



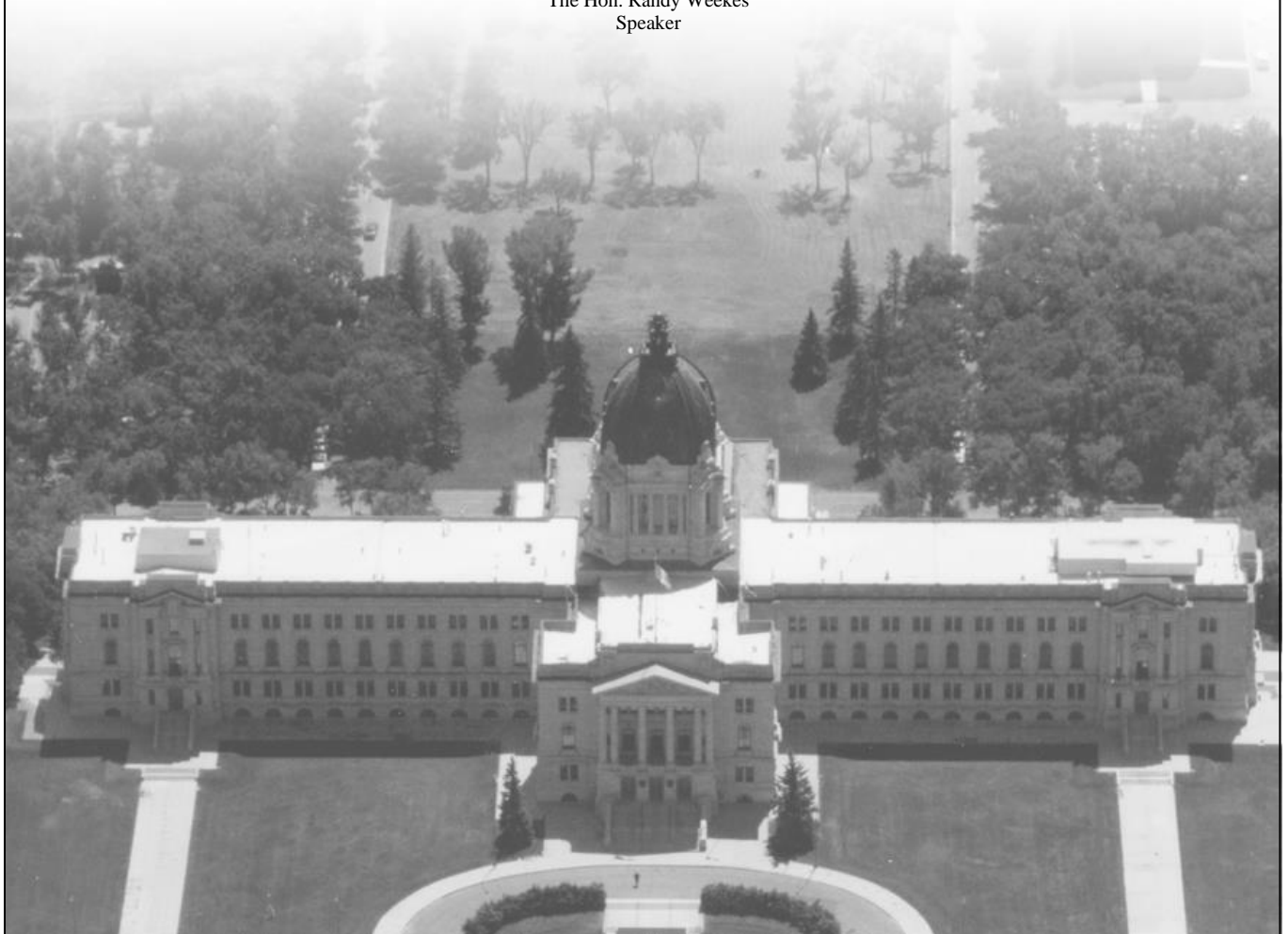
FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

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

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (SP)
Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)	Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)
Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)	Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)	Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	McLeod, Blaine — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Burki, Noor — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)	McLeod, Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)	McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Clarke, Jared — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)	Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)	Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)	Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)	Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (Ind.)	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) — 45; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 14;
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Independent — 1

Clerks-at-the-Table

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

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — On Thursday, November 30th, 2023 the Government House Leader rose on a point of order, alleging that the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre had repeatedly referred to caucus matters during question period, citing rule 20(2). I deferred my ruling so that I could review the record and am now prepared to rule on the matter.

Rule 20(2) states that “Questions on issues not officially connected with the government, of a private nature, related to Board of Internal Economy, caucus, party or political responsibilities are prohibited.”

Simply indicating that someone is a member of a caucus does not make it out of order. However, in accordance with this rule, the members need to directly connect their questions and responses to ministry-related business or the administration of government.

In reviewing the *Hansard*, it is difficult for the Speaker to determine from the Government House Leader’s point of order the specific instance in which rule 20(2) was contravened. I therefore find this point of order not well taken. However, in this highly charged atmosphere I’d like to remind members of the importance of behaving with respect for the Chamber and each other as members duly elected by the people of this province. I ask all members to govern themselves accordingly.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to you, through you to all the members of the Assembly, I’m truly honoured to introduce 32 spectacular students from Humboldt Collegiate in Humboldt. They’re accompanied by their teachers, Dave Millette and Dave Rowe, and it’s truly an honour to have them here today. And I hope they enjoy the proceedings, and I’m looking forward to meeting with them later. So welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s always an honour to do introductions in this Assembly, particularly when you have family members and some pretty good friends that are in the Assembly. So I’d ask at this time for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The member has asked for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — I want to thank my friend, the member for Kindersley, for saving me on that one. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, in your gallery are some, again, very special people to me: my daughter Katelin, an RN [registered nurse] in Yorkton, Katelin Cuthill. She has served in public health, surgery, now in recovery in Yorkton. And just obviously my favourite nurse but just an amazing nurse from the feedback I get from people that she’s interacted with.

Beside her is my granddaughter Malaya. She’s 14 years old. She’s a grade A student, an amazing athlete, but just an utterly amazing granddaughter and kid. Along with them is Katelin’s mom, the love of my life, Leone Ottenbreit, my girlfriend for 43 years, my wife of over 37 who is just an amazing person. But also she’s here today representing something that we’ve been involved with for well over 26 years, Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer. More about that in a member’s statement.

With the group up there as well is someone that’s become a great friend of mine, Dave Kerr. He says he’s retired from Knight Auto Group, but I would say semi-retired. He’s a pretty busy fellow. Again he’s done some great volunteering and work with us over the last year or so.

With this group is representatives of the Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation. The CEO [chief executive officer], Nora Yeates — give us a wave, Nora, so we know where you are; many here would know Nora — and members of her team, Jakki Crowe and Kayla Blondeau and Misty Selinger; and last but not least, Darren Adams.

Mr. Speaker, Dave and the Cancer Foundation representatives, as I said, have become really good friends of Leone and mine over the last number of years, especially the last year. We took on a project together as a team. They’ve accomplished much as a team, Mr. Speaker. They even surpassed some of the goals that we set that will enhance the lives of people in Saskatchewan going through very difficult times. Again, I’ll expand on that in members’ statements. But I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome these amazing citizens of Saskatchewan to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I also request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the gallery behind me this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, is Janice Colquhoun. Her sister Karen joins her. I want to introduce Janice to the Assembly. Many know her. She’s unfortunately retiring after 36 years of service within the Ministry of Social Services in child and family, Mr. Speaker, and I’d like to say a few words

about her.

So during her time with the ministry, Janice has worked on the front line to support children, youth, and families in need. She's also managed and directed post-service care for adoptees and their families. And most recently, of all the areas that she's worked most recently before retirement, Janice was the first executive director of Indigenous services in the ministry. She's led the provincial Cowessess coordination agreement team in their work and with ISC [Indigenous Services Canada] to develop the first coordination agreement in Canada.

Janice has several career accomplishments and awards throughout her time in the public service. In 2005 she received the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal award for distinguished service. In 2022 she was given the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service and the Deputy Minister to the Premier's Award of Excellence for Exemplary Teamwork. Last year she also received a Queen's platinum medal. Janice has led with passion and collaboration and always focuses on ensuring our children, youth, and families she works with are getting the best services possible.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think I'm out of line in saying that child protection and child and family work is some of the most difficult work you can imagine. And I certainly didn't realize that or understand — I was fairly ignorant as to the work that was done prior to me becoming a minister — but I can certainly say thank God for the wonderful people who take on this work in our province each and every day in general, and specifically thank Janice so much for her work over so long. We thank you for the work you've done and the example you've left behind. And many following you in the ministry will absolutely benefit from her leadership.

So I'd like all members to please help me welcome Janice, her sister, but thank her for her years and years of distinguished work on behalf of the most vulnerable people in our province.

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

Ms. Conway: — Seek leave for an extended introduction, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I first want to begin by joining the minister opposite in extending my deepest congratulations to Janice, and my thanks. I came across Janice a few times in the semi-adversarial role of estimates, and I always found her to be forthright and honest and helpful and clearly committed to her work. This is not an area that is without challenges, Mr. Speaker, and we extend our deepest gratitude to you for a career well-spent in this very important area of child protection. So thank you for your service to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there are two folks sitting here on the Chamber

floor: Brenda Edel and Lynnett Boris. I want to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. And then we have, in the Speaker's gallery also, Dylan Morin and Odin Swidzinski. They were here as part of a rally outside of the legislature of disability advocates, Mr. Speaker.

And we've just been chatting, and the phrase "never underestimate a small group of citizens' ability to change the world" came to mind as I was visiting with this group outside. They have been working for nearly a decade, I believe, in trying to bring about accessibility legislation to Saskatchewan. That has been a long fight, and I understand that the Act was proclaimed just yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

Now I also understand that two of these folks have applied for the advisory committee. That role will be ever so important when it comes to this legislation. They will be key in forming the regulations that go with this legislation. And of course a lot of the standards and the teeth, the penalties will be outlined in those regulations. So we're waiting with bated breath to see that advisory committee come to fruition and for them to be able to get into the good work of working on those regulations.

