are those under the age of 18 who are eligible for coverage under the

family health benefits program. People who are on SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] and SIS [Saskatchewan income support] programs may be eligible for the female contraceptive devices with prior approval.

Reproductive rights are about public health access to health care, and this is something our government takes seriously and has made major investments in health human resources. 831 nursing graduates from Saskatchewan and out of province have been hired since December of 2022. The 2020 NDP platform promised to hire 450 more nurses over four years. We've added 615 in just one year. The 2023 budget provides the largest health infrastructure investment in history.

So in conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, reproductive rights are not just a theoretical concept. They are deeply personal and have profound implications for the lives and individuals of the people of Saskatchewan, something our government will continue to . . .

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The 65-minute period has expired. The 10-minute period for question and answer will begin. I recognize the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We hear a lot of things from the members opposite, but what we never hear about is how, when they had the opportunity to form government, they closed 52 hospitals and the Plains Health Centre. And we will never hear about what they will do to make up for those lost services.

But our government has a plan. We will continue to build and protect. To the member from Regina Elphinstone: how did the NDP party policy of closing the Plains hospital help all Saskatchewan people access all health services they required, including reproductive health care, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to correct the record each time this tired and out-of-touch government tries to resurrect a talking point that even their former cabinet minister and new senior communications expert has told them is a bit old and inaccurate, Mr. Speaker.

There are 52 health centres that are open and functioning to this day. And after 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 long years they haven't transitioned any one of them back. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member from Saskatoon Riversdale, in his statement, says he does not support the motion being put before the House. Can he explain why?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And thank you for the question. We believe that all people are entitled to have

access to health care service that people need and we should all treat them with respect, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Neither our government nor the Ministry of Health officials are involved in clinical decisions regarding patient care. The determination of appropriate care and the medically necessary service lies with the practitioner and the patient. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Lumsden-Morse.

Mr. B. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today as someone who has spent his life in Saskatchewan from birth till when the good Lord would call me home. And you know, I remember a time when the NDP was in government and they closed so many schools and 52 hospitals. It was the closure time of government. And not only that, the Plains centre, a facility that really should still be there, they shuttered access to health care and education for rural citizens.

[12:15]

To the member, and I want to make sure I get this right here. To the member from Douglas Park . . . Oh, Elphinstone. Okay, sorry. Where does it have to go? Saskatoon Fairview. Does the NDP regret this decision? Sorry, Saskatoon Fairview.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague already answered this question, so I'm not sure why we're back in this debate again. I know the members opposite want to talk about things that happened when I was 10 years old, but let's talk about what's happening today, Mr. Speaker.

After 16 years that they have been in government, Mr. Speaker, facilities across this province shuttered under this government, Mr. Speaker. Our phones, our emails ringing off the hook because of this government's decisions, their inability to recruit health care workers, their inability to retain health care workers that is closing facilities across this province today, Mr. Speaker, under their watch.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we asked a question. We didn't get an answer, so I'm going to put it to the member from Saskatoon Riversdale once again. Why specifically does he not support the motion put forward by the Health critic?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, as they well know, this is all part of the Canadian health Act, and we in the province follow the *Canada Health Act*. And physicians are responsible for accessing medical necessity procedures and clinical needs of patients that are referred to them. And, Mr. Speaker, our government nor the Ministry of Health is going to interfere with our doctors and their decisions and conversations with the

patients. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, this NDP opposition just can't seem to get the record straight. The last time they were able to form government they shut down rural health care and they opposed abortion clinics. Former NDP Health minister Louise Simard, the same one that closed 52 rural hospitals, said they remain strongly opposed to the establishment of abortion clinics in our province. And they went on further by suggesting that they investigate de-insuring abortions.

To the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre: does your party still oppose the establishment of abortion clinics just like it remains opposed to rural health care?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are the only party in this House that are advocating for increased access to abortion for rural communities. We know that folks living in northern and rural communities in Saskatchewan don't have equitable access to abortion services, to reproductive health. That's why we've been advancing the private member's bill we have, advancing the petitions we've been advancing. I mean this member has got to keep up.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale says that he does not support the motion. So my question for the member from Saskatoon Westview: does he support his colleague's position in opposing this motion before the House?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to talk a little bit about the investments. I know they want to hear more about that. You know, there's more than 550 seats that have been added to 18 post-secondary programs for priority health professions that are in demand and are hard to recruit. And the students will begin filling these seats in the fall, which will mean better health care.

This expansion builds on the initial expansion of nursing seats in '22-23 to add 150 nursing seats in Saskatchewan's registered nursing, registered psychiatric nursing, and nurse practitioner programs. And in June the College of Medicine announced an expansion of undergraduate seats by four this year, and a further four for a total of 108. Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies has expanded the health care aide program in Prince Albert with an additional 20 seats.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Arm River.

Mr. Skoropad: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2014 the Leader of

the Opposition's current chief of staff and former member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre tabled a petition calling on the Assembly to "speedily enact legislation requiring parental consent for abortion in the province of Saskatchewan."

