



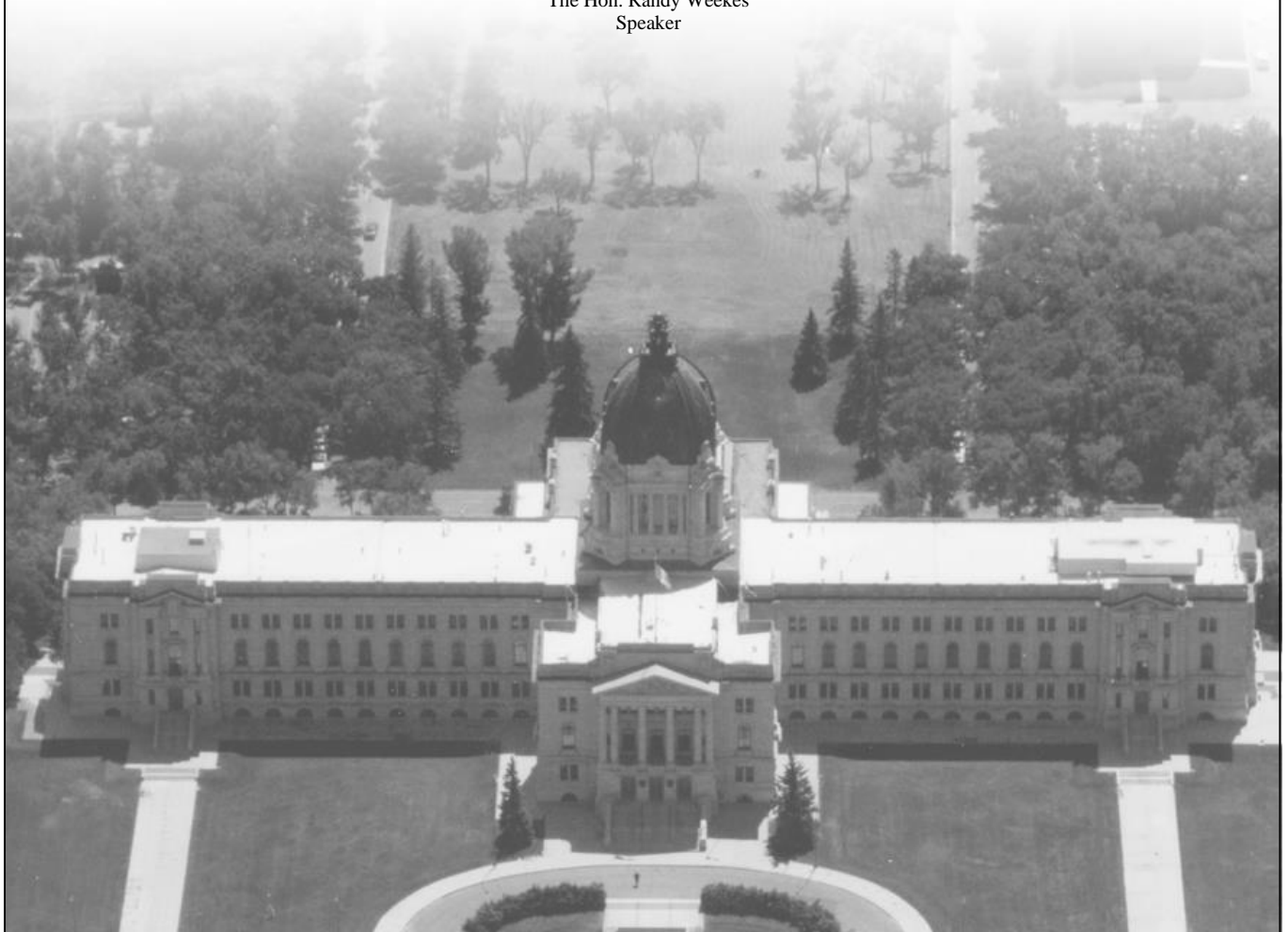
FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

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 (Ind.)	

Standings

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 44; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 14;
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Independent — 2

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

Hansard on the internet
Hansard and other documents of the
Legislative Assembly are available
within hours after each sitting.

<https://www.legassembly.sk.ca/Calendar>

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

McMorris.....	5517, 5520
Teed.....	5517, 5518
Eyre.....	5517
Sarauer.....	5518
Ross, L.	5518
Skoropad.....	5518
Hargrave.....	5518
Burki.....	5519
Fiaz.....	5519
Wotherspoon.....	5519
Cheveldayoff.....	5519
Ottenbreit.....	5520

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mowat.....	5520
Teed.....	5520
Ottenbreit.....	5520

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Government Support for Individuals with Intellectual Exceptionalities	
Buckingham.....	5521
Saskatchewan Experiences Decline in Life Expectancy	
Young, A.....	5521
Highway Twinning Project in Southeast Helps Ensure Safe and Efficient Transportation	
Bonk.....	5521
Saskatchewan Science Centre Celebrates 35th Anniversary	
Sarauer.....	5522
Government Funding Will Address Labour Shortages in Hospitality Industry	
Cheveldayoff.....	5522
Expanding Mental Health Support Program in Schools	
Friesen.....	5522
Government Commits Funding to Combat Interpersonal Violence	
Lambert.....	5522

QUESTION PERIOD

Cost of Living and Federal Carbon Tax	
Beck.....	5523
Moe.....	5523
Contracts with Out-of-Province and Local Firms	
Beck.....	5523
McMorris.....	5523
Hargrave.....	5524
Contract for Tire Recycling	
Conway.....	5524
Tell.....	5524
Funding for Education	
Love.....	5525
Cockrill.....	5525
Hospital Parking Fees and Funding for Health Care	
Mowat.....	5526
Hindley.....	5526
Overdose Deaths and Treatment for Addictions	
Sarauer.....	5527
McLeod, T.....	5527

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

SaskPower and Saskatchewan Research Council Join CANDU Owners Group	
Duncan.....	5527
Young, A.....	5528

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Ottenbreit.....	5528
-----------------	------

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the members in the Assembly, I have a few guests seated in your gallery I would like to introduce. If you could just give a wave. First is Larry and Loralyn Leugner, and beside them is Shawn Ahlers. As well as beside him is Ashley Leugner, who I'm going to be talking quite a bit about, Mr. Speaker, because what I forgot to do right off the bat is ask for leave for an extended introduction.