So I did want to just take this opportunity to thank the four that have joined us today. There were more, but they were cold and they had other things to get to. And these four decided to come in to join us and watch the proceedings today, so I want to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, there's a school group from my constituency here today from Seven Stones Community School up in the — oh, help me out, Trent — the east gallery with their teacher, Ms. Hunter.

Now I believe this is a grade 7/8 class. And I'm really looking forward to meeting with them after and hearing their questions. And I just want them to know that they have a bit of a high bar to meet because a few weeks ago I met with Ms. Klaptchuk's grade 1/2 class, and they peppered me with questions. It was intense. They had lots of questions of a personal nature sometimes, but about health care workers. Yeah, they wanted to know about my kids, but they wanted to know about shift work, health care workers, the child protection field. Like, wow. I was stunned by these grade 1/2s from Seven Stones. So I am really hoping to hear some tough questions from these guys.

I don't know Ms. Hunter, but I know she's known to and admired by a few members on this side. I think she might commute up Elphinstone Street, the walk. Yes. Okay, so I've never met Ms. Hunter, but I just have to say this on the record. I have admired her as a . . . She's a walker. She commutes to and from school, it seems like, rain or shine every day. I'm often rushing from one thing to the other, usually late, and I see her. And I'm just like, wow, no matter the weather, she's out. And I have often admired it and thought I need to walk more. So anyway I wanted to give her that shout-out. You know, she's seen and acknowledged in the community for that.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members in welcoming this grade 7/8 from Seven Stones to this their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and all members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce a constituent, Lizzy McKay who is in the top row, west gallery there. She was born and raised in Melville. As a first-year university student at the University of Regina here, taking business, she tells me she'd like to open up her own clothing business here when she graduates.

Fun story about Lizzy. When we were walking through the building here before, I asked her if she'd ever been here before. And she said, well actually the one day that we were ready to go, I was the only student that came to class that day, and the bus never left. And I will expand on what that means a little further in a member's statement about Lizzy McKay.

I would like all members to welcome Lizzy McKay to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join with my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre in welcoming Lynnett Boris to her Legislative Assembly. I met Lynnett for the first time during the Saskatoon Meewasin by-election, and she was a tireless volunteer in the office. Since then I feel like I've gained a new friend.

And I'm so proud of Lynnett. She's very active in her community. She's involved with Barrier Free Saskatchewan, she's involved with her King Edward community, and she's actively involved in our Saskatoon Meewasin executive. And for that I am so grateful. And so, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask all members to welcome her again to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Ask leave for an extended introduction, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[13:45]

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I have a few people to introduce this morning. I'll start off with, up in the west gallery, a friend of mine. His name is Wayne Bacon. Wayne would be known as a farmer in our area who has got a great reputation in the community. He's had his fingers in lots of things, but the thing I enjoy most about Wayne, I must say, is that he's an ideas man. And whether it's the shortline or some of the community solutions for difficult problems, Wayne's always there with a good idea and his rolled up sleeves to help fix things.

One of the things I'm looking forward to about Wayne is he lives near Kinistino, which is . . . If I get a chance to serve in this House again, I'm glad Melfort's inheriting Kinistino in part of

our constituency, so I'll be glad to be able to serve alongside with Wayne. And so to you and through you, I'd ask if we all welcomed Wayne to his Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet there's three young ladies up in your west balcony as well, and two of them aren't strangers to the Chamber here. We've got Marita and Shelby, and with them our newest addition to our comms team. And I don't know if you noticed, Mr. Speaker, but as I age and as we age there's fewer and fewer good angles to work, and so these three miracle workers are doing a great job keeping us on message and getting the message out to the community.

You know what? It takes a real smile, a genuine smile to draw out a genuine smile. And I think that Felicie Dela Cruz has been a great addition to our caucus comms team. So Felicie, she was born and raised in Saudi Arabia. She took her first bachelor's degree in the Philippines and she moved to Canada here to the city of Regina. She heard it was a great place to live; her brothers are here. So a few years ago she took her polytechnic degree, Bachelor of Applied Management, and we've had her here in our office since August.

And if there's one or two words that I would describe Felicie with, I would say first of all that she is joyful and fits in great with the team there. They're happy young ladies and you make a great team. And secondly, meekness, and meekness is strength and humility. And so please welcome these three girls, and especially Felicie Dela Cruz to her Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's to you and through you, I would also like to join with my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre to welcome Ms. Morgan Hunter to her Assembly. I had the privilege of going to university with Morgan to complete our education degree. And you know, here's another shining example of an amazing teacher in Saskatchewan doing amazing things for her students and for her community. So I just wanted to say thank you to you, Morgan, for all the work that you do.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to give another shout-out to my friend Brenda Edel, amazing human being that I have had the privilege to get to know over the last five, six years now I think. Brenda ran for the Saskatchewan NDP [New Democratic Party] in Rosetown-Delisle back in 2020, and we were both candidates during that time. And she of course is the candidate again coming up for the 2024 election.

While she's not, you know, advocating through politics, she is advocating as the president of Barrier Free Saskatchewan, and has done amazing work to help educate people on the barriers people with disabilities live with every day and, in that work, helped establish the disability wing in the Saskatchewan NDP.

And I have learned so much, Mr. Speaker, from Brenda and how we can all do better and how we will all experience a disability in our lifetime. And so it's something important to think about and to improve on in our society. So thank you, Brenda, for being here.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Today I'd like to join with the members opposite in welcoming the disability advocates here today from Barrier Free Saskatchewan and elsewhere, thank them for their passion. Every time we have meetings, that certainly rings true, is the passion they bring to the conversation. Appreciate that. And as we work on accessibility legislation, as that continues, I look forward to continued meetings. So thanks for everyone being here today, and welcome.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I just wanted to take a moment and pile on the love for Morgan Hunter. Morgan, obviously I don't know you as a teacher, but I know you as a human. Morgan's a personal friend of mine, and her husband, Brad, is a close friend of my husband's. They enjoy many, many shared hobbies and I know we both enjoy our small agents of chaos, my two children. Morgan's a proud mom to Owen and Jasper as well. I don't know her as a pedestrian. I don't know her as a teacher, but I do know her as a wonderful mom, a wonderful friend, and a strong member of her community.

And while I don't know her as a teacher to her students, I do talk to Ms. Hunter about her work. And I just want to say, she adores you and the community at Seven Stones so much. Even in the summer she talks about how excited she is getting to come to work and spend time with you. It's real. It's genuine.

And Morgan, it was such a nice surprise to see you sitting here. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude my piling on and ask all members one more time to welcome Ms. Hunter to her Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. B. McLeod: — 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 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 home 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 the great constituency of

Carrot River. I do so submit.

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 for universal access to birth control. Universal access to contraception is an essential component of the human right to health care. Covering the costs of prescription contraception allows people to have full control over their reproductive health. Lack of access is reflected in the significant number of unintended pregnancies and abortions in the province, which places strain on the health care system. Notably contraception coverage has been demonstrated to save the government \$7 for every \$1 invested, significantly reducing the financial impact of unplanned pregnancies.

Mr. Speaker, both British Columbia and Manitoba have committed to providing universal access to contraception. We should join with these Western provinces and continue to be a leader for the rest of the country.

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 adopt a policy making no-cost prescription contraceptive available to all Saskatchewan people.

The undersigned live in Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again to present our petition calling on the government to address the affordability crisis. The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the following: that inflation is 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, and that the Sask Party government's 32 new tax and fee hikes have made life more expensive. People are asking us for solutions on this cost-of-living crisis, Mr. Speaker, and I hope the government will heed those.

I'll 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 meaningfully address the affordability crisis in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories today reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise yet again today with another petition calling for the improvement of labour laws in Saskatchewan. Those who signed this petition wish to bring to

our attention the following: that even after the October 1st increase, Saskatchewan's minimum wage remains the lowest in Canada at \$14 an hour; and, Mr. Speaker, the official 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. It is well known, Mr. Speaker, that paid sick leave has been proven to save employers money while making workplaces healthier and safer for all workers.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, 71 per cent of workers in Canada have experienced workplace violence and/or harassment, and much more needs to be done to ensure that workplaces in Saskatchewan are harassment free.

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 have signed this petition today come from Weyburn and Stoughton. I do so present.

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am on my feet to present a petition calling on the Saskatchewan government to enact adequate, equitable SAID rates. The Saskatchewan assured income for disability program, or SAID program, is a program of folks with significant and enduring disabilities who have lasting barriers to employment. The current SAID rates mean that individuals who rely on this program live well below the poverty line. They live in deep poverty, Mr. Speaker. Poverty has deepened recently due to this cost-of-living crisis, and we haven't seen commensurate increases to the SAID program so that folks can keep up with the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, this petition also calls on this government to abandon its discriminatory clawback policies, such as the policy requiring individuals to apply for early CPP [Canada Pension Plan] and then clawing that back, dollar for dollar. Saskatchewan people are struggling to make ends meet during these generational inflationary pressured times, Mr. Speaker.

So with that I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan increase SAID rates to account for inflation, respect the constitutional rights of persons with disability in Saskatchewan by halting discriminatory practices and aligning policies with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, index SAID basic amounts to inflation going forward, and provide targeted relief to those in deepest poverty, such as single individuals paying market rent.

The signatories of this petition reside in Grandora, Saskatchewan. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Melville Student Recognized for Her Dedication and Perseverance

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In June I had the privilege of attending and bringing greetings on behalf of the province of Saskatchewan at the Melville Comprehensive High School graduation. During the ceremony there was a special presentation made to a graduate, Elisabeth McKay, who is with us here today.

Elisabeth, or Lizzy as she goes by, accomplished the incredible feat of never missing a day of school. Mr. Speaker, that entails being present, engaged, and ready to learn every single day for roughly twelve and a half years or 2,462 days, from kindergarten to grade 12.

