



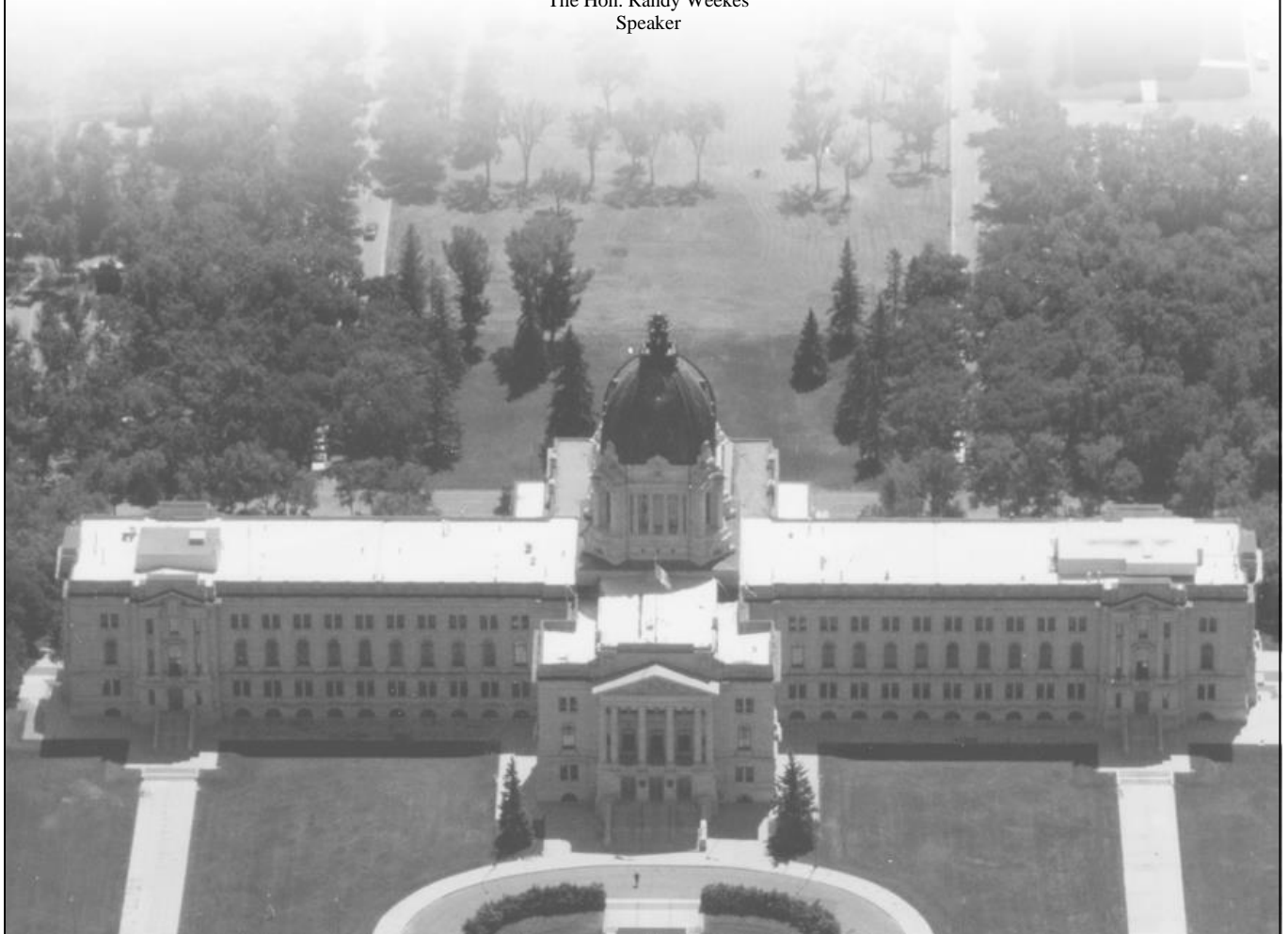
FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

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)
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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

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd 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.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues for the leave for an extended introduction.

Mr. Speaker, today we're joined by a number of guests who are here to witness the signing of a significant memorandum of understanding between the governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta to advance our collective interests in the nuclear space. And I'll have a bit more about that to say in a statement.

First I want to welcome Alberta's Minister of Affordability and Utilities, Minister Nathan Neudorf, who is joining us here on the floor of the Assembly. Mr. Speaker, Nathan is the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Lethbridge-East. He was elected in 2019 and re-elected in 2023. Prior to his election, Nathan worked in commercial construction. He was involved in the Alberta Construction Association, the Alberta Construction Safety Association, as well as, I believe, the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Speaker. So I want to welcome Nathan and thank him for his partnership.

Joining Nathan today from Alberta — and I believe they are in the galleries — Jon Dziadyk, his chief of staff; Andrew Buffin, assistant deputy minister of Utilities; Leo Tovar, a senior policy advisor; and Mike Law, who is the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Alberta Electric System Operator.

Mr. Speaker, for the announcement today of the MOU [memorandum of understanding] signing we also had a number of guests from inside the province. Many of them were unable to join us, but I know that certainly Kent Campbell, no stranger to this House, president and CEO of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] is here; Amber Biemans, who is a board member at SaskPower as well. Ray Orb, the president of SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] joined us at the announcement this morning; and Brian Rakochoy, who is manager of advocacy for SARM, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it was a pleasure for us to welcome them here for a very important signing. So I do want to thank Minister Neudorf for being here today, for his officials that are joining us, and the guests that joined us for the announcement and those that could

stay for proceedings today.

I would ask all members to welcome them to the Saskatchewan legislature.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's my pleasure to join the minister in welcoming Minister Neudorf as well as all of the officials and experts present from Alberta, as well as Brian and Mr. Orb here from Saskatchewan, and Mr. Campbell and your team as well for being part of today's announcement.

Mr. Neudorf, the long-standing relationship between Saskatchewan and Alberta is one that I believe is truly valued by all members of this legislature. And the work that you and your government have done in advancing our shared interests when it comes to energy, when it comes to the economy, and when it comes to affordability — especially with your government's introduction and expansion of the gas tax relief program — is so important and something we hope to get across the line here today.

Who knows? Stay tuned, I suppose. Maybe you'll stick around for the vote. But, Mr. Speaker, with that I would like to sincerely thank and welcome Mr. Neudorf, his officials, as well as all guests joining us here today.

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

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, seated in the west gallery are two constituents of mine from the village of Bethune, Dale and Maria Bitz.

Maria runs a home-based business in Bethune. In addition to that she is an educational assistant at Clive Draycott School, does amazing work there. And speaking of amazing, she's an amazing singer, Mr. Speaker.

Dale, Dale, Mr. Speaker, on the other hand is not an amazing singer. Actually he's not very good at all. But he is an amazing mechanic, Mr. Speaker, where he works at Young's Equipment in Chamberlain and has done so for a number of years. And, Mr. Speaker, when my dad was still farming, his combine was his treasure. He loved it. I think he loved it more than me quite frankly. And no one touched his combine except Dale.

And so that just speaks to his amazing talent. And I would be remiss if I do not mention that he has also been my amazing best friend for a long time. And he also is a pretty good cousin too.

So with that, I would ask that all members welcome Dale and Maria to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, this morning I'd like to introduce in the west gallery, 54 grade 5 students from Valley Christian Academy in Osler. Yeah,

give us a wave. They're accompanied today by their teacher, Tyler Golding; as well as parent chaperones, Carie McKenzie, David Cameron, Sharon Balzer, Rachel Baird, Jane O'Soup, and Nicole Van Ee.

Mr. Speaker, VCA [Valley Christian Academy] is home to the Lions, and they do great athletics in that school and they also do great academics. And VCA is an associate school in Prairie Spirit School Division that will be converting or changing over to a certified independent school this fall. And our government is very pleased to be able to work with both Prairie Spirit School Division as well VCA in this.

So with that, I would like to have all members of this Assembly welcome these students from Osler's Valley Christian Academy to their Saskatchewan legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce the Carteri family. There's Cristina Carteri and her son, Angelo, and Rosa and Pasqualina.