I'm going to take that as a yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Man, I've only been here for a few years. Anyway I just want to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

I want to talk a little bit about Ashley. Ashley grew up on Echo Lake and was a fond lover of water sports right off the bat, started skiing when she was about four. Took up wakeboarding, and that's where our families crossed paths. She took up wakeboarding and became a member of the SaskFirst team and really did progress and really was a role model for many. It was kind of a male-dominated sport, that SaskFirst wakeboarding team, and Ashley was a real role model for any of the girls that came after.

Ashley won her first national, Canadian national championship here at home on Wascana Lake back in 2008, when we had probably the best nationals that this country has ever seen out front of the building. In 2009 she won a silver at Worlds in Korea and was also named Canada's Wakeboarder of the Year. Ashley has competed in Australia, China, and Korea.

She's sustained a few injuries as boarders are known to do — maybe a shoulder injury and certainly a couple of knee injuries — and has come back from that. She was informed in 2023 that the Pan Am Games were going to be going on in Santiago, Chile, and was invited to compete.

She had taken a number of years off. She started last spring training in 2003. So much so that her dad and Shawn were the boat drivers an awful lot early in the morning and after work so Ashley could train. She won her seventh national title this year and represented Canada at the Pan Am Games in Santiago, Chile. She finished fifth at Santiago, Chile.

Mr. Speaker, we don't get to serve here alone, and not too many athletes do. And that's her support system sitting up there. I'd ask everybody to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and

through you, it's my honour to join with the minister opposite as the official opposition critic for Parks, Culture and Sport in welcoming Ashley Leugner to her Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, just an absolutely amazing list of accomplishments and the opportunity to see the world doing something that you love, which is absolutely kind of the goal I think in some ways. But I think the sport accomplishments that you made are something we should all be proud of here in Saskatchewan.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming Ashley Leugner to her Legislative Assembly.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning the Premier, the Minister for the Status of Women, and I announced \$42.6 million in community-based funding over three years to combat the critical, complex issue of interpersonal violence, and a number of organizations from across the province joined us. And some are with us in the west gallery this afternoon, so if you could please give a wave: from Regina Sexual Assault Centre, Lisa Miller; from 211 Saskatchewan, Kristin Nelson and Alison Jestadt.

Mr. Speaker, this funding is not abstract. It does make an enormous difference, and last year Government of Saskatchewan funding ensured that over 1,000 adults, most of them women, and over 1,100 children had access to safe, confidential accommodation while in crisis and could access resources to support and rebuild their lives.

Over 900 people last year in Grandmother's Bay, La Ronge, Pinehouse, Stanley Mission, Sucker River, Prince Albert, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, North Battleford, Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Yorkton, Estevan, Carlyle, Weyburn, and Oxbow received counselling and advocacy services, Mr. Speaker, and support and advocacy for housing, employment, and education.

The funding we announced today will strengthen community outreach and empower families. It will flow to 34 community-based services such as the ones who are joining us today, Mr. Speaker, and 54 programs across the province that provide supports and services to individuals and their families who find themselves in the throes of extremely challenging and sometimes dangerous circumstances. Our latest provincial budget dedicates \$31.7 million this year across government to initiatives that address interpersonal violence.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank these organizations for

everything they do as we work together on this crucial issue. Your ongoing dedication to create on-the-ground solutions gives people the strength that they need to escape violent relationships and to rebuild their lives.

We're very grateful for your critical help. Please join me in welcoming these guests to their Assembly this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise with the minister opposite in welcoming Lisa Miller from Regina Sexual Assault Centre as well as Kristin and Alison from 211 to their Legislative Assembly. It's so good to see the three of you here today.

Joining with the minister in thanks first of all for you and all of the work that you do, as well as all of the organizations that you're representing here today and all of the staff within, for doing such important, invaluable work, front-line service work helping survivors of interpersonal violence get the help that they need, be able to be connected to the services that they need to be connected to.

We know that you do this work not for the money most certainly and also on very limited budgets. Very glad to hear about the support and the additional support being provided from the government. This is incredibly important work that they're doing for survivors across the province, and I'd ask all members once again to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Ms. L. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, our government is proud to once again partner with KidSport to designate the month of May as KidSport Month in Saskatchewan. And to you and through you, it is my pleasure to introduce five guests seated in the west gallery from KidSport.

Joining us today is Tammy Hoffart, KidSport provincial coordinator. Tammy is joined by Daphne van den Hurk, KidSport community consultant; administrative assistant Karlee Duda; Dorothy Josephson, KidSport Saskatchewan committee member; and Brett Lauther, Saskatchewan Roughrider KidSport ambassador.

Now KidSport is a children's charity designation to assist children across the province in accessing sport and recreation. Now during May, 41 local KidSport chapters will host fundraising events, activities across the province. I encourage

everyone to visit their website and see how they can get involved.

The Government of Saskatchewan is so proud to support KidSport in partnership with Sask Sport, with the proceeds from Saskatchewan Lotteries. And on behalf of our government, I'd like to thank KidSport for their efforts to ensure all kids — I mean all kids — are able to experience the joy and fulfillment of sport and recreation.

I invite all members to join me in welcoming these very special guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's an honour to join with the minister opposite — again as the official opposition critic for Parks, Culture and Sport — to welcome these esteemed guests to their Legislative Assembly from KidSport. I'm absolutely delighted to hear that May is KidSport Month.

I want to join with the minister and welcome Tammy, Daphne, Karlee, Dorothy, and Brett to your Legislative Assembly. I look forward to seeing all the exciting events that you will be putting on during the month of May. And on behalf of all of us here, I want to thank you so much for the work that you do, ensuring that kids have access to sport here in our beautiful province in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these esteemed guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with my colleague the minister in welcoming those folks here with KidSport. In particular I'd like to welcome here Brett Lauther. I've come to know Brett a little bit as I think he's an honorary Arm River constituent. He spends considerable time out there. He's got a lot of connections to the community. We certainly appreciate the time he spends out there.