I believe the CEO of Good Spirit School Division, Quintin Robertson, captured the moment well with his public comments that read:

Lizzy, an Indigenous student from our community, has exhibited an unwavering dedication to her studies that are unparalleled. She is an embodiment of the spirit of perseverance and determination. Through her relentless dedication she has not only excelled in her studies but also in her extracurricular activities. Her devotion, persistence, and focus have enabled her to leave a mark that will inspire the future generations of students at MCS.

A presentation of a \$250 gift card was presented to Lizzy, representing a saying, "If I only had a dime for every day I attended school." Lizzy is presently enrolled at the University of Regina as a business student. Through you I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in recognizing the dedication and perseverance of student Lizzy McKay.

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

Concerns of Lone Rock Residents

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the board of the organized hamlet of Lone Rock: Lloyd Ludwig, Donna Woods, Tracy Kashuba, as well as Terry Kashuba.

In 2018 the residents of Lone Rock were told by the RM [rural municipality] of Wilton that they would have to sell their homes or they would lose their water service. The water and sewer systems needed an upgrade, and the RM decided they weren't paying. Some sold their homes and later learned that the RM was buying their homes through a numbered company. The hamlet water service has been cut off, and many are relying on previous individual wells, using well water that damages appliances due to the mineral content, or having to truck water in.

[14:00]

They've contacted the Minister of Government Relations numerous times, only to be told to take their concerns to the Ombudsman, who then directs them back to the minister. And around and around it goes. In the meantime they have been waiting for the Saskatchewan Municipal Board to hear their case for close to four years. As of today, a hearing still hasn't been scheduled.

While the residents of Lone Rock are left waiting in limbo for their day with the Saskatchewan municipal appeal board, they are becoming more and more frustrated that their concerns are not being heard. This is a community where growth does not work for everyone.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Proceeds from Charity Raffle Support Cancer Patients

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, 18 months ago I received a call from my friend, former premier Brad Wall, representing himself of Flying W Consulting, and five other Saskatchewan philanthropists, including Knight Auto Group, Rawlco Radio, Broda Construction, Original 16 brewers, and RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] with an offer.

The group had built three other custom high-end vehicles to auction at Barrett Jackson, raising funds for charities including Alzheimer's, minor football, Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, and STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service]. They now had a \$185,000 Resto Mod Charger. Brad's comment to me: "I promoted Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer since we met, and I think we can do something bigger this year. Do you want the car?"

Humbled by the offer, I immediately accepted; however, thought the Saskatchewan raffle was more in line with our local focus. I knew to do it properly would take manpower and work. Leone and I engaged with our long-term partners and friends at the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan, and the Charity Charger Raffle was born.

We attended every large and some small car shows, sold tickets in person and online from April through August with Dave Kerr, who helped put the Charger together, and with the lead mechanic, Mark Bennett, looking after transporting it around the province. The draw in Saskatoon saw Brian Trebish of Yorkton win the 50/50, and Joey Holtorf of just north of Saskatoon take home the Charger.

Leone and I are very grateful to the sponsors for the donation of the Charity Charger, Nora Yeates and the Foundation staff for their help, Dave Kerr for his amazing contribution, and to all who supported the initiative to raise — get this — an amazing \$567,000 to support cancer patients and care in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Human Rights Activist Makes Saskatchewan Better

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In honour of

yesterday's international persons with disabilities day, I rise to recognize a constituent of mine, Michael Huck. I have had the privilege of getting to know Michael over the last year. He is a thoughtful, kind, articulate, and giving person. He also lives with a disability called spinal muscular atrophy. Because of this he uses a motorized wheelchair and needs the assistance of personal care aides for many activities of daily living, but that certainly hasn't prevented him from doing amazing things during his life. Michael acquired a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Regina in 1972 and worked for the federal government for 20 years in several roles.

Michael is a human rights activist and an advocate for people with disabilities. He has served as a board member; social policy researcher; lobbyist; and advocate for local, provincial, and national organizations of individuals with disabilities. One such example of his recent work was actively participating in the Saskatchewan accessibility Act public consultation process.

Michael feels strongly that the Saskatchewan legislature should create an independent disability advocate. His vision for the disability advocate would be to audit and provide an independent assessment of government disability programs and services and investigate and resolve citizen grievances.

I ask all members of this Legislative Assembly to acknowledge and thank Michael Huck for his past and present contributions to the betterment of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation Aids in Economic Growth

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Exciting days for education in Saskatchewan. If you haven't been keeping an eye on some of the Sask DLC [Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation] announcements as a student or as a parent, you may want to check out the K [kindergarten] to career focused options that are being developed and rolled out.

Darren Gasper and his crew have courses available from agriculture and anatomy to visual arts, welding, and wildlife management and all sorts in between, like power engineering level 4 — what on earth, Mr. Speaker? — dual-credit courses with U of S [University of Saskatchewan], U of R [University of Regina], Sask Polytechnic, Athabasca University, and Edwards School of Business.

The other day I joined with members and our Minister of Education in Saskatoon for yet another partnership announcement of the SDLC, this time with the autobody association of Saskatchewan.

With the can-do attitude in our province and our ever-growing economy, a workforce-focused K to career education system is what the people and the industry are looking for — an education system seen as a valuable partner in the economic growth of a province that the world is looking to for leadership in sustainable food, energy, resources, technology, and manufactured products.

That's our province, Mr. Speaker. That's Saskatchewan. There's a lot in the hopper, so for those looking for whatever reason to

have a little online education in whole or in part, the Sask SDLC is providing the broad spectrum of classes for students up to the age of 22, all for free, and all to help our students succeed and our workforce in this province match the growing need for what the world sees here in Saskatchewan, and that's answers and solutions for their growing needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

New Emergency Shelter in Meadow Lake Is a Community Effort

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last Friday was another great day in Meadow Lake, as I had the opportunity to join representatives from the Meadow Lake Homeplate Shelter Coalition Corp., the city of Meadow Lake, and Meadow Lake Tribal Council to celebrate the opening of a new emergency shelter in my hometown of Meadow Lake.

This shelter is opening in part due to government funding through the recently announced provincial approach to homelessness. Mr. Speaker, the province is investing nearly \$50,000 to fund five permanent emergency shelter spaces in this new shelter. This investment is included in the overall \$14.1 million commitment to create new permanent emergency shelter spaces in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, and other communities based on need. In total, up to 20 emergency shelter spaces in Meadow Lake will be supported through March 2024 through operational funding provided by the province, by the city of Meadow Lake, and by private donations.

And, Mr. Speaker, this was a genuine community effort, and I want to thank some friends who had a lot to do with this. I want to thank our partners, the city of Meadow Lake: Mayor Seymour, administrator Diana Burton, and the council for their commitment in putting nearly \$60,000 into this project. I want to thank Bob Steeg who was the Chair of the Homeplate Shelter Coalition and his entire board and volunteer team for putting this together. And I want to thank the MLTC [Meadow Lake Tribal Council] for their contribution as well, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Growth of Provincial Economy

Mr. Francis: — Mr. Speaker, members opposite aren't going to be happy about it, but I have more good news about the labour market here in Saskatchewan — 24,300 full-time jobs. Yes, that's how many new jobs have been created in the last year alone. On top of that, we have the nation's second-lowest unemployment rate at 5.1 per cent. The province set record highs for the month of November with 599,600 people currently employed.

This positive trend in job growth is further proving that efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce are paying off, and we are proud that Saskatchewan's labour market is ready to meet the needs of our growing province and world.

Statistics Canada's latest national GDP [gross domestic product] numbers place Saskatchewan as the top province in the nation for GDP growth. A 6 per cent increase from 2021 to 2022 saw the total dollar value of the province's 2022 GDP rise to 76.7 billion.

Saskatchewan also led the nation in retail trade as month-over-month trade was up more than 2.1 billion in September '23 compared to August '23. And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

Our Premier is proudly sharing the Saskatchewan story at COP28 [Conference of Parties 28], something the members opposite strongly oppose. After all, that's the party that saw our province shrink and investment flee under their tenure. Mr. Speaker, unlike the opposition, members on this side will never stop being proud of this province and will celebrate its successes. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Collection of Provincial Fuel Tax and Federal Carbon Tax

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver on the cost of living. Families in Saskatchewan are struggling more than anywhere else in the country, yet this Sask Party government is offering no relief. Instead we see them hiking taxes and fees at a time when families are struggling just to get by.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a proposal to remove the fuel tax from gas and diesel for six months to give families the relief that they need. When will we see the Sask Party government finally act to offer some much-needed relief to families in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Only too often, Mr. Speaker, we have to question what the members opposite say in their preamble because sometimes the facts are much different. She is well aware that Saskatchewan is the most affordable province in our country for a family of four when you take in taxes, housing, utilities all into consideration, and there's many, many, many reports that back that up. She is also well aware that there's over \$2 billion worth of affordability measures within our budget each and every time.

But furthermore just recently we had announced that we are not going to collect the carbon tax, the Jagmeet Singh-Trudeau carbon tax on home heating fuel. That is worth more to families in our province than what she is suggesting.

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

Ms. Beck: — Well, Mr. Speaker, apparently the minister wants to deny the reality of people in this province as they report it. But this is a government, that Finance minister, are so completely out of touch with the realities of people in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, reminded that this is the same Finance minister who had no regrets about an \$8,000 flight for a trip to North Battleford for lunch, and it's clear, it's so clear that she still doesn't understand the realities that families are facing.

Mr. Speaker, read the room. People in this province need a break and they're looking to this government for help. Why won't the Sask Party finally deliver some cost-of-living relief and why won't they give families a much-needed break at the pumps?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, each and every budget we give individuals and families within our province a break right within their personal income tax. We not only have the lowest personal income tax in the country, but it's indexed to help cushion it against inflationary pressures.

But she says, why won't we do something? We have just recently announced what we're going to do. We are not going to collect the carbon tax on home heating fuel, be it natural gas or electricity. That is something. And it's worth more, quite frankly, to those people who have to heat their homes — and it gets cold in Saskatchewan winters — than what she is suggesting in the fuel tax.