Mr. Speaker, as many of the members here know, I got hearing aids a few years ago. And she has Optimal Hearing, so I went there. And the thing is, what I did is I needed hearing aids so I could hear what the opposition was saying. So I listened very closely. But the other part is, Mr. Speaker, is I can just turn the hearing aids off if it gets too bad.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that they have been to the legislature; they call it the ivory palace. And I would like all members to thank them for coming down here today. So thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: whereas the Trudeau Liberal-NDP [New Democratic Party] coalition carbon tax is one of the main causes of affordability issues and inflation in the nation of Canada; 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 to not change the carbon tax on home heating, Saskatchewan families continue to pay that 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 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 are residents of Saskatoon and Regina. I do so submit. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Thanks to Organizations That Support Families of Missing Loved Ones

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I rise today for Missing Persons Week. Every missing person has had their life, as they knew it, stolen away from them. So too have all the people who love them, who worry and wonder every day, who look for answers for justice they may never get, who live in fear, who struggle to hold on to hope. These disappearances are crimes, not just against one person but against their entire community.

I want to thank all organizations for the work of supporting families of missing loved ones. They raise awareness about the missing, and they advocate support and reforms to save others from having to deal with this pain. In particular, they collaborate with Indigenous leadership to bring their services to our communities.

Given the never-ending horror that is the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit, 2S+ [two-spirit, plus], it's vital to reach out to these communities to help. I ask all members to join me in thanking all organizations who offer their commitment, support, and advocacy for families of missing loved ones. Miigwech.

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

Authority of Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, it was a year ago in this Assembly that I started questioning the government about their debacle with Shercom and the Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan. At that time the government promised they would look into the matter. Now they are saying it's an arm's-length organization that they have no control over.

That is not accurate. The Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan was created by this provincial government. It operates with authority that was delegated by the province. Its only authority comes from what the province has given it. Since it acts with the authority of the province, it is this provincial government's duty to ensure it is acting fairly and responsibly on behalf of the government.

The decisions this agency makes impacts our entire province, from tire recycling to environmental stewardship to government contract winners and losers in business and the economic impacts of value-added processing. These are all matters the provincial government has a vested interest in and is responsible for.

Now this government is saying they created an agency that they have no control over, that is unaccountable and has no oversight. Well, Mr. Speaker, that sounds about right for this government, creating more layers of bureaucracy that are unaccountable and out of touch with the people. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people aren't buying these excuses. They expect transparency and accountability from the government and all its agencies.

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

**Red Dress Day and Support
for Families Impacted by Gender-Based Violence**

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Sunday, May 5th Red Dress Day will be commemorated across Canada. Officially known as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Red Dress Day is held annually to raise awareness of the disproportionate number of Indigenous people who are impacted by gender-based violence.

In this year's budget \$800,000 is allocated for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls+ Community Response Fund to support grassroots organizations and communities to develop and deliver projects. The family information liaison unit currently supports over 170 families to navigate government processes and access support and information about their loved ones. Last year the fund supported 23 projects, and applications are currently open for this year.

Our government is allocating \$42.6 million over the next three years to more than 34 community-based organizations to deliver critical support and services to those families impacted by interpersonal violence and abuse.

Red Dress Day is an important opportunity to honour those who are dearly missed by saying their names, talking about their lives, and holding spaces for those who loved them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Health Care Specialists Celebrated During Perfusion Week

Ms. Mowat: — I rise today to recognize Perfusion Week and celebrate the crucial role that cardiovascular perfusionists play in cardiac surgery and critical care. The theme of this year's Perfusion Week is Connected to Life! which highlights the important contributions of perfusionists to patient care and outcomes. The life-saving duties of a perfusionist include operating heart-lung bypass machines during cardiac surgeries and providing vital support in critical care scenarios. Their expertise is essential in ensuring the success of complex surgical procedures and the stabilization of critically ill patients.

[10:15]

This week is not only a celebration of cardiovascular perfusionists, it's also a call to action for us legislators. We must recognize the challenges facing the profession and work with perfusionists to address these challenges. In every province, including Saskatchewan, there's a shortage of perfusionists that requires increased government support to overcome. But like so many other specialists in this province, they're understaffed and under-resourced, and the Sask Party government is failing to deliver in recruiting and retention of health care workers.

I ask all members to join me in celebrating Perfusion Week and in calling on the government to show these health care specialists the support they need to increase the number of perfusionists in

this province and to ensure everyone can get care when they need it.

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

**New Depot and Partnership Agreement
Shows Government Commitment to Recycling**

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment recently joined Sarcan employees for the grand opening of their new depot in Watrous. The new depot is larger, brighter, and more efficient, with an expanded space to receive customers and for Drop & Go, Sarcan's popular line-skipping service.

In conjunction with the grand opening, the ministry and the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres signed a new four-year agreement celebrating a 36-year-long partnership. This agreement includes program funding of more than \$36 million for '24-25 that ensures Sarcan continues its excellent work of managing and operating the provincial beverage container program's depot collection system.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to recycling and the environmental and employment benefits Sarcan provides the province. Sarcan collected 84 per cent of the beverage containers sold in Saskatchewan last year. This places Saskatchewan's beverage container recycling system as one of the most effective recycling systems in all of North America. The opening of this new facility supports the province's solid-waste management strategy, which aims to reduce waste per person by 30 per cent by 2030, and by 50 per cent by 2040.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, thank you to Sarcan and their workers for their dedication to a healthier, cleaner, and more sustainable province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Multilateral Well Incentive Program
Will Promote Growth and Investment**

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has introduced a multilateral well incentive program to grow incremental oil production in our province. This innovative technique will put more rigs and workers in the field and support the growth plan for goals of increasing oil production to 600,000 barrels per day by 2030. The Ministry of Energy and Resources estimated between 100 to 200 additional wells will be drilled in the province per year because of this program.

Lisa Baiton, president and CEO of CAPP [Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers], has this to say about the program:

Saskatchewan's plan to modernize the royalty regime to recognize the use of new drilling technologies provides the right policy environment to attract investment to the province.

A more competitive royalty framework will help unlock the available oil resources in Saskatchewan and will in return create more jobs and additional revenues for the government and municipalities.

This is a win-win for our province, supporting both economic growth and the services people rely on. It's another example of the government committed to creating a stable, predictable, investment-friendly environment. The increased revenue generated from the program ensures that our government can continue to invest in our priorities that matter most to us: Saskatchewan people, classrooms, care, and communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Opposition's Position on Provincial Economy

Mr. Francis: — Mr. Speaker, instead of praising Saskatchewan entrepreneurs, the NDP Economy critic takes every opportunity to put dark clouds in front of the silver lining. She thinks as Economy critic it's her job to criticize and run down our economy.

But members on this side would like to take a moment to celebrate and thank our small-business owners. 98.8 per cent of all Saskatchewan businesses are small businesses. The small-business sector has increased nearly 45 per cent since 2012. Female-owned businesses have increased by over 40 per cent since 2010. Small businesses make up one-quarter of our annual GDP [gross domestic product]. Unfortunately the pandemic closed many businesses but the fact is, the number of business openings here has rebounded by 10 per cent.

But the NDP never wants to talk about success, Mr. Speaker. Their MLA for Saskatoon Nutana said what most of them really think, and I quote, "There is nothing to be proud of here." And their candidate in P.A. [Prince Albert] said, and I quote, "It's pretty dang demoralizing to live and work in Saskatchewan." Wow, Mr. Speaker.

Luckily Saskatchewan people and business owners don't share the NDP's affinity for doom and gloom. Instead they are hard-working, resourceful, and resilient, and their businesses continue to make Saskatchewan a great place. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provincial Fuel Tax and Federal Carbon Tax

Ms. Beck: — Just awash in positivity, Mr. Speaker. But yesterday during Premier's estimates, I asked the Premier if he thought that Saskatchewan people were facing an affordability crisis. Here's what he had to say, and I quote: "I wouldn't say it's an affordability crisis . . ."

Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier be so out of touch with the cost-of-living crisis that Saskatchewan families are facing?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Here we hear the Leader of the Opposition stand day in, day out and talk about an affordability crisis in this province, Mr. Speaker. There's a vote today that has, should've been voted on two weeks ago. It was actually delayed by the members opposite. And I'd ask, you know, why was that vote

delayed?

It was delayed because a number of caucus members were attending a Trudeau campaign school in Ottawa. They answered, Mr. Speaker, those members, those members answered a call to arms put out by an Ottawa-based labour organization to plot strategy ahead of the federal election vote, attended a Trudeau campaign school to plot strategy ahead of a federal election vote.

How could the Leader of the Opposition say that there's an affordability crisis and then delay a vote because they have to go and attend a campaign school to extend that affordability crisis that Canadians might be facing? I ask again today. In all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, I ask again today . . . I ask again today, how could you do that to Saskatchewan people?

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows very well that it wasn't a campaign school, and he knows very well I have no problem standing up to any federal leader, or any provincial leader for that matter, when it comes to delivering for the people of this province.