And last week I was able to speak a little bit about the Bethune Sports Gala fundraiser. He is a mainstay part of that event and making that event such a success. So I'd certainly like to thank him for that. He's a fellow with a big leg, an important leg to Saskatchewan Roughriders and to Saskatchewan. He's got a big leg, but I would argue he's got a bigger heart. And I would just like to welcome him to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, 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. Hargrave: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is a momentous occasion for me, as I had the opportunity to meet with a distinguished delegation from the Muslim Professional Association of Saskatchewan, MPA Sask for short, to our esteemed chambers.

This gathering represents the vibrant fabric of Saskatchewan's diverse community, and highlights the invaluable contributions of our Muslim colleagues to the growth and prosperity of our province. I am deeply honoured to introduce individuals sitting in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, and in dedication have left an indelible mark on Saskatchewan's economic and social landscape.

Among our honoured guests are Imran Khan, Raza Parvez, and Mohammad Parvez Aktar, and one of the staff from my office, Kamel Shazad, each a leader within the Muslim Professional Association of Saskatchewan and prominent figures in their respective fields.

Imran Khan is a senior manager of cybersecurity with ISM Canada. His commitment to cybersecurity reflects on the importance of technological advancement and security in our digital age. Raza Parvez is a principal geologist with BHP and his profound geological insights at BHP contribute directly to enhancing safety and efficiency within our mining industry. And accompanying them is Mohammad Parvez Aktar, whose exemplary community leadership exemplifies the strength and unity of Saskatchewan's diverse populations.

Today we celebrate not only the achievements of these individuals but also the broader impact of Saskatchewan's Muslim community on our collective successes through organizations like the MPA of Sask. They embody the spirit of collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity that defines our province.

Let us extend our warmest welcome to our distinguished guests and express our deepest gratitude for their unwavering dedication to the growth and prosperity of Saskatchewan. Together let us continue to embrace diversity and harness the talents of all our citizens to build a stronger, more inclusive province for generations to come. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

Mr. Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will join the member opposite in welcoming the Muslim business professionals over here, their association. It's really amazing to be presenting over here their businesses. And they're thriving over here and I'm very proud of them. And I will request all members in this Chamber to join me to welcome them into their Legislative Assembly. Thank you for coming, and you guys are welcome over here.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join the

minister and member opposite and would like to welcome the Muslim Professional Association of Saskatchewan. We appreciate your professional services to this province, Mr. Speaker, and your guidance to the newcomers. I ask all the members to join me and welcome these professionals into their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I just want to pile on with the shout-outs to our kicker here with the Riders, Brett Lauther, for being here today, for all he does within the community. Last time I saw Brett was out on the ice on Wascana Lake as part of the Frost fest, Mr. Speaker, and he was out there supporting the Outdoor Hockey League. We had a wonderful scrimmage on a Friday night there and he laced them up. And not only does he give back in many ways, not only is an awesome kicker — he's a heck of a hockey player too, Mr. Speaker.

So on behalf of the official opposition, it's my pleasure to welcome Brett to his Assembly and to thank him for his many contributions.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask 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.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Well it's with great pleasure that I introduce today my daughter Paige Cheveldayoff visiting us from Hamilton, Ontario, and her boyfriend, Kevork Baghdassarian. Kevork's from Ontario and his first time visiting Saskatchewan. Paige used to visit the legislature quite a bit a number of years ago, and in fact her and her brother used to do the wave on the floor of the legislature at budget time and swearing in ceremonies and things like that. So those were fun times.

Both Paige and Kevork are members of the McMaster swim team. Paige is pursuing a master's degree at McMaster in health sciences and Kevork just graduated as an engineer, a chemical and biological engineer. And he was a co-op student and now he's got his first job with Imperial Oil in Ontario.

So they are taking advantage of all that is Saskatchewan. They went to the sold-out Luke Bryan concert in Saskatoon. They visited and toured the synchrotron. They went to the Berry Barn. On the weekend they were in Moose Jaw and they loved the new tunnel. And they got a chance to see the steam engine come through. And now they're in Regina, took a tour of the legislature this morning.

So as we all say, we're so proud to have family members here and the support that they give us. She doesn't get here very often

but, Mr. Speaker, through you, if I could ask all members to welcome Paige Cheveldayoff and Kevork Baghdassarian to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — One last quick introduction. And some people may have thought I forgot, as I introduced Leugner family, that my wife is sitting beside them and I didn't introduce them. And normally we'd rehearse this because she doesn't like the attention. And so I don't know if I'm in more trouble not introducing her or now introducing her. But I'd like everybody to welcome Cindy to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour for me today, in the west gallery, to introduce the Yorkton Sask Party candidate in the next election, Mr. David Chan. He's in the west gallery today. And I've got full faith that he'll take his place on the floor here next fall, but that remains to be seen by the voters of Yorkton.

He and his wife, Judy, have two daughters. And I haven't talked to him about this, but I think it's public knowledge he's got another one on the way, so him and Judy are building our population. David's got quite an interesting history and job. He's a mental health worker, predominantly does work on-reserve, and just a great benefit to the community, and just so thankful for the service that he does to the people of the community.

Quick story just to kind of tell the kind of guy David is. He doesn't know I was going to do this, but we were at a men's breakfast not too long ago and we were kind of jabbing back and forth a little bit. And there was a gentleman beside him. I didn't really know him too well, but David and I were just kind of being a little bit chirpy and I maybe challenged him to something. And the fellow beside him said, "Well I'll tell you, Greg, I'll back him up. This man saved my life." David is that kind of guy. He stands up for his friends, and he stands up for people, and he's just a benefit to the community. And his mental health work doesn't go unrecognized.