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

Access to Breast Cancer Diagnostic Services

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing on the cost of living and they're failing when it comes to health care. And, Mr. Speaker, nowhere is that more clear than when it comes to mammograms and breast cancer care. Now after refusing to listen to health care workers and after performing 10,000 fewer scans per year in the public system, this government is now sending women out of the province for care that they should be able to get here at home.

Mr. Speaker, it shouldn't have to be this way. Why did the Sask Party let things get so bad before they finally decided to act?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to begin by thanking all of our cancer teams at the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency in Regina and Saskatoon for the outstanding work that they are providing, treating people right across this province that are faced with cancer.

Mr. Speaker, as we discussed well in this House last week, some of the investments made into this particular area when it comes to women's health and to options for diagnostics and treatment for breast cancer, Mr. Speaker, a number of initiatives that are both medium and long term to address the vacancies we have when it comes to the requirement for filling the vacancies for specialized breast radiologists. But also the amending of a contract that the government currently has with a private provider, publicly delivered and publicly funded, I should say, in Calgary, to provide an option for women to be able to travel there to accept some of the procedures that they need on a very urgent basis, Mr. Speaker.

Contacts were being made after the announcement on Wednesday. People across this province were being contacted on Thursday and Friday, and I can confirm for this House that a number of patients have already accepted that offer and will be travelling to Calgary, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, no kidding. People who are on an urgent wait-list for a mammogram, with a lump, are taking him

up on the offer. But as I said, it doesn't have to be this way.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about this so-called solution from that government. Under his plan we're paying a private company in Calgary \$2 million for 1,000 scans. Mr. Speaker, that works out to \$2,000 per scan. Now what do those same scans cost here in Saskatchewan? \$206.20. Why are we paying almost 10 times more for women to get scans in Calgary instead of building up the capacity to do these scans here at home?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As indicated last week, this is a short-term solution to address the unacceptable wait time for scans, for biopsies for Saskatchewan women who are on the urgent and long waiting list, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to this though, as I've said before several times, Mr. Speaker, we are extending hours of service with additional volumes in Regina and Saskatoon.

[14:15]

We're also looking to utilize existing capacity or expand capacity in regional sites across this province, implementing 3-D [three-dimensional] breast imaging at SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] facilities across the province, also centralizing the booking for breast imaging across Saskatchewan in order to improve the access for Saskatchewan women so they have quicker access for patients.

Mr. Speaker, it appears that the members opposite would rather nickel-and-dime cancer patients across this province, would rather count those dollars and cents than get the women of Saskatchewan care that they need on an urgent basis.

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

Provision of Health Care Services by Private Facilities

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, what we're seeing from this tired and out-of-touch government is straight out of the right wing playbook: run a public service like mammograms into the ground, erode the public's trust in the public system, then privatize that same service, for private companies and donors to profit.

Unfortunately that's exactly what we're seeing with this Calgary mammogram program. The company the Sask Party's paying 10 times more per scan, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has uncovered their subsidiary has donated nearly \$20,000 to the Sask Party since 2016.

What does the minister say to Saskatchewan people who look at these facts and wonder who the Sask Party is really working for?

The Speaker: — I'd just like to caution the member not to be getting into party business and party comments, please. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll use this opportunity to provide the House with an update on the number

of surgeries that have been provided by our private surgical facilities that are part of the health care system, Mr. Speaker.

Since launching in 2010, these facilities have performed more than 154,000 surgeries to Saskatchewan patients, Mr. Speaker. Publicly funded, privately delivered surgeries perform roughly 15 per cent of the total number of surgeries completed in the province each and every year, Mr. Speaker.

This is an important component to our health care system, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that people across Saskatchewan get the surgeries they need regardless of where they live, as part of some of the work that is being done to make sure that we cut down on the surgical wait-list.

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

Electoral Finance Rules

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I can understand why this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government doesn't like answering questions about the special deals they make with their friends and donors. But it's our job to ask.

And you know, Saskatchewan people are tired of seeing this movie over and over. The Sask Party government paid 11.6 million to make an embarrassing lawsuit with one of their largest corporate donors go away, and now they're signing a deal with another company whose subsidiary has donated almost \$20,000 to the Sask Party.

There's an easy way to make this all go away, something the Sask NDP has been calling for for years: end the corporate donations, end out-of-province donations, put a cap on individual contributions, and put Saskatchewan people back in control of their democracy. When will this Sask Party government commit to doing just that?

The Speaker: — I just cautioned the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Now please stand up and withdraw and apologize all those comments. Withdraw and apologize.

Ms. Conway: — Withdraw and apologize, Mr. Speaker.

Okay, again, this tired . . . Will the Sask Party government commit to scrapping corporate and union donations, put caps on individual donations, scrap out-of-province donations, or is this Sask Party government afraid of this question?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we've canvassed this question on the floor of the Assembly repeatedly. We're going to be having a Board of Internal Economy meeting as well tomorrow with regard to election rules. These were the rules that were put in place by the NDP, Mr. Speaker, in fact, when they were in government.

We have significant caps on expenditures during election campaigns. We have significant expenditures . . . caps in place between elections, Mr. Speaker. That is how as a province and

how they, when they were in government, approached this issue. We think it's an appropriate path forward.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this is about electoral finance. This is about basic transparency and accountability. We absolutely have the right to know who the Sask Party government is working for, Mr. Speaker.

Why won't the Sask Party clear the air? Why won't they end out-of-province, corporate, and union donations once and for all?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to inform the House on something the public already know, who we work for as a government. We work for the people of Saskatchewan.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, we've been doing so with some degree of success for the past 16 years as evidenced by the fact that the Premier has a 54 per cent approval rating, one of the highest in the country which is in line with a government that has maintained the support of the public for a very, very long time.

And we know the members opposite, that deeply upsets them, Mr. Speaker. We know it deeply upsets them because they are very aware that they are going to continue to sit on that side of the House for the long, long foreseeable future, Mr. Speaker.

But what we're going to continue to do is work with the people of this province, work for the people of this province, delivering things like the highest rate of job increase in the entire country.

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

Information Reported in Public Accounts for Emergency Hotel Stays

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, smug and entitled isn't a good look for a government. That tired and out-of-touch government gets a failing grade when it comes to transparency and accountability. We see that when it comes to out-of-province corporate donations, and we see it when it comes to how they're handling their spending of hard-earned public dollars.

Last week we asked why \$172,000 paid to a hotel owned by the member for Regina Northeast doesn't show up in the Public Accounts. Does the Minister of Finance have an answer? Why doesn't this large sum of public money show up in the books as it should?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — It has been a long-standing practice for the use of hotels, and hotels were used for clients when the members opposite were government as well. It's been a long-standing practice that the cost of that hotel is attached to the client and therefore it is in the global number that shows up in Public

Accounts.

Because it belongs to that client, it's not disclosed as a specific address any more than if something is rented for that individual is a specific address. And that has been the accounting practice that is acceptable by the Provincial Auditor. The Provincial Auditor that the members opposite always says that they need to look into the books, she has approved this accounting practice.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — You know, Mr. Speaker, that Provincial Auditor is now reviewing this very matter. You know, and that answer just isn't good enough. Saskatchewan people expect their government to follow the spirit, intent, and the letter of the law.

The Public Accounts are supposed to show every person or vendor that receives more than \$50,000. It's important for transparency. There's no way that this hotel or any hotel should slip under the radar while receiving more than three times the minimum threshold. It's not right and it needs to be fixed. Will the Minister of Finance commit to that today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite said, his understanding and mine as well, that the Provincial Auditor is looking at the policies that the Ministry of Social Service is using, that they used under the NDP when they were government. Hotels were used in fact more than they are today. But that she is looking into that, Mr. Speaker. Either he trusts the Provincial Auditor or he doesn't. But he needs to say which side of that he's on.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I can be clear to the Minister of Finance: we have no question when it comes to trust of the Provincial Auditor. That's not who the question is about, Mr. Speaker.

After years of mismanagement and waste, Saskatchewan people know that when this government is talking about public dollars, they have to take what they say with a grain of salt. The Public Accounts are one of the most important tools Saskatchewan people have when it comes to transparency. The Minister of Social Services said that more than \$2 million was spent by Social Services on hotels last year. How many other hotels received more than \$50,000, and why won't the minister commit to making that all public?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — In terms of the information the opposition has been asking for, I've committed several times in this House that that work is under way and we are going to present that in due course, Mr. Speaker.

As the Minister of Finance just talked about, Mr. Speaker, the government and Ministry of Social Services follows *The Financial Administration Act, 1993* in determining how it

appears in Public Accounts. And so that information, I believe, is page 209 of the most recent Public Accounts. And high volume programs of a confidential and personal nature such as IA [income assistance] and child and family are reported to the Public Accounts together as one amount as per the government's financial reporting policy established under that Act.

So, Mr. Speaker, this practice of providing that information goes well into the early '90s, and so that's the same process as under the NDP.

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

Attendance at Conference of Parties 28

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This tired and out-of-touch government has completely lost the plot. They don't think they owe any answers to Saskatchewan people on deals that directly benefit their friends and donors. They don't think they owe any answers to Saskatchewan people when it comes to the Sunrise Motel. And they certainly don't think they owe any answers to Saskatchewan people when it comes to the Premier's million-dollar trip to Dubai, the most expensive photo op in Saskatchewan history.

So a simple question to the minister: how does hosting the Government of Newfoundland and the University of British Columbia help tell Saskatchewan's story?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to congratulate my critic on her first question in eight months. What I can tell this House, Mr. Speaker, which I've told this House before, is that we are not going to apologize for telling Saskatchewan's story around the world.

In this province we export nearly 70 per cent of everything that we produce. Mr. Speaker, last year a record-high \$53 billion of commodities we exported around the world. And I would actually point to the NDP approach to exports. What did they export in their last full year in government? \$16 billion, Mr. Speaker. We are exporting now three times more value of products around the world.