Today there's going to be a vote. That's right, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to see if this Premier really understands what people in this province are going through. Here's the question. I've asked it every day this session. Will he finally understand the struggles, the crisis that people are facing in this province? Will he vote for our call to scrap his gas tax in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — If it's such a crisis, why did the Leader of the Opposition delay it two weeks to go support Justin Trudeau and Jagmeet Singh in extending the affordability challenge that Canadians are experiencing, Mr. Speaker?

And the wrath of policy decisions coming from Ottawa, I can assure you that all Canadians are experiencing this the same, Mr. Speaker. The wrath of the annually increasing carbon tax imposed by Justin Trudeau, supported by the NDP, committed to yet again yesterday, the NDP has committed to. They are going to support the increase of that tax from 65 to \$80, Mr. Speaker.

In this province, in this province we had made the decision through our minister of Crown investment corporations to remove the carbon tax from home heating natural gas and electricity, Mr. Speaker. That alone is going to save Saskatchewan families more money than anything that is put on the floor of this legislature, was supposed to be voted on two weeks ago, couldn't be voted on because the members opposite were attending the Trudeau campaign school. They answered the call to arms to go and try to get Justin Trudeau elected one more time.

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

Ms. Beck: — You know what hasn't needed a vote, Mr. Speaker? It is allowing people in this province to have some relief. This government at any time in the last year could have done what the minister from Alberta did and suspend the provincial gas tax. The fact is they have chosen not to.

But, Mr. Speaker, today they're going to get a chance to show it on the record. Here's the question: is the Premier today going to vote for our motion to suspend his PST [provincial sales tax] on gas and diesel in this province? And if he's not, I want to know, Mr. Speaker, what's he going to tell the people at the Co-op in Shellbrook about why he voted no?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — There's a lot of resources in this Assembly for the opposition to inquire with today. There's the president of SARM here that the member from Elphinstone might have a few questions for about one of their members. We have an Alberta minister here that the Leader of the Opposition might inquire with. Because rest assured, I can say this: that if the Alberta government had the ability to remove the carbon tax from their home heating natural gas and electricity, they most certainly would do that.

The question that the Leader of the Opposition needs to answer today is why we did not vote on her motion two weeks ago. Why is it such an urgent motion, such an urgency, Mr. Speaker? The affordability crisis is just that, a crisis, but yet they need to delay it so that she can attend a campaign school to ensure that Justin Trudeau can once again be elected in this nation, Mr. Speaker.

That individual, that government supported by the NDP are putting forward the policies that are causing inflationary challenges not just for families in Saskatchewan but for families across this great nation.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, you see the Premier trying to put on a bit of a show for guests from the west and those in the gallery here today. But the facts of the matter are the facts. And of course this leader and this opposition brought forward that motion to suspend the carbon tax. This opposition stands opposed to the carbon tax, but it's that Premier who plays silly partisan games day in, day out that of course have failed Saskatchewan on this front in making that argument.

But this is a provincial government that's lost the plot, and they're out of touch with Saskatchewan people when it comes to the generational cost-of-living challenge they're facing. Inexcusably they've stuck Saskatchewan people with more taxes and more costs during this time. Now today that government will have a chance to vote once again on the motion to suspend the fuel tax.

My question to the Premier: will he stand up today and finally offer some relief for Saskatchewan people, and suspend the fuel tax — the provincial fuel tax — for families across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, that member opposite is well aware this is their only platform plan. This is the only thing they have ever suggested. They actually got on to it once NDP Manitoba gave them the idea, Mr. Speaker. The savings families will have in the home heating is more than what they are

suggesting.

But interesting, they give us no idea, no idea of how they would pay for their plan which is again what the NDP do. We're going to forgo revenue. Which roads are they not going to fix? Are we going to go back to the days where the NDP told the citizens of Saskatchewan, fix your own roads?

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

Proposed Agribusiness Merger

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Tired spin, Mr. Speaker. It's a real shame that the Sask Party can't find their voice on important files for families. And it's a shame that they've been able to find their voice on the risks and hit facing producers and our economy with the proposed merger of multinational Bunge and Viterra.

And I raised this, these concerns, and asked questions to the minister at committee to find out personally what he's done on this file to engage, and he didn't say a word. Not a word.

This is a bad deal for producers in our province and it shouldn't go ahead. What's that Premier going to do to stand up for Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, it is this party and it is our Agriculture minister that recognizes that agriculture's the backbone of our economy, and we will always stand up for our producers.

The minister has consulted with stakeholders about the proposed merger, and he's heard their concerns. He met with the leadership of both companies to ensure our producers' feedback is being heard and these companies continue to have presence in our communities. He made a submission through the Ministry of Agriculture to the Transport Canada and Competition Bureau, raising the stakeholder concerns that he heard, and the Competition Bureau's report addresses some of those producers' concerns.

[10:30]

Viterra and Bunge can now propose measures to address the Competition Bureau concerns. And these will be examined by the Bureau, and the results will be provided to the Minister of Transport. And we will continue to monitor it as it goes forward.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I asked these questions to the minister. It was crickets. Not a single word from that minister. Mr. Speaker, this deal matters to Saskatchewan, and it shouldn't go ahead.

I was here when the Sask Party stood up, and we all stood united against the takeover of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan because it was the right thing to do. But the Sask Party, under this Premier, ain't what it used to be.

Here's what Sask Wheat, SaskBarley, and APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] have to say about the deal:

The merger may reduce incentives for Viterra to build its proposed canola crush facility in Regina, Saskatchewan. The increase in export basis and canola crush margins would reduce producer income by approximately \$770 million per year.

A billion-dollar hit to producers and our economy, and putting at risk the canola crush project here in Regina. Why hasn't that minister, why hasn't that Premier done anything to stop this bad deal for Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think the member opposite heard my previous answer, quite frankly, when I described all of the steps that have been taken. Viterra and Bunge have, they have an opportunity to provide measures to address these concerns. And there will be a report from Minister of Transport, which is expected to be in June of 2024. We will be letting the process move forward and watch it closely.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's a bad deal for Saskatchewan. Producers' incomes would take a billion-dollar hit. Value-add jobs and the canola crush project would be put at risk. Downtown head office jobs in Regina and good jobs all across Saskatchewan would be put at risk.

Here's what the Competition Bureau had to say: "The proposed acquisition of Viterra by Bunge is likely to result in substantial anticompetitive effects and a significant loss of rivalry between Viterra and Bunge in agricultural markets in Canada." It's a bad deal, Mr. Speaker. It's a bad deal, Mr. Premier.

Why has the Ag minister been missing on this file? Why was he crickets instead of standing up for Saskatchewan? Is the Ag minister the Agriculture minister for Saskatchewan or for a big multinational conglomerate? Why won't that Sask Party stand up for Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — That's a fair question coming from the opposition, Mr. Speaker, considering the Ag ministers that they appointed in years gone by. But I can assure Saskatchewan residents that the three Ag ministers that we've had, including the current Ag minister, is going to have the back of our agricultural producers day in, day out, Mr. Speaker, has his entire career because he's one of them. He's one of them.

Mr. Speaker, I can also assure Saskatchewan ag producers that the Premier of this province and the Saskatchewan Party government of this province is going to have the back of rural Saskatchewan residents and going to have the back of all of those that are in the ag industry — whether it be primary production or value-added production that we see today — as we see investments pouring into this province, yes, interest from

international companies, Mr. Speaker.

But rest assured with this. We know that the Competition Bureau has made comments on this. We're now looking at the companies and to the reaction that the companies are going to make. And we're watching that very closely, Mr. Speaker.

And if the members opposite think for one minute that myself or this Ag minister or this government or the MLAs on the governing side are not going to stand up for the agriculture industry and the ag producers and all of those that are involved, whether it be in downtown Saskatchewan or across this great province, Mr. Speaker, they got another thing coming.

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

Board Appointments and Contract for Tire Recycling

Ms. Conway: — Lots of huffing and puffing today, Mr. Speaker. Nice to see the Premier get up on that question. Maybe we'll see him finally get up to answer this one.

The Sask Party's tire fire of a deal still has so many unanswered questions. We still haven't got an answer about the Premier's meeting with folks from Shercom back in 2016, when they say the Premier himself made promises that they would have access to the scrap tires they need for their value-added manufacturing in their business in Saskatoon going forward.

The current minister has had the chance to get briefed up on this file, to walk over to the Premier, and have a chat with him. So did the Premier make that promise in 2016, and if so, why did he break it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, that question was answered yesterday. I want to read a quote into the record:

Richard inspires confidence, trust, and integrity. His passion for rural governance is like none other. His leadership and dedication to making a difference to municipalities has not gone unnoticed. He has had immeasurable impact on the people of Saskatchewan over many decades.