So again I have full faith he'll take his place here in the fall. And I ask all members to thank him for not only his community service and his job that he does but just the kind of guy he is and what he does every day. So I ask all members to welcome David to his Legislative Assembly and I look forward to seeing him take the floor in the fall.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to reverse the ban on third-party sex ed providers in public schools. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that banning third-party providers of sexual health education means fewer kids get access to evidence-based sex ed, which we need given that Saskatchewan has the highest rates of teen pregnancies, STIs [sexually transmitted infection],

and HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] transmission in the country and the highest rates of sexual assault and domestic violence in the country; and that banning third-party sexual health education has broader reach as this ban impacts additional prevention education programs, programs that are focused on body safety, consent, and healthy relationships.

With our staggering rates of HIV and STI transmission, it's alarming that the minister has no plan to address this and is in fact implementing policies that will make things worse. We know that education is prevention, an important part of public health, and that this government's actions are beyond irresponsible and downright harmful to the people of Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately reverse its policy decision to ban third-party sex health educators in Saskatchewan schools and listen to experts and stakeholders in developing comprehensive sex education curriculum for all publicly funded schools.

This is signed by individuals in Regina, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet presenting a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for a suspension of the fuel tax. The undersigned residents of the province wish to bring to our attention that Saskatchewan people are struggling to keep up with the increased costs of food, shelter, and other basic necessities as wages have not kept up with the rate of inflation; that according to an October 2023 Angus Reid poll more than one-third of people in Saskatchewan are struggling with the costs of living; and that the Sask Party government could provide immediate cost-of-living relief to Saskatchewan families by suspending the 15-cent-per-litre provincial gas tax and that they could follow other jurisdictions who've done just this such as Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, and Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to suspend the collection of the provincial fuel tax from gasoline and diesel for a period of six months to help families struggling with the high cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents reside in Saskatoon. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to stand on my feet and present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan on behalf of the residents. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your

attention the following: whereas the Trudeau Liberal-NDP [New Democratic Party] coalition carbon tax is one of the main causes of affordability issues and inflation in the nation of Canada; that the federal Liberal-NDP government was politically motivated in issuing a carve-out for home heating oil; and that the Government of Saskatchewan's decision not to collect or remit the carbon tax on home heating in Saskatchewan has led to a drop in inflation; further, that despite the decision not to change the carbon tax on home heating, Saskatchewan families continue to pay this tax out of pocket at the pumps, grocery stores, and more.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take upon the following action: to call upon the Government of Canada to immediately suspend the carbon tax across the nation of Canada and acknowledge its significant impact on affordability and inflation in Canada.

The below undersigned residents are from Yorkton. I do so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Government Support for Individuals with Intellectual Exceptionalities

Mr. Buckingham: — Last Friday I joined the Minister of Social Services and Elmwood Residences to celebrate the announcement of three new group homes in Saskatoon. Our government is committing 1.78 million in annualized funding to operate these homes.

This is just part of our government's 7.6 million plan to construct 10 new group homes and one assessment home to support adults with intellectual exceptionalities. We're proud of the work that's been done to make Saskatchewan the best province in Canada for people with intellectual exceptionalities to live.

I'll share a couple important initiatives we have undertaken since forming government in 2007. In 2008 our government started the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program. As of 2024, over 18,200 households have received SAID benefits. This program received a \$6.24 million increase this year.

We've introduced *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*, which came into force in December of 2023. Since 2007, Social Services funding for programs to help individuals with exceptionalities has increased by 248 million, or 348 per cent, from when the opposition was in government.

While we know there is more work to be done, we're proud of the investments we've been able to make to help some of the most vulnerable. And this is only possible with a strong and growing economy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Experiences Decline in Life Expectancy

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Everyone in this legislature should be upset with what has happened over the past six years. Our sons and daughters, our spouses, our parents, and our friends are today going to live, on average, three years less than they would have just six years ago. Life expectancy in this province has fallen further than in any other jurisdiction, and we now have the lowest life expectancy in Canada.

This tired and out-of-touch government has all the time in the world to fly to Dubai, to London, to Paris, but do they visit waiting rooms where robberies are now occurring; hospitals with broken-down equipment; rural hospitals that have been closed 291 times; or the rural long-term care beds that lack nurses, that lack care?

It is this government's lack of attention to health that is to blame for the decline in life expectancy here in Saskatchewan. It is this government that spends money not on health but on paying outrageous hotel fees to their friends. And it is this government that is now sending their friends in Calgary 900 per cent more for mammograms and using those same friends' monies for surgeries that should be performed here in Saskatchewan. Shame on this government.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Highway Twinning Project in Southeast Helps Ensure Safe and Efficient Transportation

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan's export-based economy needs a safe and efficient highway network to help get our goods to worldwide markets. This government continues to make strategic investments in our transportation and infrastructure networks.

Last week the Minister of Highways announced continued construction on the Highway 6 and 39 twinning project. The entire project stretched from south of Regina on Highway 6 to southeast of Milestone on Highway 39, with a total of 14.9 kilometres.

There will also be nearly 13 kilometres of existing lanes on Highway 6 and 39 north of Corinne to southeast of Milestone that will be repaved. This is an estimated \$57 million project. Highway 6 and 39 corridor is an important international link for the southeast corner of our province. This segment of highways sees an average of more than 3,400 vehicles a day, including tourist, residential, and industrial traffic.

This year's Ministry of Highways budget invests 741 million in road safety, while improving key transportation corridors just like this one. Investments like these are only made possible with a vibrant, strong, and growing economy. These investments will ensure that our province can continue to meet the growing needs of Saskatchewan families and communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Science Centre Celebrates 35th Anniversary

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Saskatchewan Science Centre, which was just last week. The Saskatchewan Science Centre, a staple of Regina Douglas Park, is a non-profit, non-governmental educational facility. Its mission is igniting scientific curiosity in Saskatchewan communities through interactive, dynamic, and engaging opportunities.

[14:00]

In 1978 a visionary group of women who were part of the Junior Service League recognized the critical need for greater public awareness and understanding of science and technology. Their dream? A dynamic museum experience that would revolutionize traditional learning. Fast-forward to April 25th, 1989 when their vision came to life with the opening of the Saskatchewan Science Centre.