And the reason we're doing that, Mr. Speaker, is because we're working hard at reaching out. We are creating the conditions for our companies to be successful internationally, something that we know the NDP would never do because they never did. Their only commitment on this front is to shut down the international offices and to never, ever leave the province for any reason, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Mr. Speaker, it's delightful to know that I'm living rent free in that minister's mind. And if that's how much it costs to go to Dubai, we wouldn't have a problem with it. But it's a million dollars and, Mr. Speaker, it's not just the pavilion and the guest list that have Saskatchewan people asking

questions. It's also the advertising that that minister's bought on the Dubai metro: flashy electronic ads with this tired and out-of-touch government's logo. But thankfully, thankfully they steer clear from this Premier's actual thoughts on climate change: I don't care.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, this must be some of the most expensive metro advertising in the world right now. So simple question: which ministry is picking up the tab for these ads on Dubai transit?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I was hoping they would ask this question because I really want to talk about the message that we're sharing around the world to literally tens if not hundreds of thousands of delegates from around the planet that are hearing first-hand the Saskatchewan story.

And here's a story they don't want told, Mr. Speaker, because Justin Trudeau doesn't want the story told. Steven Guilbeault doesn't want the story told. And the Sask NDP don't want the story told. The only three groups, Mr. Speaker, that I know.

Here it is. I have briefing notes, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to table them after I read them. 4.5 million, Mr. Speaker — that's one of the headlines on my briefing notes here. Saskatchewan's enhanced oil recovery efforts have sequestered 40 million tonnes of CO₂. That's enough carbon to make 4.5 million homes energy neutral for one year. A story that they don't want told, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

Four billion, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — I just want to remind the minister not to use any props. I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again this is about taxpayer money during a generational cost-of-living crisis. So I'd encourage the minister, put down the briefing notes. I'm glad you can read them, but this is a true story. Saskatchewan people are struggling. They can't pay their bills. Women are being sent out of province for basic medical care.

The Premier, meanwhile, is living it up in Dubai with Jean Charest and Christy Clark. These members opposite, that minister is spending public dollars on metro ads in Dubai instead of on health care, Mr. Speaker. How does the Sask Party government justify that? And how much is the final bill going to be for this international vanity exercise?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House are very proud of what we do in this province and what our companies and our businesses do around the world in providing sustainable energy, providing sustainable resources, commodities, and food to every corner of the planet — something the NDP never did when they were in power, Mr.

Speaker.

We've tripled the exports from this province. What does that mean? It means jobs. It means investment. It means opportunity here in Saskatchewan. And they would shut it all down, Mr. Speaker. They would. They have said they would.

I can tell you about what we're proud of. With regard to my briefing notes, Mr. Speaker, they've acknowledged the briefing notes. Four billion. If the world produced helium like Saskatchewan — which she doesn't like — global emissions would reduce by 244 million tonnes of CO₂ per year. That's like planting more than four billion trees and letting them grow for 10 years.

1.55 million, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan's underground potash mines produce 50 per cent less emissions than competitors. This is the same as diverting 1.55 million tonnes of waste . . .

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a fairly straightforward question. How much is this going to cost?

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — \$238,000, Mr. Speaker, is what we're investing, and we are selling \$53 billion of commodities around the world. That is a bargain as an investment. That story needs to be told. Our producers here in this province are creating the energy, the food, the fuel, the fertilizer around the world in the best way of any jurisdiction on the entire planet.

They might be ashamed of that, Mr. Speaker, the only people who don't want this story told at COP. The only people: Justin Trudeau, Steven Guilbeault, and the Sask NDP. I think I know which side I want to be on.

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

Overdose Deaths and Treatment for Addictions

Ms. Conway: — Wow, Mr. Speaker, a quarter of a million on metro ads in Dubai. From his lips to your ears. Chump change, I guess.

Mr. Speaker, as we look back at how this government did in 2023, one grim statistic stands out. As of November of this year, overdose deaths in the province, suspected and confirmed, added up to 395. That's already worse than it was in 2022. Sometime this week we'll get the December numbers, Mr. Speaker, and it will be another record-setting year for overdose deaths in Saskatchewan.

How is that Minister of Mental Health and Addictions going to prevent another record number of deaths by overdose in 2024?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And first and foremost our hearts go out to the families of any individual who was lost to overdose this year or any year. No death to overdose is an acceptable death, Mr. Speaker, and that's why our government is focused on helping individuals who are struggling with addiction.

We've introduced a five-year mental health and addictions action plan that is one of the most ambitious plans in the country, Mr. Speaker. That plan will see more than double the addictions treatment spaces provided across this province. It's going to simplify the accessibility of those treatment spaces, and it will focus on a recovery-oriented system of care that will help these individuals in a holistic approach to meet them where they're at and ensure that they live healthy lives in recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 154 — *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2023*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 154, *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2023* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 154 be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the deputy committee Chair.

Standing Committee on House Services

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on House Services to report that it has considered certain supplementary estimates and to present its 14th report. I move:

That the 14th report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved:

That the 14th report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Committee of the Whole on Bills.

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for the Assembly to go into Committee of the Whole on Bills.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 151 — *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023*

Clause 1

The Chair: — The item of business before the committee is Bill No. 151, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023*. By practice the committee holds a wide-ranging debate during consideration of clause 1. The debate may include the principle and details of all clauses of the bill. Once clause 1 is voted on, the debate is limited to the clause under consideration.

Clause 1, short title. Minister, would you like to make your opening statement?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'll be joined by David Keogan, my chief of staff, as well as an official from CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan].

Mr. Chair, the overall intent of the legislation is to ensure that the efforts of our government to make home heating affordable through the removal of the carbon tax from SaskEnergy bills does not also implicate unelected officials or board members in any potential legal ramifications. The proposed amendments clearly state that the Crown and its minister have the sole authority to pay or withhold payment of any charge, tax, or levy required by part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

Specifically the proposed legislation designates the Crown as the sole registered distributor of marketable natural gas and non-marketable natural gas in Saskatchewan in place of the corporation with all powers, rights, authorities, responsibilities, and obligations for the purposes of part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, which is the federal legislation that pertains to the carbon tax.

The amendments state that any carbon tax payment to the federal government would be made from the General Revenue Fund and would be made at the sole direction of the minister. It also allows for the minister to issue directives regarding the distribution and delivery of marketable and non-marketable natural gas related to the corporation's role as a service provider to the Crown, and requires that all directives be made public on the corporation's website to ensure that responsibility for any decisions made with respect to compliance with federal carbon tax legislation remains with the elected government.

The amendments also indemnify the corporation and individuals within the corporation. This includes current and former directors of the corporation, officers of the corporation, employees of the corporation, agents of the corporation, members of the corporation, affiliates of the corporation, and representatives of the corporation. In short, Mr. Chair, the Crown and its ministers assume all responsibility associated with collecting and remitting or withholding the federal carbon tax.

Mr. Chair, I as minister and we as a government understand the potential consequences of any decisions we may take on this issue, but it is not our intent for anyone else to be made to bear the consequences of these decisions. We value the hard-working women and men at SaskEnergy who are providing essential services to the people of this province, and we want to see that work continue without fear of penalty for implementing decisions made by the government.

In closing, the legislation is about fairness — fairness for Saskatchewan families who've been left out of the federal government's carbon tax exemption and who are facing the same inflationary challenges that Canadians in the Atlantic provinces and all provinces also face. This legislation will ensure that our government, and me as the minister responsible, are the sole parties held liable for any decisions our government makes regarding the removal of the carbon tax from SaskEnergy bills. Mr. Chair, with that I would be happy to take the committee's questions. Thank you.

The Chair: — Well, thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there any comments or questions on the bill? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — So I'd like to start off by asking the Minister for SaskEnergy, if this bill passes and then comes into force on January 1st, can you tell me what efforts have been taken so far to ensure that the Government of Saskatchewan will be designated as a distributor by that date?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. So ultimately it would be up to the federal government to determine whether or not they would accept what the intent of the legislation is. Certainly we can pass the legislation and indicate that the new registered distributor of natural gas in the province would be the government.

SaskEnergy has written to the federal government to inform them of this impending legislation, the bill that is before the committee. And at that point, it will be up to the federal government to determine whether or not they will accept the

government in right of the Crown as the new registered distributor. That letter has been sent but a response has not been received at this point.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I mean certainly good to hear that there has been a letter sent by the corporation. What actions specifically has the minister taken to have a fed-prov discussion around this legislation and the decision that needs to be made by the federal government to designate the Crown as a distributor?

[14:45]

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. So you know, I would just say to the member with respect to the question, certainly I've introduced the Act. We're discussing it today. I've done a significant number of media interviews including national media outlets on this particular Act, so I don't think it's a surprise at the federal level. This had been raised, my understanding, when the Deputy Premier, the Finance minister met with the federal Finance minister and all Finance ministers at the federal-provincial-territorial level where the carbon tax was discussed.

The corporation has written to the minister responsible for the Canadian revenue agency. That is ultimately the agency that is responsible for making a change. Should the bill pass in the House through the committee and through third reading, I certainly will be following up with my counterparts at the federal level, keeping in mind that this does include a number of different areas that I may not have direct interactions with. But certainly I'll be reaching out to the applicable ministers.