That is why Richard (Porky) Porter was appointed to the TSS [Tire Stewardship of Saskatchewan] board by the internal appointment process that they have, not by government, Mr. Speaker. And those are the words, that quote, pardon me, are not my words. Those are the words of Ray Orb, the president of SARM. So the member from Elphinstone, rather than slandering members of this province on the floor of this Assembly, could have the opportunity to ask . . .

The Speaker: — Premier. I ask the Premier to withdraw and apologize for that comment.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — I withdraw and apologize.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the question again. It was about the promises that Shercom says he made in 2016. Did he make those promises, and if so, why did he break them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — As I said, I answered that question yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and I would say that when this government does make appointments — like any other government, and I had made a number as the minister of Environment in my time there, as current ministers of Environment do — we choose to make those appointments on the merit of the individuals that are there.

And we have made many appointments on the advice of various organizations like SARM, like SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], labour organizations, union organizations, Mr. Speaker, as well as recommendations that come from elected members across the province. We've made those types of appointments to, for example, the Saskatchewan professional outfitters commission, as we know, Mr. Speaker.

We have made the appointment, the Deputy Premier had appointed the former NDP leader — prior to being the NDP leader; I think he had ran twice but hadn't succeeded yet — to the Advisory Group on Poverty Reduction. Janice MacKinnon is currently serving on our Saskatchewan-first tribunal.

Many other appointments, Mr. Speaker, non-partisan, not ideological appointments, appointments made on the very merit of these particular individuals. And these are individuals that this government is not going to bring their name to the floor of this Assembly, not going to smear their reputation on the floor of our provincial Legislative Assembly. And I would ask the members opposite to not do that either, to hard-working Saskatchewan people that are building their community, building our province, and building a better nation like they choose to, day in, day out.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, my question didn't touch appointments. We do have some of those questions, but I didn't ask that question. Mr. Speaker, there are more unanswered questions about this deal, like why the government decided to exclude the company already doing the work in Saskatoon from a lucrative tire contract.

And what's in those two studies that apparently justify this whole mess? The Saskatoon chamber has called for that report to be released. We have called for that report to be released. Why won't the Sask Party be transparent for once and release that report? And if there are commercially sensitive facts in that report, why won't they release a summary to the public today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, those questions need to go to TSS. They're an industry-led board, Mr. Speaker, industry-led board that is making decisions with respect to the RFPs [request for proposal]. Industry-led boards with people that are appointed to it, merit-based appointments to that particular board, like many other boards, like Mr. Meili who was appointed to a board by this government, like Janice MacKinnon. We have a former NDP

candidate that this government chose to appoint to the Bench in Saskatchewan, merit-based, and I would say is serving the people of Saskatchewan very, very well, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that will not smear Saskatchewan people that are making for a better community, Mr. Speaker. We will appoint them to positions based on their merit. All we ask is that when you are part of a party that is attempting to vie for votes and form government in this province, why would you bring people's . . .

The Speaker: — Premier. I ask the Premier to withdraw and apologize for the comment about buying votes.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Vying.

The Speaker: — Buying . . . Did you say buying?

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I said vying, but if you heard buying, I would withdraw and apologize.

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

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, every time we ask about this report, that Premier points to the independent, arm's-length TSS on this tire fire of a deal. If only that were the case, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier's true friend Richard (Porky) Porter was appointed to the SaskWater board by the Premier just a few months after he joined the cabinet. Then Mr. Porter chaired the advisory committee that created the TSS, and then was appointed a member at large to the TSS. And this is someone who has donated thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars to that Sask Party and to that Premier's own leadership campaign.

How can people continue to accept that these boards are independent when that Sask Party keeps stacking them with their true friends and their donors?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — [Inaudible interjection] . . . Not you but your colleagues. Mr. Speaker, with respect as I said to the appointments that are made, this government makes numerous appointments. Many have served or supported both sides of the House in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to make those appointments on merit.

For example, when it comes to transitional boards or when it comes to transitional committees, it isn't that long ago on the recommendation of individuals in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, it was myself actually as the minister of Environment that appointed to the transition committee for the Saskatchewan professional outfitters an individual by the name of Ray Beck. He most certainly served and served well not only on that transitional committee but served well on the interim board of the Saskatchewan professional outfitters. That recommendation came from a Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

And I would say at this point in time, on behalf of the government, on behalf of the government, I would say thank you to Mr. Porter for his service and I would say thank you to Mr.

Beck for his service as well.

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

Status of Farm Credit Canada's Head Office

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Farm Credit Canada is planning to close its head office in Regina and move it to Quebec. This would be disastrous result for Saskatchewan. Can the Premier confirm or deny this move?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — We have not been apprised of that information, so we don't have anything to comment on.

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

Ms. Wilson: — Saskatchewan farmers are just beginning their spring work, Mr. Speaker. There is enough added stress with higher production costs and now the potential of changes to their main lending institution. While we agree with the Premier's harder stance with the Prime Minister, these actions have consequences. CRA [Canada Revenue Agency] is set to audit the province and now rumours say that the feds will move FCC [Farm Credit Canada] from Regina to Montreal.

What is the Premier's plan B?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Again we don't answer questions on rumours that someone may have heard somewhere. We have heard nothing on this. There would be concerns for sure. It's the same when the NDP closed all of the rural service centres. There was a concern raised by our party. There would be concerns raised should it be more than just a rumour.

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

Government's Energy Policies

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, on the subject of small modular reactors, the government said this Monday they won't make a decision on pursuing it until 2029. Mr. Speaker, they are betting our future on it. They have already committed to shutting down our coal. That is guaranteed. It has already begun. Just ask the people in Estevan.

The government told us don't worry; SMR [small modular reactor] will save us. Now they are backtracking and stating they are still deciding. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't sound like they have a plan. The only guarantee we have from this government is that they will kill our coal and shut down natural gas to build solar panels and wind turbines.

Can the government be clear? What does their net zero plan look like?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments

Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To be clear, it's decisions made by the federal government that are going to impair the ability for the province to be able to run our coal fleet to its end of life. That's the Liberal-NDP coalition in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to SMRs, I've always been clear that we'll make a decision likely in that 2029 time frame, Mr. Speaker. We're doing our due diligence and signing agreements like the MOU that we have with Alberta. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, if the government plans to gamble with our energy grid to achieve their net zero agenda, they should be transparent with the public about the SMR technology.

[10:45]

It is highly experimental technology. As of 2023 only China and Russia are operating SMRs on this scale. The one in China is only half the capacity of what the government plans. The ones in Russia are unknown as we have no data on them. Last year seven US [United States] states cancelled their project to build SMRs, calling it a giant financial debacle. To make matters worse, the company this government has contracted to build their reactors have never even built one before.

With so little data supporting this transition, why is the government bound and bent to pursue their net zero agenda, killing Saskatchewan coal and natural gas?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm disappointed to hear the member opposite, the leader of the United Party, indicating that she's against nuclear power for the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would just say that first and foremost GE [General Electric] Hitachi is working very closely with organizations like Ontario Power Generation, one of the largest nuclear providers of generation in this country. GE Hitachi is going through the process of the design of that reactor, Mr. Speaker.

But I would also say, the GE Hitachi is the BWRX-300, Mr. Speaker. It's a boiling water reactor; that's where the BWR comes from. The X means 10. It's the 10th generation, so we're very confident that this technology will be one of the ways that we'll move forward with ensuring that we have reliable, safe, and affordable energy for Saskatchewan, should we make that decision in the next couple of years.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Saskatchewan Partners with Alberta to Advance Nuclear Development

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I was pleased to sign a memorandum of understanding between the governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta to further collaborate on advancing nuclear development, industrial decarbonization, and enhancing our electrical grid capabilities. I want to thank Nathan Neudorf, Minister of Affordability and Utilities in Alberta for joining us in Regina here for the MOU today.

Saskatchewan has a long-standing, co-operative relationship with Alberta on energy development, and we share similar challenges and opportunities related to the changing energy landscape. The potential deployment of nuclear power from SMRs is an exciting option to produce non-emitting, safe, and reliable baseload power for Saskatchewan families and businesses.

While the decision to deploy small modular reactors in Saskatchewan won't be made until 2029, there is significant regulatory and preparation work that needs to be done now to facilitate an informed decision in 2029.

Mr. Speaker, by signing this MOU, Saskatchewan and Alberta are formalizing a partnership to work together on advancing nuclear power generation, navigating a complex regulatory environment, developing the supply chain associated with the nuclear industry, training a nuclear-capable workforce, and enhancing our system reliability through increased grid interconnections.