Mr. Speaker, the Science Centre is one of Saskatchewan's largest family tourist attractions. They've had more than 5 million visitors since their opening in 1989. They're home of the recently renovated IMAX theatre and many activities for the entire family to enjoy. Last week they hosted a wonderful Discovery Week to celebrate the occasion with fun learning activities enjoyed by many.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Science Centre on their 35 years of operations, and thank you to all who make it a reality.

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

Government Funding Will Address Labour Shortages in Hospitality Industry

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has committed \$400,000 in partnership with Hospitality Saskatchewan to address labour shortages in the hospitality industry. This funding will help Hospitality Saskatchewan expand and strengthen its workforce by promoting the recruitment, settlement, and retention of local and international workers.

Here's what a few people had to say about the announcement. Jim Bence, Hospitality Saskatchewan president and CEO [chief executive officer], said, and I quote:

This is terrific news and will better position our industry to address the labour shortages faced by our membership. We are very pleased with this investment by the Government of Saskatchewan and we much appreciate their continued support.

Randy Goulden, SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] president and executive director with Tourism Yorkton, said, and I quote:

Thank you to the Government of Saskatchewan for recognizing and addressing the need to enhance the labour

shortages in the province. This funding will grow partnerships along with the tourism industry, bringing visitors to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, the hospitality sector plays a key role in our economy and is driven by small and medium-sized businesses. By working directly with industry, the province can make these targeted investments to fill vacancies and support growth. These investments align with our labour market strategy with the goal to further Saskatchewan's workforce to support our ever-growing economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Expanding Mental Health Support Program in Schools

Mr. Friesen: — Another great announcement in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes all someone needs is a little help to get back on track, and sometimes they need a lot more than a little help. That's why our government is committing \$3 million annually to expand the mental health capacity building in our schools.

Last week Premier Scott Moe, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, and the Minister of Education joined representatives of the Prairie South School Division in Moose Jaw for this exciting announcement. With the additional funding, schools in Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Yorkton, and Regina will now be included in the program.

This funding will be used by schools to hire additional staff who will be responsible for delivering mental health promotion and prevention programming, supporting students as they navigate their mental health, and building capacity in others who work with vulnerable youth and their families.

This school-based prevention and promotion program was recommended by the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth to help build resilience in families and communities. This initiative is part of a record investment of 574 million in mental health and addictions services in 2024.

Our government will continue to look after the most vulnerable in our province by providing the funding and pathways for youth to live healthy lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government Commits Funding to Combat Interpersonal Violence

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity to join many of my colleagues, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, and our Premier to announce \$42.6 million in community-based funding over three years to combat the critical, complex issue of interpersonal violence.

We were joined at the YWCA women and family centre by stakeholders who work every day to make this province a safer place. While we were there, we got to tour this impressive facility

while it is currently under construction and nearing completion.

As the Minister of Justice and Attorney General has said, this funding is substantial and will continue to build on our efforts to strengthen community outreach and empower families. The funding will be provided to 34 community-based service organizations and 54 programs across Saskatchewan that provide supports and services to individuals and their families who find themselves in the most challenging of circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, this year the Ministry of Justice is dedicating a total of \$31.7 million to interpersonal violence programs and services, a sizable and necessary investment to strengthen our communities. Since 2014-15 our government has increased its annual investment in domestic violence shelters and enhanced residential services to over \$9 million. These investments are only possible with the support of a strong and growing economy. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Cost of Living and Federal Carbon Tax

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver on the number one issue facing Saskatchewan families — the cost of living. And new numbers from Statistics Canada released last Friday show just how real this challenge is for people here at home. During this Premier's time in office, household incomes in this province have dropped by \$1,600. Mr. Speaker, that's minus 2.4 per cent, the second-biggest drop amongst all provinces. Meanwhile, inflation rose by 16 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, everything costs more, and families are making less. Why won't the Premier give people a break and cut the fuel tax?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Yet again, Mr. Speaker, I would direct the members opposite to the budget documents where in virtually every income category Saskatchewan, the City of Regina in Saskatchewan remains one of the most affordable places to live in the nation of Canada. Mr. Speaker, this is due to decisions that we have made in previous years, the last 17 or so years. Decisions like that have removed 112,000 people from the tax rolls by increasing the level of income on where you start to pay provincial income tax, Mr. Speaker. We've discussed that many times on the floor of this Assembly.

The largest inflationary pressure that Canadian families are facing today is that of the federally induced carbon tax or imposed carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, of which the members opposite just travelled to Ottawa to Trudeau campaign school to ensure that that government and that policy can continue into the future, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious that Trudeau's choice in this province is the NDP, Mr. Speaker. And when you look back through the various premiers that we've had, the NDP premiers in this province whether it be Blakeney, Romanow, Calvert, I

think we can all agree — we may not have agreed with their policies — but we would all agree they had the best interests of Saskatchewan people in mind.

I'm not sure we can say that about today's NDP that is interested in re-electing Jagmeet and Justin.

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

Contracts with Out-of-Province and Local Firms

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we have the Premier laughing in his own clever lines while 60 per cent of people in this province are having trouble paying their bills. That's some look.

Mr. Speaker, the reason that families are earning less in this province is because that Premier never stands up for Saskatchewan jobs. He's handing contract, Mr. Speaker, after contract to out-of-province companies, to the right donors with the right connections. We saw that with the bypass, a billion-dollar contract handed over to a French company. And we see that with the tire deal that the Saskatoon chamber notes sandbagged, Mr. Speaker, a local business.

Why does this Premier always choose to create jobs outside our province instead of standing up for jobs here in Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we hear every day the Leader of the Opposition say, "Say the same thing in every room." Well let's hear what's happened in this room. We've got a member opposite that has done nothing but slam, slander a former Cabinet minister in this room, Mr. Speaker. We've got people in the opposition that don't want to have any more corporate donations into Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan politics, and we also have a Leader of the Opposition that just today said, no out-of-province, got to be in-province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let me read from an email that the NDP Party sent to who? Prairie Sky Strategy, that happens to employ the member that they are discrediting. And you know why they sent them a letter, Mr. Speaker? They're begging and pleading for a \$5,000 donation for that Leader of the Opposition. Say the same thing in every room? Tell your party that.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, they're some worked up over there today, and no wonder with what's coming out in this province about how this government is failing the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

It is the job of the Premier of Saskatchewan to work to create jobs here in Saskatchewan. And by every measure, Mr. Speaker, that Premier is failing at his job. This is a premier with the worst job creation record in Canada, all at a time when, Mr. Speaker, there's opportunity in every corner of this province, and so many people want to be part of it.