To the member from Saskatoon Fairview: is that position the current position the members opposite now have, or was their member wrong in bringing this petition forth?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, our position is crystal clear if you'd have a look at the motion we've put forward, although their positions are very unclear, Mr. Speaker. It's been very unclear whether they plan to plow ahead with this idea of allowing parental consent. Are they still working on that, Mr. Speaker? We know they were looking at it in 2017. Is it something they're still working on? That's what they have to answer for today, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm really glad that the members opposite decided to bring parental consent into the conversation. So my question is for the member from Saskatoon Westview: can he explain in what scenario a teenager is too immature to consent to an abortion but mature enough to carry, give birth to, and raise that child?

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan legislation stipulates that any insured service covered by the province's publicly funded health system must be a medically required service. Physicians are responsible for assessing the medical necessity of procedures and clinical needs of patients referred to them. If they would listen, they'd learn a lot.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, neither our government nor Ministry of Health officials are involved in the clinical decisions regarding patient care. The determination of appropriate care . . .

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

Motion No. 1 — Regulation of Legal Firearms Possession

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'll be happy to make this motion at the end of what I'm talking about here. First off I want to say that I've been around firearms, Mr. Speaker, all of my life, ever since I was a kid. I'm a licensed firearm owner and I also have a restricted licence, which means that I'm allowed to have handguns, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, firearms are something that Western Canada, well all of Canada needs but Western Canada especially, around our farms, around our various different places. We need these firearms. They're a tool, Mr. Speaker.

You know, you just don't go and get a firearm licence out of a Cracker Jack box. You actually have to go through . . . you have to be vetted by the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. You have to go through training. You have to do a test. Of course your restricted licence is even harder to get because a restricted licence allows you to have handguns.

Now the federal government, I have no idea why the federal government is going and picking on us licensed gun owners. It's terrible. And then coming out and basically banning — well they started with 1,500; I think it's up to 1,800 — various types of firearms just because I guess they have a plastic stock or something like that, just because they're being more modern and they claim they look like an assault rifle, which there's absolutely, absolutely nothing out there that can define an assault rifle, Mr. Speaker.

And here's a catch. They claim that they're going to have this buyback program. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have six handguns. Now my daughter Gina, she likes shooting. And every time she comes home she wants to go out to the range and we go shooting. She also has a restricted licence. I said if anything ever happened to me, that she could have my handguns because they're all registered, Mr. Speaker.

Well in this Liberal-NDP coalition, what they've done is they went and put a clause in there that if I was to kick the bucket tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, they could turn around, the RCMP could turn around and come in and take my handguns and destroy them with absolutely no compensation. So I am sitting there with a few thousand dollars' worth of handguns that they could actually just come along and take and destroy. I can't sell them. I can't hand them off. I can't . . . You know, it's absolutely terrible.

Now like I said, we've had firearms around our place forever. And I can still remember back when I was a kid that we had . . . in our porch my dad had a gun hanging right over the porch door. And that was there for a reason. It was for varmints that would come into the yard.

My grandfather, my grandfather had a double-barrelled shotgun. My grandmother loved gardening and she hated rabbits because they would get into her garden. He had a double-barrelled shotgun sitting right by the door leading out to the garden, so if a rabbit showed up out there that rabbit was going to be a dead rabbit.

Anyway but we were trained. We were trained right from a young age to be very, very careful with firearms. We were trained how to use them and how to be safe. Like you know, you don't check a firearm by looking down the barrel. That's one really good start. Anyway these are things that people like us need.

And I have another story, Mr. Speaker. And this is just one of these things that happened. Our farm is right across from Pasquia park. One day the people who were working there came roaring over to our farm and they said, have you got a rifle here? Of course I said yes. Actually my exact words were, yes I do;

Trudeau hasn't taken them all yet. Anyway, I said, what's the problem? They said, we got a wild boar running through the campsite at Pasquia park. So I went in my safe. Unfortunately you can't just leave a gun sitting by the door anymore like we used to. So I went and got the safe, grabbed the gun, came out, and here this wild boar came running right into our yard. So I shot him right there. Luckily we have that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in saying that of course, actually I have quite a few rifles plus handguns. Going through and checking, I found out that I have three rifles that now the Liberal government claims are illegal. So I can't even use those. And here's the stupid part, Mr. Speaker. One of them's a .22. A .22, and it's considered illegal.

Mr. Speaker, this is absolutely ludicrous. If they want to come along and take it back . . . Of course they came out with a buyback policy — well this is a Liberal-NDP coalition, never could figure out numbers — where they originally said it was going to be between 400 and \$600,000 to come back and buy what they considered illegal guns. Well, Mr. Speaker, now it just came out the other day they figured it would be about \$1.8 million to be able to do this. And then to top it all off, the Fraser Institute has come out and said it's going to be closer to \$4 billion to be able to do something like this.

Mr. Speaker, this is an absolute waste of money. The Liberals are sitting there saying that, well, it's going to make it safer. No. You're not having licensed gun owners, like many of us people who are in this Chamber, you're not going to have licensed gun owners out there shooting. It's the gangbangers in Toronto where the problem is.