The work being done by our government is in pursuit of a shared goal — growing our province and supporting our residents, communities, businesses, and industries with affordable, reliable, and sustainable power. By sharing knowledge and experiences between jurisdictions, we are building a cleaner and brighter future for our citizens and benefiting communities across our province, including those located in our rural, northern, and Indigenous communities.

I look forward to continued collaboration between Saskatchewan and Alberta and seeing the many ways that our provinces can support each other as we navigate this complex nuclear journey. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And again twice in one week, my thanks to the minister for a copy of his remarks in advance, and to my new pal for the day, Minister Neudorf. Thank you for your presence here in Saskatchewan, and the strong real commitment shown through the signing of this MOU.

And I also want to take a special moment and thank you and thank your government for having taken note of the position that we, as the official opposition, have and have talked about publicly when it comes to the federal government's goals for net zero by 2035 being too far and too fast. And we want to thank you for your public recognition of those positions and for sharing

them wide and far.

Now, Mr. Speaker, provincial alignment in the west when it comes to our economies to energy is the mainstay of our beautiful country. And hearing the commitment championed by both ministers today on decarbonization, on grid enhancement, and on advancing nuclear development is an affirmation of the long-standing relationship between our two provinces.

And having supply chains developed and supported in Saskatchewan is essential. Recently Ontario Minister Smith has stated that Ontario has 80 per cent of the supply chain when it comes to SMRs and had more to say when it came to the associated labour and knowledge economies, Mr. Speaker. That is not good news for Alberta. That is not good news for Saskatchewan.

And now I hear today that the minister has chosen to clarify that the decision on nuclear has not been made. Because if this is the right choice for Saskatchewan — and SMRs may be the right choice for Saskatchewan — there is significant information that remains and should be forthcoming. Because by this government's own measures, each SMR will come at a cost of 5 to \$7 billion each.

But surely by this stage SaskPower must have an actual estimate of the cost, given its stage 3 future-supply-options analysis which projects to 2050. The cost of four-generation supply options include three SMRs. In the legislature and in the province, questions remain. Today though, Mr. Speaker, it seems that the 2029 decision horizon remains.

Now in regards to the MOU today formalizing the day-to-day work of the governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta, formalizing the sharing of knowledge and expertise is good news for both Saskatchewan and Alberta, and truly must be a remarkable achievement for this government. A glorious, heady day for all, for both governments and all today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Saskatchewan's Exports in International Markets and Federal Carbon Tax

Mr. Bonk: — There are occasions, Mr. Speaker, as Gwendolen remarked in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, when "it becomes more than a moral duty to speak one's mind; it becomes a pleasure." And, Mr. Speaker, today we're talking about international trade — the policies of our government and how it's increased our trade to \$49.3 billion.

I like it so much actually, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read the motion right at the beginning:

That this Assembly supports the Government of Saskatchewan's policies and investments that have led to the value of the province's exports increasing to \$49.3 billion in 2023 while expanding the province's access

to international markets; and further,

That the Assembly condemns the provincial NDP opposition for continuing to collaborate to keep the unsustainable Trudeau-NDP coalition carbon tax government in power.

In fact I'm going to sign it; I like it so much.

Mr. Speaker, international trade is so important to Saskatchewan. And it's important to me, Mr. Speaker. I spent 25 years of my life in international trade. I worked on four continents exporting products from Saskatchewan, promoting our producers, working to help our producers reach international markets, Mr. Speaker. I had the honour of serving as minister of Trade in this government for a while, and I can't say how much of an honour that was to help our producers find their voice on the world stage and get the rightful recognition that they deserve after so many years of being ignored by the previous NDP governments.

But Mr. Speaker, international trade is the lifeblood of the international economy. It's how the entire world works. Mr. Speaker, when we have something here that we're good at producing and we need something from somewhere else where they're good at producing it, we trade. This is what our province has been built on. This is how North America has become the powerhouse that it is, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there was a political philosopher in Scotland named Adam Smith. And Adam Smith, he was a really interesting guy. And he was worried about the citizens of Scotland and he was wondering, what can we do to increase the happiness of the citizens? That was where he started from, that was his philosophical point.

And in 1776, he wrote a book, his seminal work called *The Wealth of Nations*. And in that book he highlighted, or laid out, some ways where he thought he could maybe help his citizens to increase their happiness by increasing their productivity, by increasing their wealth, and in turn helping those around them.

He laid out five special points in his thesis. The first point was specialization, and he used a very interesting example with this. He said, imagine one person is producing pins, little metal pins. He said one person can produce about 20 pins by themselves in a day. He said, but with specialization, if you had 10 people working in specific areas of expertise producing pins together, those 10 people could produce 48,000 pins in a day.

Mr. Speaker, we can even highlight this example more if we look at what Milton Friedman used in his example of pencils. He said it's impossible for one person to create a pencil. He said as strange as that sounds, it's almost impossible for one person to make a pencil. He said, just imagine, the wood from a pencil would be cut down in a forest, maybe in British Columbia, but it was cut down with a saw. The saw was made with steel; the steel was made with iron ore. The iron ore was imported from somewhere; it was made by a person in a factory somewhere.

If you go further and you look at the lead that's in the pencil, it's not even lead actually. It's graphite. Graphite's probably made in a mine in South America, and it's been transported by other people to North America where the pencil was assembled. For

example, take a look at the eraser. The eraser is made of rubber. Rubber has probably, probably come from Malaysia actually, but rubber trees aren't native to Malaysia. They're actually from South America and they were brought to Malaysia with the help of the British government about 300 years ago, Mr. Speaker.

Then you look at the brass ferrule or aluminum ferrule that's holding the eraser to the pencil. That was made in a factory somewhere. We don't know exactly where that would be made. In China? We're not sure. You look at the paint on that pencil. The paint, we don't know where it was manufactured, but probably the chemicals for that paint came from a factory in Germany.

It takes thousands of people in thousands of industries from many different countries to create a pencil. This is the importance of trade, which is the next point that Adam Smith had in his thesis. Trade is what helps all of us to . . . We can produce what we're good at. We can buy what we're not good at or it's not cost-effective for us to make. And with that we can accumulate wealth, which is his next point.

Wealth accumulation is not accumulating money for the sake of accumulating money, Mr. Speaker. It's for the innate need of individuals to better themselves, to better their situation for their families. They're not doing this out of greed. They're not doing this out of spite for their neighbour or to put someone down. They're doing this to help themselves, to raise up their whole community, their entire family, Mr. Speaker. It's a very good thing.

The next thing he points out, his fourth point, is market signals. Mr. Speaker, the market knows. The market can tell you what is in need, what isn't in need. This doesn't come down by a government edict from someone in a grand office at command central, Mr. Speaker. The market is nimble. The market is quick. It can tell what we need when we need it and it can react.

His fifth point which was called the invisible hand, Mr. Speaker — this is the important, important point — that people left up to their own devices will find the most efficient way to allocate capital and resources, not the government. You don't see us . . . You go to any park in the world, you're not going to see statues of a committee. It's always people, individuals who found a need, who created a solution, and with that created wealth for their people, their families, and their communities, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that's very interesting when you look at what Adam Smith . . . his position he brought forward was comparative advantage. And, Mr. Speaker, comparative advantage is Saskatchewan's superpower. There is no other place on earth that has the comparative advantages that we have here. We are superpowers in agriculture. We have some of the largest potash reserves on earth; uranium reserves on earth; energy. You look at our oil, our natural gas. You look at our manufacturing, Mr. Speaker.

I'm just going to highlight a few little points here, and I'm going to speak in code. Or I'm just going to talk about agriculture, but code for the members opposite. In '22 Saskatchewan exported approximately, based on dollar value, 56 per cent of the world's — the world's — canary seed exports, 45 per cent of the world's lentil exports, 37 per cent of the world's dry pea exports, 33 per

cent of the world's durum exports, 24 per cent of the world's mustard exports, 23 per cent of the world's canola oil exports, 20 per cent of the world's oat exports, 19 per cent of the world's canola meal exports, 14 per cent of the world's flaxseed exports, 14 per cent of the world's chickpea exports, 12 per cent of the world's canola seed exports, 6 per cent of the world's rye exports — and I'm pretty sure we know how they left this province — 4 per cent of the world's non-durum wheat exports, and 4 per cent of the world's barley exports.

[11:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to mention my good friend the member from Melfort. He always likes to talk about the Saskatchewan Party's guiding principles. And they are worth a read if you . . . I have to agree with him. The first and, I would dare to say the most important of all of our guiding principles is "economic growth and job creation through the private sector, not government, as the engine of the economy."