Mr. Speaker, when we're looking at Saskatchewan projects paid

for by Saskatchewan tax dollars, why won't this Premier hire Saskatchewan and make sure Saskatchewan jobs always come first?

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, does that opposition member mean the Saskatchewan jobs that they're applying to Prairie Sky Strategy in Calgary for, Mr. Speaker? Is that the same Saskatchewan jobs?

Mr. Speaker, let me read. It says, "You can register for tickets or sponsorship." And then it goes on at the bottom, "I'll follow up with you, a phone call next week." Boy, does that sound like begging for corporate sponsorship from Alberta.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, they're scraping the bottom of the barrel over there, and I'll note that the Premier can't even find his feet to stand up for Saskatchewan. The Sask Party's plan, Mr. Speaker, isn't for Saskatchewan jobs. It's a plan for jobs in Calgary, Alberta; in Paris, France; or in Kansas City, Missouri; or Newport Beach, California; or literally anywhere but here at home.

Mr. Speaker, that is that Premier's record, and that's why we need a hire Saskatchewan plan. That's why people are falling behind. And that's why, Mr. Speaker — and we hear this every day — it's time for a change. Why can't the Premier stand up for Saskatchewan jobs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskBuilds.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to stand here and tell my fellow members and the people of Saskatchewan about the great projects happening in our province. I'm pleased to say that over 82 per cent — 82 per cent — of the contracts have been awarded to Saskatchewan-based companies. Mr. Speaker, in fact when there's a Saskatchewan bidder, Saskatchewan companies secure the contracts approximately 90 per cent of the time in these competitions. These projects are using the best local Saskatchewan workers, creating jobs and employment opportunities for the people of our great province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, all they have to do is go to schools like the new francophone school in north Regina, talk to them and their employees about Saskatchewan Quorex. The Quorex company is building that school, Mr. Speaker. Go talk to them. Mr. Speaker. The new joint-use school in Coronation Park is being built by Westridge. Maybe the members opposite go talk to them about the good Saskatchewan jobs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Contract for Tire Recycling

Ms. Conway: — Quite the desperate little performance we have here today, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party is failing to protect Saskatchewan jobs. We need look no further than their choice to

hand a tire recycling contract to a company from Newport Beach, California. The Saskatoon chamber of commerce said this: "Sandbagged the local business already doing the work." And when the chamber submitted an FOI [freedom of information] to that Minister of Environment for the study that justified the entire fiasco, the ministry fully denied this request. It was redacted 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Why won't the Minister of Environment release this study and show some basic transparency?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll try and pick bits and pieces out of that question because there were, like, were four or five questions in that one.

Tire Stewardship — and I will say it slow for the members opposite — of Saskatchewan is an independent, industry-based organization that manages tire recycling in the province. The Government of Saskatchewan has no role in awarding any procurement contract. The ministry role is one of oversight to ensure all the commitments are fulfilled under the scrap tire recycling program. And I'll leave it at that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

[14:15]

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon chamber of commerce recently took to social media to voice their concerns. Quote from their CEO:

The agency responsible to collect and manage scrap tire recycling has been operating outside its mandate and has sandbagged a Saskatchewan success story, not to mention over 60 good local jobs in Saskatoon.

This government has in its possession the study that apparently justified this whole shady affair, Mr. Speaker. The chamber has reiterated their request for that report just five minutes ago in an open letter. Why won't the Environment minister release that document today?

The Speaker: — I just want to caution the member about your languages. Recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yeah, the ethics and democracy over there. Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan is an independent, industry-based organization that manages tire recycling in the province. The ministry, the ministry . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Wow, you're observant. The Ministry of Environment's role is one of oversight to ensure that all the commitments are fulfilled under scrap tire recycling program, Mr. Speaker.

If the members opposite or anyone else wish to seek the report that talks about the division of the province, then they can go to TSS [Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan]. Thank you.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this isn't just about jobs; it's about transparency, and the Sask Party government is infamously awful at both. This whole fiasco stems from a study by the government that apparently shows there's a need for two tire processors in the province. That's why apparently they needed to split the province into two regions and exclude the local business already doing the work.

What do we have today? Fewer jobs and a company based in Newport Beach, California now doing the work. If the Sask Party thinks this is all above board, then they simply need to prove it and release that report.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — As was said earlier, Mr. Speaker, Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan is an independent industry-based organization that manages tire recycling in the province. Mr. Speaker, if this report was generated through Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan, that report belongs to them. It does not belong to the government, and government did not initiate the report or contract to have the report undertaken, Mr. Speaker. There you have it.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this tire fire of a deal keeps burning out of control. Local businesses, the Saskatoon chamber of commerce, former friends of this Sask Party government — they're all speaking out about this deal. Over 60 jobs lost, an RFP [request for proposal] designed to exclude the company already doing the work. The chamber is saying that the agency this minister is responsible for operated outside its mandate.

It's past time this Minister of Environment takes some responsibility for her file and release those documents. Will she do it today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, the documents the member is referring to throughout all of that diatribe, Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan has ownership. They contracted to get that report done, Mr. Speaker, so I do suggest that the member go to TSS and ask them for that report.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, she is the minister responsible. She can provide that report, Mr. Speaker. And while she's at it, Mr. Speaker, we would like to see the review conducted by former deputy minister Cam Swan, as well as the proposal dated October 19th, 2020 titled *Proposed Product Stewardship Program for Scrap Tire Management*, the proposal that is contingent to that ministry approving TSS to do this work.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan is an independent industry-based organization that manages tire recycling in the province, delegated authority by the

province to this particular entity and organization. The Government of Saskatchewan has no role in awarding or procuring any of the contracts that have been cited here today. The ministry's role is one of oversight to ensure that all commitments are fulfilled under the scrap tire recycling program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear this tired and out-of-touch government is failing on jobs, and they're absolutely failing on education too.