And what happens is these gangbangers — you know, they give them a pistol; they get a pistol; they smuggle it in from the US — they've never handled a gun before in their life. So they get out there and they go shooting, and what they do is, you know, they don't know how to shoot. They're not like me. They don't go to a range. They don't go shooting around a farm or anything. They've never fired a gun before in their life. So they're on the streets of Toronto and they start shooting at stuff. Well it's almost indiscriminate. They're hitting people, you know, because they don't know how to aim a gun, so they're just blindly shooting all over the place.

I guarantee you when I go to shoot at something, I'm going to hit it. Well most of the time. The odd time I'm a little shaky, I have to admit. But, Mr. Speaker, I can go out there and shoot at something and hit it. I'm not going to be shooting indiscriminately. And I know how to handle a firearm.

[12:30]

Mr. Speaker, some of this was brought in by — what was his name? — Wortman, who did the massacre down in Nova Scotia. Now here's the catch. He wasn't a licensed firearm owner. Actually he was prohibited from owning a firearm. And he went out there, and he had illegal guns that he had smuggled in from the States.

And of course this just gave the Liberals free run at saying, okay, we're going to get rid of all these guns. You know, the bad part is, Mr. Speaker, is that Stalin and Hitler liked to do the same

thing. They liked to confiscate guns from all the legal gun owners. Mr. Speaker, this is an absolutely terrible policy. And what we need to do is we need to move it back where we have a Saskatchewan firearms officer, which we do have.

We have a great firearms officer and I would like to read his résumé, Mr. Speaker. Because he's a good guy. I've met him. He's very knowledgeable. I'm going to read, I'm going to quote here. It was off of the Chief Firearms Officer:

Robert Freberg served as CEO of Brigadier Security systems in Saskatoon, and Elite Security systems, Regina, for 34 years. He's been a board member and a volunteer with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation for more than 40 years. He served as president for five.

Mr. Freberg has been an elected member of the national board of directors of the Canadian sports shooting association. He was a firearms instructor for the possession and acquisition licence and restricted possession and acquisition licence programs.

Mr. Freberg has been involved in recreational shooting sports as a competitor, hunter, and a licensed gunsmith for decades. He has a strong mandate to enhance education, safety, and communication to Saskatchewan's rural and urban stakeholders in his role as CFO.

These are things what we need in Saskatchewan. This is going to make our province move forward. It makes everything a lot safer, because when you have licensed, trained people such as myself and others within this Assembly, it's paramount that we are doing the right thing. We have gun safes. Actually I've got three gun safes if you really want to know, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the other things that were put into this, is you can have a complaint on Bill C-21. You can have a complaint. And let's say my neighbour doesn't like me for some reason. He can go to the RCMP and say I'm a bad guy. And the RCMP can actually come and confiscate my guns, and I don't have any recourse on this. There isn't even, isn't even a body to go and appeal this.

Mr. Speaker, this is ludicrous that the government, our own federal government would do something like this when I'm legal. I'm safe with them. And yet what do they do? They sit there and they let the gangbangers away. And actually they lowered — you know, Harper had in some pretty harsh laws — but then they lowered some of the incarceration for these people who are doing this.

It's not us legal gun owners who are causing the problem, Mr. Speaker; it's the gangbangers out there. And you can look at every statistic you want, and it's the people who are out there using them illegally. That's the people, Mr. Speaker, that we need.

And you know, I could come up with a gazillion different stories on things. You know, and even the former NDP, federal NDP leader tried to get in on this when he said, well he said he didn't think that, you know, they should be going after us law-abiding people. He's trying to use something as if he knew something about guns. He said, well he can remember when he was young he used to go hunting ducks with a .22. Well I've got news for

you. You don't hunt ducks with a .22; you hunt them with a shotgun. So in other words, just trying to cater to some of the people that were out there.

The problem is we've got these various different rules and regulations being put in by people in Ottawa who have never, ever handled a firearm in their life. They had absolutely no idea of what a firearm actually was. They've never shot one. Where us normal, legal, law-abiding citizens are being challenged by our federal government.

So the best way we can do this, Mr. Speaker, is to actually bring that control back into the province, Mr. Speaker. So I guess what I would like to do now is I would like to read the motion.

And I move:

That this Assembly calls upon the Government of Canada to devolve all relevant parts of the *Firearms Act* to the province of Saskatchewan in order to allow it to administer and regulate legal firearms possession.

I so move.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — It has been moved by the member for Carrot River Valley:

That this Assembly calls upon the Government of Canada to devolve all the relevant parts of the *Firearms Act* to the province of Saskatchewan in order to allow it to administer and regulate legal firearms possession.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Estevan.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will concurrently adjourn debate on the motion, and as well I would move that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The Government Deputy House Leader moved to adjourn debate. Okay. The member from Estevan, member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried. I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — And now I will move this House now adjourn.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The Deputy Government House Leader moved to adjourn this House. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — This House is now adjourned until Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:38.]

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Minister of Social Services

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