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the fundamental difference between our party and the members opposite. If you were to switch "the private sector" and "not government" in a different order, basically you can . . . that's the difference between us and them.

We believe in the power of our individuals. If we were to leave them up to what they're good at — get out of the way, and let them produce — it's amazing what this province will accomplish. And our government supports our producers. We support our private industry. And there's a few ways that we do that. One is by low taxes. We have one of the lowest tax regimes in all of Canada and, I dare say, North America.

Smaller, less intrusive government. This is very important. But we have to have regulation because we have to protect our workers, we have to protect our consumers, and also it's very important when it comes to safety and traceability. Saskatchewan has a great reputation on the world markets for the products we produce, for sustainability and the quality that we have. And we have to protect that.

We support our exporters through programs and organizations like STEP, Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership. I've had the privilege of being on . . . I can't even count how many trade missions with STEP in the past, and I am such a fan of the work they do, how they connect, they link Saskatchewan producers with global markets. It's amazing the work they do on the intel side, on helping our producers find new markets, and finding their way through government regulations in other countries.

Another way that we help our producers, Mr. Speaker, is by trade offices. We have nine trade offices, in Germany, Japan, China, Vietnam, Mexico, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, UK [United Kingdom], and India. And this is so important, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if . . . I've spent, like I mentioned, a fair part of my life working in international trade.

And the way it works now is if someone is interested in a Saskatchewan product, they would go to a Canadian embassy. That Canadian embassy is staffed by someone there who doesn't really know usually very much about Saskatchewan products, about agriculture for example, or potash, because these are unique to Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it is so important that we

have our own people there who understand our industries, understand what we're doing, and are able to help us to export our products. And it's so important also for that government-to-government connection in a lot of these countries, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to say one thing that is so important is predictability, stability, and reliability. That is what our customers are looking for. That's what our producers are so thankful that we have this government in place and has provided that, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll just contrast that a little bit with what happened under the NDP government, and there's a long list of horrible NDP governments that we've had in this province. But I want to just say maybe the most pernicious and I think ill-advised government that we've ever had was the Blakeney government when they were nationalizing, nationalizing private industry in this province, Mr. Speaker. They actually took companies from people who made good-faith business decisions, and said we're taking what you have. We're stealing it, but we're going to give you . . . We're going to offer you compensation at what we decide.

Mr. Speaker, here's a quote from K+S CEO Norbert Steiner. He said, "that even more than a generation later, you can hardly believe that such an act could happen in a country belonging to the Western world." This is in your generation, Mr. Speaker. It's unbelievable.

I just want to read something else from economist Milton Friedman when he said:

The world runs on individuals pursuing their separate interests. The greatest achievements of civilization have not come from government bureaus. Einstein didn't construct his theory under order from a bureaucrat. Henry Ford didn't revolutionize the auto industry that way. In only the cases in which the masses have escaped grinding poverty, the only cases in recorded history are where they have had capitalism and largely free trade. If you want to know where the masses are worst off, it's exactly in those kinds of societies that are departed from it, so that the record of history is absolutely crystal clear that there is no alternative way so far discovered for improving the lot of the ordinary people that can hold a candle to the productive activities that are unleashed by the free enterprise system.

Mr. Speaker, our policies work. You can see it by the . . . And if anyone doubts it, look at the difference in the numbers between 2007 and what we have today. This isn't accident. Policy matters, Mr. Speaker. We're there to support our industry. We're there to support our producers. We're there to provide the framework for them to succeed. We're not there to tell them how to do what they do. Our job is to set the necessary framework of regulation and taxation and get out of the way. Let them do what they do, and they do it the best in the world, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

I'll read the motion again, Mr. Speaker:

That this Assembly supports the Government of Saskatchewan's policies and investments that have led to the value of the province's exports increasing to 49.3 billion in 2023 while expanding the province's access to international markets; and further,

That the Assembly condemns the provincial NDP opposition for continuing to collaborate to keep the unsustainable Trudeau-NDP coalition carbon tax government in power.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Moosomin:

That this Assembly supports the Government of Saskatchewan's policies and investments that have led to the value of the province's exports increasing to 49.3 billion in 2023 while expanding the province's access to international markets; and further,

That the Assembly condemns the provincial NDP opposition for continuing to collaborate to keep the unsustainable Trudeau-NDP coalition carbon tax government in power.

I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Wow. Well thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not really sure if this is a debate right now, but always a pleasure to have the opportunity to talk about the economy and to talk about this government's record.

I want to start off by thanking the member opposite, who's one of my favourites, for this opportunity. I believe, you know, like an actual, solid, staunch right winger, truly praetorian, who actually believes in his values and tries to live his principles. And it must be incredibly challenging for him, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to sit there as part of the biggest government in Saskatchewan history, to sit there as part of a government that has tripled the take on the PST, that in 2024 alone has increased PST revenues by 17 per cent, a government that is . . . I mean, I was going to say is balancing its budget, but I suppose it isn't actually balancing its budget, but is cushioning its own deficit to the tune of nearly half a billion dollars on its own carbon tax.

I applaud the member for his courage in continuing to stand with the biggest government in Saskatchewan history and some of the profound thoughts that he put on the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, including those that, you know, "international trade is the lifeblood of the international economy." I believe that's a direct quote. True, Mr. Speaker. No disagreement.

But maybe let's start with disagreement and get that out of the way. As members in this House will be familiar — and what a pleasure it is to stand and say it time and time again — this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, has no truck or trade with the feds when it comes to their energy policies, their economic policies, the carbon tax, or anything like that, making life more expensive and harder for Canadian people. So sure. Yes, like we agree. We agree. Carbon tax, not on. Policies of the federal government, that coalition, not on for Saskatchewan. We've been clear in this House. We've been clear in Ottawa. We'll continue to be clear every opportunity presented to us, and I thank the members opposite for that.

But let's talk about the first part of the motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we support the Government of Saskatchewan's

policies and investments that have led to the value of provincial exports increasing to \$49.3 billion in 2023.

You know, I know I'm going to run out of time, Mr. Speaker, because I have too much written down already, but maybe that's a great place to start. Because, you know, when we want to talk about exports, like merchandise exports in 2023 are down, let's talk about the facts. They're down 6.4 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And the things that this government wants to take responsibility for, the value of exports, jobs created, a strong and growing economy . . . The people creating an economy are not the members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's the business owners, it's the farmers, it's the miners. It's the co-operatives, it's the small businesses, it's the big businesses doing that here in Saskatchewan.

It is not the Government of Saskatchewan and it is not members opposite, unless, unless I missed it in the member from Moosomin's remarks that they've got some sort of centrally planned economy that they're promoting over there, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure. They've said nothing. Let's talk about . . . They've said nothing on the proposed Viterra takeover. For oil and gas, another important sector, no real plan on how they're going to get to their own goal of 600,000 barrels per day.

And when we want to look at private investment in Saskatchewan going forward — which is another number members opposite I assume take direction from someone on — looking forward, a full 1 per cent of that 1.6 per cent, a full 1 per cent of GDP growth is at Jansen. And what a great project that is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a fantastic project, good investment, Mr. Speaker, that would not have happened without the regime set up by the past NDP government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Let's talk about the potash sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The only changes — oh, members opposite don't like this, so let me just remind you — the only changes that this government has made was to increase taxes on the potash sector under the former minister, the member from Stonebridge, who has the sector paying an additional \$117 million in taxes every year. That is the only change that this government has made when it comes to the potash sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So let's get into the rest of their record, the rest of the economy, their record on things that are in their control, those central planners of economies over there. The GDP growth for the last six years has been 3.45 per cent under this Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is an annual growth rate — second worst in the country, second worst in the country — of 0.575 per cent, Mr. Speaker. They've managed to balance one single budget in 10 years.

The member opposite wanted to talk about the Blakeney government as the most pernicious government in history. You know what Allan Blakeney did every single year? He balanced the flipping budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He put money away. He created a sovereign wealth fund. That government built this province, a record that I am proud of, that members opposite are proud of, and a record that members opposite wish they could emulate.

Because what have they done? I've already talked about it. They tripled the take on the PST. They've only managed to balance

one budget in 10 years which is in no small part due to the unforgivable invasion of Ukraine by Putin, not something I would be proud of if I was members opposite. And under them the PST in this province that they also like to talk about . . . When we left government, you know what the PST rate was? It was 5 per cent. The PST under your government, under that government opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the highest it's been in 30 years.