Just a few weeks back that minister asked school divisions and trustees to use their voices on education funding. And Saskatoon Public Schools has answered that call. They put out a letter last week laying out the cuts that they've been forced to make because of this government's underfunding of our classrooms. Home economics and industrial arts for grade 8, gone. Busing for entire neighbourhoods, gone. Librarians, gone. There are now three librarians covering the entire city. That's 59 schools with three librarians, Mr. Speaker.

Does that minister take any responsibility for the cuts at Saskatoon Public Schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I communicate with Saskatoon Public on a regular basis, as I do with school divisions all over the province, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can let the member know that in the largest ever school operating funding increase in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon Public received a 10.3 per cent increase to their school operating funding.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, this minister should know his government's record of blaming school divisions for those difficult decisions, but these are Sask Party cuts at the core, Mr. Speaker. The school division reports receiving a 7.7 per cent increase, of which 7.4 per cent is going solely to manage enrolment growth and inflation. Now those factors are important, but that only leaves 0.3 per cent to address class size, to address complexity and to bring back all of those programs that have been cut under this tired and out-of-touch government.

Why won't that Sask Party minister take any responsibility for the cuts that they forced on Saskatoon Public Schools through their record of underfunding?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in case the member opposite missed it in my initial answer, Saskatoon Public will receive \$286 million. The school operating grant this next school year, an increase of 26.7 million or 10.3 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

That's on top of the significant capital announcements that we made in the city of Saskatoon to address some of the large enrolment increases that we're seeing in that community. We are going to be building the largest school that we've ever seen in this province when we build that high school on the east side of Saskatoon, in Holmwood, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that continues to invest in education, both on the operating side and on the capital side.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, did he read the letter and the infographics sent out by the division last week? He doesn't seem to get it. Luckily Saskatoon Public Schools broke it down very simply with pictures for that minister to understand. Their per-student funding in Saskatoon is just over \$10,000. If funding had kept pace with inflation, it would be \$2,500 higher today. The result is that there are not enough teachers, and supports are being cut, supports that our students need.

Does the minister see the problem or is he accusing the division, Saskatoon Public Schools, of getting their math wrong?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, I would just remind the member opposite, this is the largest school operating funding increase that we have seen in this province, Mr. Speaker, in provincial history. That means school divisions — whether it's Saskatoon Public or any another place in the province, Mr. Speaker — that means they have more dollars this year than they've had before to work with students, provide services that they need, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am actively out there listening in Saskatoon Public. I visited two Saskatoon public schools on Friday, Mr. Speaker, with members of the board, Mr. Speaker. The only school that that member opposite likes to go visit is Justin Trudeau campaign school.

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

Hospital Parking Fees and Funding for Health Care

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear that that government is failing on education, and it is crystal clear that they are failing on health care, Mr. Speaker.

We learned last week that cancer patients needing chemotherapy at the Prince Albert Victoria Hospital would no longer receive free parking. The SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] claims that this change is because of misuse of free parking passes. But instead of working to ensure that the most vulnerable still have access, they cut the program altogether.

What does the minister have to say to the cancer patients that now have to pay to receive treatment at Victoria Hospital?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this particular

instance, this was a decision made by the SHA in terms of how they conduct this part of their operations, Mr. Speaker, and we'll raise it with the leadership of the SHA again. I think they've explained publicly in the media the reason for the decision, Mr. Speaker.

In the area of cancer care, I would just say that this government is making record investments into the area of cancer care, significant investments into the Cancer Agency in this province, and a number of cancer-related programs and services, building capacity here in Saskatchewan to address the growing pressures when it comes to cancer in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, I think these ministers need a lesson in ministerial responsibility. Mr. Speaker, if the Sask Party is trying to save a buck by forcing vulnerable cancer patients to pay for parking, they should really look in the mirror. They have a long list of health care mismanagement and waste where savings could be found — 240 million on the failed AIMS [administrative information management system] system; millions paid for out-of-province surgeries and mammograms, money that's going to Sask Party friends and donors; and they'll have spent 139 million on contract nurses outside of Saskatchewan by December, Mr. Speaker.

The list goes on and on. What does this say about the minister's priorities when cancer patients are paying the price for this government's mismanagement and waste?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is proud to make record investments into health care. And we're very grateful for the health care teams, the front-line staff that deliver this care, Mr. Speaker. Whenever we have an opportunity, myself as minister, MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] on this side of the House make sure that we engage with front-line health care providers to find ways to address challenges that we're facing in the system and also to build upon the successes that we have in our health care system, Mr. Speaker.

In this year's budget we're making a record investment of nearly \$7.6 billion into a variety of areas of health care, Mr. Speaker, a 10.6 per cent increase in health care funding over the previous year's budget. Mr. Speaker, investments into, as I've said previously, record investments into cancer care, into surgical care, money for the Saskatoon and Regina capacity pressure action plans, more funding for health human resources hiring and recruitment and retention — the list goes on and on. We're going to continue to make those investments into our health care system, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — It's not good enough, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is too busy looking out for their friends and donors to look after Saskatchewan people. Dennis Ogradnick, city councillor in Prince Albert, first raised

this issue in the media. He was undergoing cancer treatment at Victoria Hospital when free parking was abruptly stopped. And he had some thoughts to share: “I thought this was wrong. You are under a lot of stress and that extra pay, it adds up and it could become a financial burden and a stressful situation for parents.”

Mr. Speaker, how does this minister justify nickel-and-diming cancer patients in P.A. [Prince Albert]?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said previously, this was a decision made by the SHA. We’ll have a further conversation with the SHA leadership about this decision and look further into it, Mr. Speaker.