But specifically it's the minister responsible for the Canada Revenue Agency that the letter would be sent to. I don't have a previous working relationship with that minister, but I will be reaching out with the minister upon the bill's passage in this House.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — What response is the minister aware of so far or has he received in response to the legislative amendments that are covered under this legislation?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I haven't received feedback directly from any federal ministers. I believe some have commented publicly on the idea of what Saskatchewan had initially proposed by exempting Saskatchewan families from the carbon tax, but at this point we haven't received a formal response from any federal minister.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I'd like to ask the minister, what has been the legal opinion you have received so far regarding the constitutionality of this bill?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So with respect to the advice that has been received . . . Certainly this bill seeks to clarify who would be the registered distributor of natural gas in the province of Saskatchewan. So from a legal perspective, there was nothing in and of itself which is in this bill that would be found to be not constitutional. Ultimately the question will be whether or not the federal government will acknowledge a change in the registered distributor, and we don't have any indication yet if they're going to acknowledge that change.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I think that is sort of one of the cruxes of this argument right now is the assurance that the federal government will recognize Government of Saskatchewan in right of the Crown as the designated distributor. And so given that fact and given what we've heard so far, what arguments or case does the minister intend to make to ensure that that is, in fact, that decision is made in time for the Act to take effect January 1st?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. The intent of the legislation is clear, is to remove SaskEnergy directors and officers from responsibility or liability in relation to the carbon tax. As I have indicated, and I think the member recognizes, ultimately it's the federal Minister of National Revenue who will need to make a determination as to who is registered as the registered distributor.

We believe that, as SaskEnergy is a provincial government entity, the provincial government should be able to determine how it allocates its various responsibilities in relation to SaskEnergy.

To the member's question, should the federal minister fail to make the change that we will be requesting upon passage of this Act, then that will be an opportunity that we would look to potentially explore additional legal challenges.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you to the member opposite for the answer to that question. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask, what is the government estimate of the amount of carbon tax that will not be charged to SaskEnergy customers in the last three months of the 2023-24 fiscal year?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Obviously it depends on gas usage over the next . . . for the three months, the last three months of the fiscal year. But our estimate is approximately \$62 million over those three months.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you to the member opposite. If I heard him correctly, I believe he said \$62 million over the next three months. I'm also aware that the intention is to have monies, and maybe you could confirm for me that those monies will be

coming out of the General Revenue Fund. Have there been monies set aside to cover that liability?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — So to confirm, for the months of January, February, March the total would be approximately \$62 million for those three months in total. So monies have not been set aside at this point, because at this point we are still collecting until the end of this calendar year. And so for the January remittance, monies will have been collected in December. We only become potentially in a point of non-compliance at the end of February.

And I would say that in the event that the federal government doesn't recognize what this legislation seeks to do, frankly, if officers and directors at SaskEnergy are still in the position of a financial or a legal liability, then we would look to see what options that we do have to ensure that they are not personally held liable or, frankly, more seriously, threatened with criminal charges.

So at this point, the GRF [General Revenue Fund] has not been collecting money because we are not out of compliance. And the carbon tax will be collected until the end of this calendar year, which will satisfy the remittance that would be needed for the month of January.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — With due respect, you know, if there is going to be a financial liability outstanding . . . You know, I recognize that one-month sort of offset, but should we not have seen a forecast last week with supplemental estimates to cover off that quite likely liability?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, I would say to the member that a decision has not been made at this point. The Act is still before the House. We certainly would hope that the federal government would provide tax fairness to all Canadians, including people in Saskatchewan. And short of that, if they don't do that, that they would at least recognize the jurisdiction of the province of Saskatchewan as it relates to the operations of a Crown corporation. And so no, it would be I think premature at this point to be forecasting any payments that would be paid for by the province of Saskatchewan.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Yes, of course we know that the bill is still before the House, but certainly these are pressing matters that are happening along an aggressive timeline. And so certainly I'm looking to see that there are contingencies and measures in place that account for that.

So I'd like to know, related to this financial liability, has the minister discussed this with either SaskEnergy's auditor or maybe the Provincial Auditor, the Provincial Comptroller? And if he has, will this bill result in either a liability being added to the financial statements or a contingent liability be included in the notes to the provincial financial statements?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member's question, no, I have not had those discussions with the auditor or the comptroller or the board's auditor. I think those are the authorities that she had indicated. Again there are several steps that we need to get through before we would ever contemplate putting the province or SaskEnergy in a position of being in non-compliance.

This bill today is not about making the decision to be not in compliance with the carbon tax. This merely changes the registered distributor from SaskEnergy to the government, to the government in right of the Crown.

[15:00]

There would be a number of steps that we'd have to go through before we would make the decision whether or not to be in compliance if in fact the federal government does recognize this change and does acknowledge what the changes in the legislation direct.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Could the minister please describe for me the pith and substance of this legislation?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member, the purpose of the amendments is to ensure that executive government and specifically me as the minister is the sole registered distributor of natural gas for the purposes of the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, thereby replacing SaskEnergy.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — And by that sole purpose, is it the intention of the minister that this legislation will have the carbon payments be paid out of the General Revenue Fund and that it will in fact apply to the Government of Saskatchewan?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So it does ensure that the government alone is responsible for the payment of any charges or payments that would be made under the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*. As well it would seek to indemnify the directors and officers of SaskEnergy from any potential damages, costs, or charges that result from any related action under the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* that is taken by the minister.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Just for sake of clarity, in response to that answer, the minister indicated that the government alone would be responsible any payments. But it's not clear to me that the government would be in a position where they have to make those payments. So what I want to know is whether or not the minister anticipates that there will be payments to the tune of —

I think you just mentioned for the last three months of the current fiscal year — \$62 million. Is that how much will be owing in the last three months of the current fiscal year, or does he think that they will be not obliged to pay?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly I'm not suggesting that anything in the amendments before Committee of the Whole today changes the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I'd like to ask what the government's estimate is of the amount of carbon tax that will be charged to SaskEnergy customers in the next fiscal year, 2024-25.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry, if I could have the member repeat the question. Sorry about that.

Ms. Ritchie: — Yes, sorry. I do want to clarify. I'm asking about the estimate of the amount of the carbon tax that will not be charged to SaskEnergy customers in 2024-25 and that will instead fall to the General Revenue Fund.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member's question, again it depends on usage based on weather conditions over the coming year.

I have estimates for the calendar year of 2024 to give you a sense. So the forecast is \$131 million in carbon tax, and then six and a half million dollars in GST [goods and services tax] that is charged on top of the carbon tax for approximately \$138 million.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I guess what I'm wondering now, as the minister has indicated this is legislation to provide relief for home heating, what I'd like to know is how does the government ensure that the way that the legislation is worded, that it is targeting home heating exclusively, or how has it taken that into account?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again what the bill does is specifically identifies as the sole registered distributor of natural gas in the province, the government — the executive government, the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy — and transfers that from SaskEnergy to the government.

So in terms of the design of the program, who would be applicable, ensuring that it's targeted to residential customers, that is outside of the Act and the amendments that we're changing. That can be done outside of the legislation and that's certainly what the intent is, is that this would be dedicated towards providing relief for residential customers in Saskatchewan.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I don't know. I do kind of remain a little bit unclear in terms of that response from the minister. Are you saying that that is a detail to be worked out after the fact or does it . . . Who will be, in the way that this is designed right now, what types of clients will this legislation apply to?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to be clear, the amendments to the Act don't change how the carbon tax is collected. That's always been a decision that has not been a part of the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

[15:15]

As a province we made the decision to apply as a rate rider on everybody's SaskEnergy bill, so the collection of the tax doesn't change because of this Act. What this simply does is that it transfers responsibility for being responsible for those provisions in part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*. It transfers those from SaskEnergy to the Crown in right of Saskatchewan. And so it would be from there, as we have always done, that we would choose which customers of SaskEnergy would continue to have a rate rider.

What the Premier has indicated, what the government has indicated is that residential customers would no longer, after January 1st, have a rate rider attached to their bill. But again that can be done outside of these amendments. The part 1 of the greenhouse gas price inclusion Act really speaks to the remittance of the carbon tax, not the collection of the carbon tax.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — So can you explain to me how that would be done? And just further to that, I'm not sure you understand the question. But you've indicated that there's sort of the subsequent actions that will be taken in terms of how it will be sort of directed as per the Premier's direction. And so I'd like to understand the mechanism for that.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So as I recall, when the decision was made to collect the carbon tax that was due to be remitted by SaskEnergy when the carbon tax was initially imposed on Saskatchewan.

My understanding and my recollection is that would have been likely through a cabinet decision item that would estimate the funds that would need to be raised and then look at the different classes of customer base in SaskEnergy. And we would have made a decision in terms of how that would be allocated.

We will go through that same process either through a CDI [cabinet decision item] or likely through a directive that now will be . . . As minister, we'll be empowered to make a directive under this Act where we would direct SaskEnergy to remove from residential bills the rate rider. We will keep it for the other customer classes within SaskEnergy. And again, that will either be done through a cabinet decision or through a directive upon

this Act being enacted.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I suspect that in the minister's deliberations with his federal counterparts, that they'll be very interested in how this classification as distributor will apply to how the carbon price is being collected and remitted. Have those details been provided to them?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to be clear, if I wasn't clear, the federal legislation is silent or agnostic on the collection of carbon tax. It only speaks to the remittance of the carbon tax. And so the changes contemplated in this Act don't in and of themselves change the . . .

It changes from SaskEnergy to . . . What we're intending to do is change it from SaskEnergy to the government, to me as minister, the responsibility to remit carbon tax. Collection has always been essentially for us to decide how that would be allocated in the province, whether it be a rate rider, whether it be through GRF, whether it be through the earnings of the corporation.

So the federal Act is silent on collection. It's really on remittance that there is a legal obligation.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Well it seems to be a rather interesting distinction then. Could the minister please confirm for me that, you know, that the amount of carbon pricing that is applied is . . . Is the same amount of money going to be going to the federal government at the end of the day, regardless of these amendments?

The Chair: — I recognize Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Nothing in the legislation, in the amendments dictates how much we will remit. It simply transfers the responsibility for remittance from the corporation to me as minister, and therefore any legal liabilities in the event that in the future we would run afoul of the federal legislation.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm curious to know if the minister received outside legal advice on the constitutionality of this bill and, if so, would he be willing to share it?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So again, and I think I'm probably repeating myself on this, but there's nothing in the amendments before this House that contemplates or tries to change federal legislation, and therefore, you know, it's not been raised to me that there are constitutional issues with this.