[11:15]

Let's talk about things under their control. This is a government who just this year needed an extra \$750 million in special warrants to add to the \$1 billion revenue swing that they were already facing. Talk about a nearly \$2 billion whoopsie, Mr. Speaker, a climate for investment under this government. Let's talk about investment. Capital investment in this province is 55 per cent of what it was in 2014, Mr. Speaker, and it's not just because of COVID as the members opposite like to claim. News flash: the pandemic was terrible. It happened globally. It happened across Canada. And by every measure this government under this Premier is last or second last in Canada.

And you know, the member opposite from Moosomin, he wanted to talk about how the economic system we have today is about lifting people up. It's about improving the lot of regular people. Well I agree, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's what it's all about. But under this government the lot of regular people is not doing so well. Under this government, for the first time since the Great Depression, the standard of living for people in Saskatchewan has dropped.

Under Allan Blakeney it went up. Under Tommy Douglas it went up. Woodrow Lloyd, it went up. Ross Thatcher, it went up. Even Grant Devine, it went up. Roy Romanow, it went up. Lorne Calvert, it went up. Premier Wall, it went up. Under this Premier and this government, for the first time — I'm going to say it again — since the Great Depression, the standard of living for people in Saskatchewan has dropped, and it has dropped \$2,300. How's that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for improving the lot of regular people?

It is not trickling down, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The only thing trickling down are the incomes of regular people.

And looking at the clock, Mr. Speaker, I'm confident I'll be able to land this plane.

I want to maybe finish off by talking about the net debt under this government, the economy, the economic factors that they are responsible for. March 31st, 2017, the net debt of the province was \$10.19 billion. March 31st, 2023, the last year we have full information for, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was \$14.59 billion. So for this government over there, so proud of their strong, right wing, libertarian bona fides, that is a 43.2 per cent increase in the debt.

Wow, Mr. Speaker. When we talk about the things that this government is responsible for, it is a pretty sad record. But when we look at the things that this province can be proud of, that is the hard work of job creators, of businesses, of exporters. And I look forward to the Q & A [question and answer].

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Before I begin, I'd like all members to welcome my mom, Phyllis Kaeding; my wife, Carla, to the Legislative Assembly. Anyway thanks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm so proud to have them here today. And you know, at least the one advantage my mom has with hearing aids is she does get to turn them off when she needs to, and that may have happened in the previous speech here.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's really a pleasure to enter this debate today, and I would like to second the motion put forward by the member from Moosomin. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I enjoy the news, catching up on the financial issues, monitoring items that really affect the economy of the day for my constituents in Melville-Saltcoats and certainly of the province. And you know what I'm finding, contrary to what we've just heard here, is some very positive headlines projecting a very reasonable financial year for our businesses and for our province and for our residents. And I'd say that's very much thanks to our Premier, to our Finance minister, and to this Sask Party government for the economic policies that they brought forward.

One of the articles I've heard is from Deloitte Canada, that issue, and its April 2024 report that read, "Saskatchewan is tied with Alberta in second place in the country, behind Newfoundland and Labrador, for provincial real GDP forecast for 2024."

Now Deloitte Canada says that Saskatchewan's economy is poised for relatively strong performance this year compared to that of the rest of the country. The economic outlook report actually says there's a strong investment in the province driven by sizable investments in the potash industry and coupled with solid population gains and relatively low household debt burdens. Now Deloitte forecasts Saskatchewan's economy to also grow 3.1 per cent next year and 3.6 per cent in 2026.

Now, although 2023 wasn't the finest year for Canada's economic growth, experts did say that Saskatchewan stood out compared to the rest of the country and is expected to be a leader again in 2024.

Conference Board of Canada, their March 21 assessment of the provincial budget indicated, and I quote:

Overall, despite the plan for two consecutive years of deficit, the province's finances remain an envy of the rest of the country. The budget is otherwise fiscally responsible, with a plan to get back to surplus quickly. In all, this budget sets the province in the right direction to meet the needs of a growing population with only a modest and a short-term increase to its already enviable net debt position.

Scotiabank, in their post-Saskatchewan-budget review, summarizes the government's capital budget plan as noted:

The budget unveiled a record-breaking capital spending plan aimed at bolstering school, health care, and transportation infrastructure. The upgraded Saskatchewan capital plan totalled 17.9 billion over the next four years, jointly funded by the government and commercial Crowns. Investment climbed to a record level of 4.4 billion in 2025,

peaks at 5.2 billion in '26, primarily directed at hospitals and schools. An increased infrastructure outlay should help support the province's growth outlook. Strong economy builds a strong capital program.

Financial Post headline dated November 1st, 2023, that said, "Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador are best positioned to weather the storm." But, and now for the other side of the story, *Financial Post* dated April 30th, "Canada's economy is losing momentum quickly."

I found:

A recent report from the Royal Bank of Canada titled *Navigating 2024: Reset and Revival In A Reshaping World* . . . [that] looks at local and global events that could affect Canada's economy in 2024 and years to come, states that the rising cost of living "squeezing purchasing power" will make it harder for the residents, especially low-income households, to manage their expenses.

The report warns people to embrace "shrink-sumption," where rising costs mean they must allocate more money to their daily essentials while forgoing purchases of expensive goods.

And what would be the possible cause to so many of our federal financial issues? Boy, you know, possibly the multiple federally imposed carbon taxes. Whether it's the carbon tax, clean fuel regulations, federal OBPS [output-based pricing system], and many more of these indirect carbon taxes that this federal Liberal-NDP coalition government, supported by this NDP opposition, have inflicted on the residents of Canada and this province.

Oh, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I found another interesting read, and this is a . . . Fraser Institute reported in the *Financial Post* dated September 2004 — get ready for this — "Saskatchewan, a province suffocated by socialism." I guess that's what passive ownership does, isn't it. Yeah.

Fun fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker: the leading positive economic indicators are all based on provinces that have a robust oil and gas industry that continues to support that federal economy to a value of 7.5 per cent of national GDP. Oil and gas, an industry that this federal Liberal-NDP coalition government is on a mission to eliminate, and by full association, this provincial NDP opposition supporting it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my first full-time job in this province was short-lived, unfortunately, and it was working for Imperial Oil. Now not many that . . . Early '80s, not many of our young colleagues unfortunately going to remember the devastation that Trudeau senior inflicted on this oil and gas sector. Trudeau the elder created Petro-Can as a Crown corporation, introduced the national energy program, which created animosity and distrust of Ottawa. Boy this is something that sounds familiar, isn't it?

Trudeau the younger, same mission, as he introduced the national carbon tax; a cap on greenhouse gas emissions that only applies to the oil and gas sector; a subjective review process for large infrastructure projects that really, observers agree, basically prohibits energy-related projects, including pipelines; and

banned bitumen exports from the West Coast.

So unfortunately for Canadians, the current Trudeau's tenure greatly mirrors his father's time in office. Ottawa has expanded existing programs, created new ones financed largely by borrowing, which will saddle Canadians, Canadians like you and me, more government debt, higher interest payments well into the future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this NDP opposition continues to enable the federal Liberal-NDP coalition government. They can't escape their public support of the ill-conceived federal carbon tax. Their members, from failed leaders such as Cam Broten, Ryan Meili, have all publicly stated their support for a carbon tax. Their current leader fanned at a pitch when she called the carbon tax a distraction. They have both current and some of their newest candidates openly endorsing the carbon tax. And as the opposition so often likes to quote so many, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. It's very appropriate in discussing this opposition's extremely weak attempt at refuting their support to the carbon tax. How can they do that to Saskatchewan people?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we do not have a strong economy, we cannot continue to make those significant investments that we are making in classrooms, care, and communities. That strong economy is allowing us to provide record increase in education funding, record increase in health funding, and a record increase in municipal revenue sharing that all of our municipalities depend on. So since we've been provided an opportunity to form government, the private sector capital investment has been in the billions of dollars.

And although the previous NDP had attempted to be in business by nationalizing the oil and gas sector, the potash sector, and even attempting to corner the Saskatchewan potato business, none of these sectors invested in their communities, in their operations, in their people, until those businesses came back to the private sector during this government's tenure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my constituency in Melville-Saltcoats has been one of the biggest benefactors of private sector investment in this province. From Mosaic's multi-billion-dollar investment and expansion of their operations at Mosaic K3 to the CN rail yard expansion in Melville to the new G3 high-throughput grain elevator located north of Melville to the canola crush plants and the ag value-added processors increasing in Yorkton, their investment has resulted in jobs and opportunities that have blessed our constituency and area.