Again I would say this, that we are making significant investments when it comes to the areas and many areas of cancer care: prevention, treatment, post-treatment, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency receiving \$248.6 million in this year’s budget, a \$26.1 million increase over last year; a million dollars to be provided to ovarian cancer research. Mr. Speaker, \$3.5 million towards breast health in this province, including the establishment of a breast health centre here in Regina, which is something that has been long asked for by not only patients in southern Saskatchewan but also by providers of health care services, Mr. Speaker, as result of some of the ongoing collaboration of work that we have with those surgeons and others that work in the area of breast cancer, Mr. Speaker. And we’ll continue to make these investments.

[14:30]

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

Overdose Deaths and Treatment for Addictions

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Regina continues to be hit hard by the overdose crisis. Year after year Regina has recorded two times the amount of overdose deaths compared to Saskatoon. And now the Regina Police Service has released new statistics to show that it’s getting worse. In March alone there were 280 drug overdoses in Regina. That’s over 100 more overdoses than January and February of this year.

Mr. Speaker, this crisis is wreaking havoc in our communities, and it is leaving families without their loved ones. When will the Sask Party recognize that their choices to cut supports are causing more harm to people?

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

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just say that the harm that these individuals are experiencing is as a direct result of the drugs that they are using, and that is why our focus is on helping individuals overcome their addiction to those drugs, Mr. Speaker. Our government’s focus is on treatment and recovery to help people overcome those addictions and live healthy lives, Mr. Speaker.

To that end, our government has introduced a plan that will make

it easier for individuals to access treatment spaces. We’re more than doubling the amount of treatment spaces available, and we are focused on a recovery-oriented system of care that wraps supports around individuals and helps them find the path to recovery in a safe and healthy way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

SaskPower and Saskatchewan Research Council Join CANDU Owners Group

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I was pleased to attend an event at SaskPower head office here in Regina to announce that SaskPower and Saskatchewan Research Council have joined the CANDU Owners Group, also known as COG.

SaskPower and SRC [Saskatchewan Research Council] are the first new members to join COG in over 20 years. Today’s announcement is another example of how Saskatchewan is leveraging industry expertise to help advance nuclear development for both SaskPower’s small modular reactor and Saskatchewan Research Council’s microreactor projects.

Mr. Speaker, as members of COG, both SaskPower and SRC will gain access to research, technical workshops, and peer groups focused on environmental and regulatory affairs, nuclear safety, used fuel management, and emergency planning. Established in 1984, COG is a technically focused organization that operates four lines of business: research and development, joint projects, nuclear safety and environmental affairs, and information exchange learning and development.

Existing members of COG include Ontario Power Generation, Bruce Power, New Brunswick Power, and the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories. Mr. Speaker, COG’s primary purpose is to support nuclear industry collaboration to continually innovate nuclear plant equipment and processes to ensure the highest standard of safety, efficiency, and environmental performance.

In 2018 COG expanded its mandate to include advanced technologies, including small modular reactors and microreactors in recognition that its collaboration model is beneficial to non-CANDU technologies. As SaskPower and SRC advance in developing their SMR [small modular reactor] and microreactor projects, COG membership will provide expanded and cost-effective access to nuclear industry technical and regulatory expertise.

SaskPower has been a participant in COG’s SMR technology forum since 2019. Eight SMR vendors took part in COG’s SMR vendor program, including GE Hitachi and Westinghouse. Through the program, vendors collaborate with COG members to exchange information on nuclear fuel supply, waste management, supply qualification, and regulatory issues. Our province is committed to ensuring continued energy security, and that commitment is evident in today’s announcement.

By tapping into COG’s four decades of expertise and experience, SaskPower and SRC are gaining access to the most innovative

research along with industry intelligence, best practices, and supply chain development while enabling cost savings through resource pooling.

Mr. Speaker, this is another significant milestone for Saskatchewan in advancing the safe and sustainable introduction of nuclear power generation technologies into the province. I look forward to seeing the ways that SaskPower and SRC membership in COG will inform and shape our province's future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and my thanks to the minister for providing a copy of his remarks in advance. So first and foremost, my congratulations and appreciation to the officials and experts who worked so hard to make today's announcement a reality. An announcement focused on collaboration and innovation is a pleasant change in this House, Mr. Speaker.

And now I believe this is maybe the third opportunity that I've had to respond to a ministerial statement on the matter of small modular reactors and their potential role in Saskatchewan's energy future. And for the sake of both brevity and the merits of consistency, I'll endeavour to return to the same well.

When it comes to approaching the question of nuclear power generation here in Saskatchewan and approaching energy security and in approaching the economic future of our province, this is a conversation and a decision-making process that must be above reproach. We must think regionally, nationally, and globally, and we must be serious in our approach to both the economy and to climate change.

Now in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we stood united in opposition to things like the clean electricity regulations, the carbon tax, and overreach into provincial jurisdictions so ably carved out and defended by former premiers Blakeney and Romanow. And having done a few of these statements and a few 75-minute debates, Mr. Speaker, there are opportunities for SMRs here in Saskatchewan. The decision-making process and the business case must be above reproach.

The minister's comments that this, and I'll quote, that "This is another significant milestone for Saskatchewan in advancing the safe and sustainable introduction of nuclear power generation technologies into the province," may highlight the fears of many that this is a government that's short on details, plays fast and loose with transparency, and has set us on a path to inevitability rather than ensuring whatever the decision is that is made is one that is in the best interests of the province.

Mr. Speaker, this is about power generation and energy security, and it's about potentially doubling the provincial debt, nearly quadrupling SaskPower's. And at the very least, the public deserves transparency.

Today's announcement is a good-news story of collaboration and industry development. The lack of transparency and the accompanying concerns bolstered by the nearly \$250 million that this government has spent on SMR pre-work will continue to

linger.

When it comes to SMRs, when it comes to our economic and energy-generating future, the communities of Estevan, of Elbow, Crown employees, and the taxpayer deserve transparency and accountability for this monumental decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I order questions 10 to 21.

The Speaker: — Questions 10 to 21 have been ordered. I recognize the Government Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committee, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned till 1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:38.]

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
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

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

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

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

Hon. Everett Hindley
Minister of Health

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

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

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Energy and Resources

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

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Environment

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Advanced Education