Ultimately the federal government will decide whether or not they accept the government as the new registered agent for distribution of natural gas and thereby accepting SaskEnergy's

delisting as a registered agent. That is for their choice to make. Nothing in this seeks to change, constitutionally seeks to change an Act of the federal parliament.

And so therefore the advice that I've received is that this legislation is in order for our House. What the federal government does with the direction that this legislation will provide for SaskEnergy, and therefore with our attempt to register the government in right of Saskatchewan, is to be determined at this point.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you for that response, Minister. With regards though to the classification or designation as a distributor as is laid out in the greenhouse gas pollution Act, what legal advice or opinion has the minister received as to the conformity or applicability of that designation on the Government of Saskatchewan in right of the Crown, which is another level of government?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member's question, it's the belief of the province that SaskEnergy has always been and is a provincial government entity. As the provincial government, we should be able to determine how it allocates its various responsibilities in relation to SaskEnergy.

We are hopeful that the federal government will look favourably upon the legislative changes that are before the committee today. And I said this before, but should they fail to do so, you know, we would certainly look to explore additional legal opportunities and avenues that would be afforded to the province.

What we want to do though as well is ensure that this will be a decision that the owner, the shareholder, the Government of Saskatchewan will make, potentially make in the future in terms of specifically part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, and that this would not be a decision that would be made by the officials or the directors at SaskEnergy. And therefore, you know, it certainly is our view that they should not bear any of the legal, potential legal responsibility or remedies that the federal government has insisted being in place in the federal Act.

[15:30]

And so I'm not sure that covers the member's question, but certainly we believe that SaskEnergy is an entity of the provincial government. This simply seeks to transfer the responsibility for decision making, with respect to that very narrow part of a pretty significant federal legislation, and transfer that responsibility to me as the minister.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Okay, so what I think I hear you saying basically is that, for the purposes of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, that as of January 1st the Crown shall be the sole registered distributor of marketable natural gas and non-marketable natural gas in Saskatchewan in place of the corporation, and that any charge, tax, levy, remittance, or other payment required associated with regulations under the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution*

Pricing Act that need to be paid to the receiver general by the Crown shall be paid out of the general revenue and at the sole discretion of the minister.

You've gone on to say that this Act basically is providing that sole discretion to the minister, and yet it's still not clear to me how the federal government is going to be amenable to designating the minister in that role without there being far more definition in terms of how that is potentially going to change the manner in which the Act will apply, whether or not that's going to change how money is transferred, remitted. And I guess it just comes back to one of my original questions to the minister in terms of, given that there is so much here that is yet to be defined, why has he not reached out to his counterpart?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I think I'll make a couple of points. One, the change in the legislation, while it does make a number of changes including designating the minister responsible under the Act, you know, that would be I think a part of a broader recognition by the federal government and the Minister of National Revenue to acknowledge the changes that this bill seeks to make with respect to who is the registered distributor of natural gas in the province of Saskatchewan.

So whether or not the federal minister or federal government recognizes me in terms . . . or the minister in terms of being designated, really what this comes down to is the federal Act requires an entity to be designated as the registered distributor of natural gas in all provinces. There would be a schedule that would comprise . . . It wouldn't likely get into the details in terms of that schedule of who the individual person is, but it would designate in terms of who would the entity be.

What this seeks to do is to change that entity from SaskEnergy as a corporation to the Crown in right of Saskatchewan, to executive government, and ultimately to me as minister responsible.

So really in terms of acknowledging a designation as the minister and determining who writes the cheque or who sends the e-transfer, all those things, at the end of the day, you know, I think that's . . . will be things that we will determine once the legislation is passed and once the federal government acknowledges that they will accept change in registration from SaskEnergy to the Crown in right of Saskatchewan and to the Government of Saskatchewan.

You know, we certainly would seek the federal government's speedy acknowledgement of that change so that we can then put in place a number of things that will have to be put in place as we take authority to make that decision, the decision of whether to be in compliance of that very narrow section of part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

And I would just say with respect to the member's question, I don't think it's a secret at the federal level of the Government of Saskatchewan's position on the carbon tax. And we've been very clear when the Premier . . . particularly in the last discussion around the carbon tax provincially, and at a national level where the federal government made the decision to carve out some

Canadians but not all Canadians when it comes to home heating, frankly a position that was supported by the federal NDP, that all Canadians would see that relief.

So again, I don't think it's a surprise. We will work through a process, once this legislation . . . assuming it does pass through the House, of informing the federal government of these changes and ultimately await their answer whether or not they'll recognize the jurisdiction and authority of the Government of Saskatchewan.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering what assurance you can offer to the people of Saskatchewan that the amendments that are being considered here will indeed have the effect of providing carbon tax fairness for families in the manner of having those remittances removed from their bills.

Because I mean it's . . . I'm hearing what you're saying, Mr. Minister, but there's been a lot of talk so far here in committee about, you know, this simply just sort of changes who is designated as the distributor and indemnifying. But I'm not really seeing anything here in terms of assurance that this will have the desired outcome of tax fairness for families.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member's question, I think the assurance that the people of Saskatchewan have and should have is that from the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan who indicated that, come January 1st, that the carbon tax would no longer be on people's natural gas bills that they receive from SaskEnergy. That is the assurance that I would also give as Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

You know, ultimately it will be up to the federal government of whether or not that relief will ultimately be provided to the province of Saskatchewan through their decision to waive any fees that the province would thereby be liable for. We don't have that assurance, but we certainly would request that the federal government provide that.

But I will say as well, I do want to particularly give assurance to the women and men who work at SaskEnergy, and those who serve on the board, that this is a decision that the government is making. The Premier has already announced that this will no longer be on natural gas bills come January 1st. So they have that assurance.

But I would say, you know, we certainly are concerned with the way the federal government has proceeded with the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* in that it can potentially levy significant fines and criminal charges to individuals. It certainly is my intent as minister that those that have worked and those that continue to work at SaskEnergy or serve on its board would not face those penalties. I'm not willing to . . . I won't ask them to pay a price that I'm not prepared to pay myself.

And so that's the intent of the indemnification sections. I think it is . . . and I don't think that I'm the only one, but certainly it is the view of myself and this government that the threat of criminal penalties for individuals with respect to the GGPPA [*Greenhouse*

Gas Pollution Pricing Act] is inappropriate, particularly when we are looking to provide heat for people in this province and across this country. But that is a decision that the federal government made a number of years ago when they enacted this legislation.

But that is the assurance that I want to give, both to the people of Saskatchewan that they will not pay a carbon tax on residential home heating come January 1st, and that we will do everything that we can, including this piece of legislation, for the people that work at SaskEnergy that they will not bear a financial or criminal penalty because of the decision of this government to provide that fairness for all Saskatchewan people.

But ultimately it's up to the federal government to ensure that there is fairness and we continue to call for that.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder if the minister could please describe for me what contingency, or what will be the implications if the federal government fails to recognize the Government of Saskatchewan as the designated distributor by January 1st.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member's question, if the federal government chooses not to acknowledge a change in terms of the registered distributor of natural gas in the province of Saskatchewan by virtue of the Act that this legislature is considering, and I hope will pass, Mr. Chair, if they ignore the will of the duly elected legislature of the province of Saskatchewan, then I think we would be in a position to consider our legal options and potentially take the federal government to court.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — So if that course of action is undertaken, can you . . . What position will that leave the employees, directors, and other agents of SaskEnergy? Will they still be indemnified?

[15:45]

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. With respect to the member's question, so the Act would remain in place in terms of financially indemnifying those that work at SaskEnergy, those who serve on the board.

As you will know, what we can't indemnify against though is the threat of the possibility of criminal charges. If the federal government intends to pursue action against SaskEnergy with respect to levying more than financial penalties, essentially criminal action against individuals, then we would certainly as a government have a discussion about what we would need to do to be in compliance of part 1 so that no individual at SaskEnergy would be in a position to have a criminal charge laid against them.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Well I, you know, I think it's in the interests of all Saskatchewan people that this issue does not escalate to a point of either putting individuals at risk of criminal prosecution or the government incurring financial costs and liabilities.

So I'll go back to my earlier question around the, you know . . . You said you haven't reached out to your counterpart. If you were to do so, or you intend do so as you also indicated, what sort of arguments or negotiations do you intend to put forward to ensure that this Act can go forward and the province be listed as the registered distributor in time for it to take effect on January 1 so that we avoid any potential legal conflict?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I would say that what I intend to do, presuming that this legislation passes, is I will be notifying federal colleagues as well as the Minister of National Revenue, as has already been done by SaskEnergy, that this change has been made by the duly elected legislature in the province of Saskatchewan. As the owner of SaskEnergy, of the Crown corporation, it is our intent to change the gas distributor under the federal Act, part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, from SaskEnergy to the Crown in right of Saskatchewan.

Certainly I don't see this as a negotiation. This is our intent. It's our hope that they will acknowledge that that change would be made. In the meantime, though, we continue to call for the federal government, as the members opposite have joined us and as the federal NDP have joined us, in calling for carbon tax fairness for all families in Canada including those in Saskatchewan.

We ought not to be penalized for the work that had been done by SaskEnergy a number of decades ago to bring natural gas to large parts of this province, Mr. Speaker. And so I certainly hope that this doesn't escalate, considering that the responsibility is borne by the minister and that currently happens to be me. But if that is the case, certainly I am prepared to bear the consequences.

But again this is not a negotiation. We will be informing the federal government of the intention of the Government of Saskatchewan to become the registered distributor of natural gas. But in the meantime, certainly would hope that the members opposite would continue to support this government's call for tax fairness for all families and that we could all avoid an unneeded escalation in this issue.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to go back. You indicated earlier, I believe it was for the year 2024, that the amount that would be accrued is 138 million. And I would like to understand how you arrived at that amount and whether it covers only residential home heating or other categories.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — That's the forecasted amount for only residential.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does the government intend to not collect carbon taxes for any other categories of customers that it supplies natural gas to? And how will those be excluded?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to be clear, so that it wasn't me that, if this is unclear . . . But just to be clear, the Act itself doesn't change how carbon tax is collected in the province. That is outside of this legislation.

But to your question, we want to mirror the carbon tax treatment that has been afforded to those that use home heating oil. That was announced by the Prime Minister some six weeks ago, or somewhere in that neighbourhood, and that was only on residential customers. So we're mirroring that. The carbon tax rate rider will still apply to the other customer classes beyond January 1st. It will only be removed from residential customers come January 1st.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — I'd like to thank the minister for that response. He mentioned sort of mirroring the federal legislation. The federal legislation has a term limit. Does the minister anticipate that this legislation will do the same?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I would refer the member to section 5(2), that section 4, which is a repeal clause, will come into force one year after the day on which the Act comes into force. So we're essentially putting a one-year timeline or deadline on this. So the intent would be that if this is enacted, once it's passed, that a year after it comes into force that the Act would be repealed.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think there's, you know, the manner in which the section 7.5, the repeal provision is stated, indicates that “. . . the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by regulation, repeal sections 7.1 to 7.4 and this section”. And it's been pointed out to me that, you know, there may concerns here with sort of the supremacy of the legislature being superseded by this clause. Can you assure the Assembly here that any repeals will come to this floor for a vote?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the member for the question. So what 7.5 basically says is that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may by regulation at any point within the next year repeal the Act. Or if that is not the case then one year after the Act is in force it automatically is repealed.

And so you know, this is a time-limited, short-term measure that we're taking with the hopes that this country has, frankly, greater clarity on how tax fairness will be provided, carbon tax fairness will be provided to all Canadians.

And so by approving these provisions in the legislation the

legislature would essentially be agreeing with ultimately the repeal of the Act either by Lieutenant Governor in Council within the 12 months after it's enacted, or when that 12-month period comes it would be repealed automatically.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. There have been concerns raised about how these amendments may affect carbon rebates that Saskatchewan people currently receive from the federal government. I'm wondering if you can tell me, you know, if you've considered that prospect and if so, how you intend to mitigate it.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

[16:00]

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thanks, Mr. Chair. No. Again the Act in and of itself doesn't contemplate the effect that it may have on the issuing of rebates by the federal government. That's ultimately up to the federal government to decide.

The federal government has arbitrarily decided to exempt from carbon tax those that use home heating oil, largely in Atlantic Canada which is largely a rural province. And yet at the same time they announce that the top-up for the rebates was going to be increasing for rural residents. So they by their own admission have decided that they would forgo the collection of carbon tax and yet top up the rebate that a number of those individuals that use that heating source would use.

And so when it comes to the matter of carbon tax rebates, that's in the jurisdiction of the federal government and the federal government's within their right to decide how those would be administered across the country.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Can the minister tell me how his government intends to ensure that all forms of home heating fuel are excluded from the carbon price?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So first and foremost, we continue to call on the federal government to provide a consistent approach to all Canadians when it comes to providing relief from the carbon tax, particularly through this winter season that is now upon us in Saskatchewan.

With respect to other forms of home heating, the only one that is under the purview of the province of Saskatchewan via a Crown corporation obviously would be electricity. And so what we've announced — last week announced by the Premier and confirmed by myself today through a news release — is that we would be directing SaskPower to exempt those that are on electricity for their home heating that portion of the carbon tax that would correspond to that portion of their electricity bill that would be related to home heating. And so that will be in place for January 1st as well through SaskPower.

Working with SaskPower to determine those communities that

we know largely are based on home heating, electricity for their home heating, so that would equate to about 60 per cent of their bill during these winter months likely on average would be associated with heating their homes, and so that portion of it, the carbon tax would be removed.

We also have a process in place in the event that we do miss individuals, that they would be able to notify SaskPower that they in fact do use electricity for their home heating. And so those are really the two forms that we do control as the provincial government. We know that there are others in the province that would use forms of fuel that would be outside of the purview of SaskPower and SaskEnergy. And again that's why we're calling on the federal government to extend that fairness right across the piece.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the minister please tell us how these amendments will affect farm customers.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, rural customers, farm customers who do have a residential account will be eligible and will be included on the carbon tax exemption going forward. And the same would be true for those farm customers with respect to SaskPower that have a residential account. We would also be including them as well.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the additional remittances that . . . not the additional, but rather. The minister has already indicated that to this point there have not been any budgetary line items identified in the current fiscal year. At what point, as a legislature, can we expect to see that come forward for approval?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, again the amendments in and of themselves don't contemplate a decision of remitting or not remitting. They simply transfer that responsibility and obligation from SaskEnergy to the government, to me as the minister. So you know, that decision has not been made.

Because we're collecting to the end of this year, we will be compliant when it comes time to remit at the end of January. The first point where we potentially could be not compliant would be in February, at the end of February, and so we're several months away from that decision point. At this point SaskEnergy is fully in compliance. Should this legislation pass, it would be our intent to be compliant as well as a government.

So I can't speculate, and you know, I don't know that information in terms of when the Ministry of Finance would look to inform the legislature with respect to some unbudgeted payments that would need to be made. We're certainly a ways away from even being in a position to have to make that decision.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I would respectfully submit that, you know, end of February really isn't that far off. You know, we are going to be wrapping up session here at the end of this week and heading into the Christmas period. It's definitely a busy time of year. There remains to be a lot of work really to get this over the boards by January 1st as indicated.

I guess I'm still not 100 per cent clear on whether or not the minister expects to be in a position where there will be amounts owing at the end of February, or if indeed there will be a situation that will preclude the Government of Saskatchewan as the distributor from being required to remit such payments.

Can you clarify that or provide some kind of assurance? Because either it's a certainty that there is going to be this amount owing at the end of February, in which case we need to be prepared for that as a legislature to approve those additional amounts coming out of the general fund, or it's that somehow we will have avoided those payments.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, so again there's nothing in the amendments in this bill that seeks to change the obligations that are required under part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*. We can't change federal legislation.

So I would say that the only assurance that we will have or can have that there will not be an obligation owed at the end of February will be the federal government acknowledging the calls that they are receiving from across this country to provide carbon tax fairness for all families, including those in Saskatchewan, to heed what they have received in terms of unfortunately a defeated motion in the House, but a motion that was supported by not only the federal Conservatives but as well the federal NDP, as well as a motion that was supported in this House by all members, including those from the provincial NDP, that would see that fairness being provided to residents in Saskatchewan.

So really short of a change at the federal level, with the Prime Minister announcing what he did announce for those that use home heating oil, largely in Atlantic Canada. Short of that being announced, you know, hopefully an early Christmas present, for all of us, Mr. Chair, that the Prime Minister will make that announcement. Short of that, I have no assurances that there won't be an obligation that would be owed by the Government of Saskatchewan come the end of February.

The only assurance that I can provide the House is that through this bill that that obligation for making that decision and remitting those funds would transfer from SaskEnergy, from the women and men who work there that do a great job of providing a vital, critical service for the people of Saskatchewan, that that obligation or responsibility would be transferred from them to me.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to know if this legislation will have any impact on the operations of TransGas in any way.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister of SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — No, it doesn't.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does the minister have any concerns with the federal government perceiving this bill and this application to be a registered distributor as any form of mischief as it relates to the greenhouse gas pollution prevention Act?

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the member's question, no. What this seeks to do is to transfer responsibility and obligations for that very narrow part of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* from SaskEnergy to the government, to the shareholder, to the owner of the company, and that we would provide that indemnification under the application of that federal Act, provide that indemnification to those that have worked at SaskEnergy and those that continue to work there and provide oversight in terms of their duties as board members. So really that's what this is about. This is really about transferring that responsibility and the obligations from SaskEnergy to us.

[16:15]

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the minister tell me if he has undergone any sort of an economic cost analysis related to both the proposed amendments to the Act but then also any legal challenges that may arise from it, and if so, where those costs will accrue.

The Chair: — I recognize the Minister for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, Mr. Chair, again this simply seeks to change the registered distributor of natural gas in the province from SaskEnergy to the Government of Saskatchewan, to the Crown in right of Saskatchewan. And so we're not at this point contemplating any challenges or costs associated or economic loss associated with this because this in and of itself doesn't contemplate decisions that would be made subsequent to the changes or the amendments in this Act.

Certainly any piece of legislation brought forward by the province can be challenged, but you know, we aren't contemplating that that would be the case. Ultimately this is just seeking to transfer the responsibility from SaskEnergy to the Crown.

The Chair: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have no further questions.

The Chair: — Are there any more questions or comments from any committee members? Seeing none, we will proceed with voting on clauses. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 151, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023*.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the committee report the bill without amendment.

The Chair: — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 151, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023* without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

The Chair: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of Committees.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 151, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023* without amendment.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading. I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 151 — *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023*

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 151, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Recorded division. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 16:22 until 16:28.]

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 151, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023* be now read the third time and passed under its title. All those in favour please stand.

[Yeas — 45]

Morgan	McMorris	Hindley
Harpauer	Duncan	Merriman
Wyant	Makowsky	Skoropad
Cockrill	Eyre	J. Harrison
Carr	Hargrave	T. McLeod
Bradshaw	A. Ross	Dennis
Kirsch	Lambert	Ottenbreit
Francis	C. Young	Steele
Bonk	Nerlien	B. McLeod
Friesen	Grewal	Goudy
Keisig	Lemaigre	Jenson
D. Harrison	Beck	Wotherspoon
Love	Teed	A. Young
Burki	Clarke	Sarauer
Conway	Ritchie	Wilson

[16:30]

The Speaker: — Those opposed please stand.

[Nays — nil]

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 45; those opposed to the motion, 0.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Third reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till

1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:32.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Highways

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Education

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Crown Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
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Hon. Joe Hargrave
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement
Minister Responsible for the
Global Transportation Hub Authority

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Hon. Jeremy Harrison
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Minister of Immigration and Career Training
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

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Hon. Gene Makowsky
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
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Minister Responsible for
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Minister Responsible for the
Provincial Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

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

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Energy and Resources

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

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Environment

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Advanced Education