Just last Friday I had the opportunity to have the minister of Crowns investment corp and the leadership of SaskPower join Mosaic officials and I underground in the new multi-billion-dollar K3 operation at Esterhazy. While at their site, we learned that 1 in 10 tonnes of potash mined in the world is generated in this area. And Mosaic and their Saskatchewan competitors are world leaders in sustainably producing potash for the world markets.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one fact overlooked by economic geniuses such as Eric Cline, Erin Weir, and this NDP government is that getting Saskatchewan potash to market involves getting it to the West Coast. Costs \$97 a tonne in freight just to get potash to our

West Coast markets. We need to remain competitive. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will second the motion put forward by the member from Moosomin and will re-emphasize that we . . .

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Happy to enter into this debate about the state of our Saskatchewan economy, the state of job growth in Saskatchewan, the state of Saskatchewan's small businesses, and of course the carbon tax, a common refrain we hear in this Chamber.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to preface my remarks here to say that I love this province. I ran to represent the people of Saskatoon Meewasin because I believe in the potential of Saskatchewan. I wanted to run to ensure that Saskatchewan people, that Saskatchewan as a province lives up to full potential, and that everyone in our province can partake in the spinoff of that success — not just a select few well-connected donors and corporations.

[11:30]

Too long has our province's potential been squandered by this tired and out-of-touch government. Sask New Democrats know so much potential could be unlocked when you stop playing divisive wedge politics and really find solutions to the issues that we face, when you make decisions that are people-first, not donor-first.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are ready to supercharge our economy by rehiring Saskatchewan workers, keeping contracts in Saskatchewan so that we create more jobs with bigger paycheques for families right here in Saskatchewan, not in our neighbour of Alberta. We are ready to take up that challenge.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to start my second statement here today. No matter how many photoshop images the Sask Party needs to cobble together, no matter how low we have to go with a big-brother, state-propaganda spam text to the people of Saskatchewan, I will say it clear and now — we do not support the federal carbon tax.

No matter what room we are in, no matter whichever federal leader we are speaking to, our Saskatchewan NDP leader has been clear. We do not support the federally imposed or any provincially imposed carbon taxes.

No matter how much this government spins, we know that the failure to exempt Saskatchewan residents in a similar carve-out to Atlantic Canada lies at the feet of this government alone. The only reason a federally imposed carbon tax exists for the people of Saskatchewan, on everything for everyone, is because this Saskatchewan Party government has failed to negotiate a better deal with Ottawa.

And so I will say it again for all those sitting in the back: Saskatchewan New Democrats do not support a federally imposed carbon tax.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to jump into jobs and economy. And I won't be joining in on the back-patting and

economic spin that this government wants to put out to the people of Saskatchewan, because no matter how they spin these economic numbers, we know that Saskatchewan people are struggling. Saskatchewan's small businesses are struggling. And it's time that this government received a wake-up call. It's time for this government to take responsibility for its own worst-in-Canada economic record. Over six years that this Premier has been in office, he has overseen the worst jobs creation record in the country. The provincial job creation record from January 2018 to January 2024 has Saskatchewan pegged at the lowest growth in Canada with an average percentage job increase per year at 1.06 per cent. That is the worst in the country, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But this is what you get when you start contracting jobs out to every out-of-province donor who puts money in your political pocket. Jobs as well as lucrative, well-connected appointments, I might add, are going to the highest bidder and highest donor. At SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] and SaskTel we continue to hear about jobs that were once mortgage-paying jobs for families right here in Saskatchewan going to out-of-province contract workers. Whole divisions at SGI, Mr. Deputy Speaker, thousands of good, mortgage-paying jobs have been lost in our Crowns. I've heard countless stories from constituents about SaskTel vans showing up at their house with Alberta plates.

SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] union of nurses are raising the alarm bells on the startling number of travel nurses being employed in Saskatchewan. Seventy million this year alone will be spent on those travel nurses, many of whom will have no contracts, are from out of province, no benefits, and no sick leave.

We also see Kevin Doherty, Saskatchewan's most successful Finance minister at making budget cuts, once pillaging our budgets of health and education and libraries, now turned most successful lobbyist, pillaging jobs out of Saskatchewan. This guy couldn't get enough while he was here in the Chamber. Now he's doing more lobbying for this government.

Mr. Doherty's lobbying efforts helped secure a recycling deal for a California company, employing what was what — what did the Minister of Environment say? — two dozen, maybe 12 to 15 employees displacing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 60 employees that were once working in our province.

When you are selling off the province to the biggest donors, selling off jobs to every province but your own, it's no wonder that under this watch we are seeing the worst job creation record in the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a kid I watched the old *Scooby-Doo*, you know, and I was . . . Always a classic moment at the end when — you know, we've all seen the memes, Mr. Speaker — when the team unveils the villain and, in this case, you know, takes off the mask of the Saskatchewan Party and finds Alberta donors underneath. You know, if it weren't for those darn kids uncovering all of our secret plots, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, it's a classic situation. If this ship sinks for the Saskatchewan Party, I think it'll be time . . . You know, they changed their name last time from the Progressive Conservatives to the Saskatchewan Party. I think they're going to have to

change their name to the Alberta Party after to save some clout.

But you know, you're not even just working for our out-of-province donors. Let's talk about small businesses for a second. Mr. Speaker, if the jobs numbers that we're talking about aren't enough, let's look at small-business numbers. You know, how do you gauge the health of your economy? You know what, Mr. Speaker, you look at small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan families are struggling to put food on the table, they're struggling to pay utility rates, and they don't have extra money at the end of the month to support their local economy, to support their local small businesses. The expert numbers that the members opposite are highlighting are wonderful accomplishments; if only the spinoff was making its way to Saskatchewan families and Saskatchewan small businesses.

So let's look at the health of those small businesses. Since taking office, the Premier has overseen a growth of small business by 0.43 per cent. That is less than 1 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of small-business growth in Saskatchewan — less than 1 per cent. Mr. Speaker, this year alone we lost 91 small businesses; the first months of 2023, 257 small businesses. Since the Premier took office, rural Saskatchewan has lost 860 small businesses.

Now we've raised this question in question period and they're loath to talk about their own record. But this is 91, 257, 860 small businesses. These are mom-and-pop shops, locally owned establishments that made our community so, so good. No matter whether you live in Saskatoon or Regina or Lloydminster or Avonlea or Wadena, all these small businesses make our communities a better place. These are staggering, staggering numbers.

Mr. Speaker, it seems the only small businesses making it here in Saskatchewan are those with deep connections to this Saskatchewan Party, like the Sunrise Motel and the Travelodge, Mr. Deputy Speaker — thriving businesses. It seems the only way that you can be successful in this province or out of province is if you're a big out-of-province or in-province donor or an MLA sitting in these benches, Mr. Speaker. Then you can just start counting your cash, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all the way to the bank until those pesky opposition members uncover it and foil your plans. Then, then, then we're going to stop pouring money into the pockets of our MLAs here.

Mr. Speaker, I'll come back to small businesses here in my last minute. Those numbers, these growth numbers are abysmal. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Premier has overseen the worst job creation record in the country. We've seen second-worst GDP growth under the last six years that this Premier has been in office. These are not indicators of a provincial economy that is booming, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we can look at these numbers but they are not reaching the people of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing I reject the premise of this debate motion because this Sask Party has the worst jobs creation, worst jobs creation, worst economic record in the country. They're terrible job creators. They're bad for the economy. They're too busy picking fights and taking flights than facing the real challenges faced by Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is time for change. It is time for a government that works for the people of this province, not wealthy out-of-province or well-connected donors. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to stand before you today and support the motion from my colleague the member from Moosomin and seconded by my colleague, the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . Actually before I get into that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my colleague from Moosomin commented about nationalizing potash and stuff, and I'd like to tell a little story. And I don't know, it's burned into my memory here. It would have been shortly after that the potash industry was nationalized by the NDP government of the day. A sign on the wall of an office in a grain elevator, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it said, "If it moves, tax it. If it slows down, subsidize it. If it stops moving, nationalize it." That could be right out of their policy manual for the NDP today.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's sad but true. It's reality. They would do it. They call it passive ownership nowadays, but they're not to be trusted. The member across there talked about the Scooby-Doo mask. If you individually asked . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I caution the member on the use of "not to be trusted."

Mr. D. Harrison: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan is an exporting province and we rely on our exports to fuel our economy. We are a vast province producing much, much more than we consume. This is a testament to the strength of Saskatchewan people, the resources we are blessed with, and the investments made by the companies working in Saskatchewan. We have what the world needs. We have the food, fuel, and the fertilizer, and it's produced more sustainably here than anywhere else in the world.

To further build our economy and reach new markets, we've introduced a collection of resources to serve as a road map for economic expansion in the province. Saskatchewan's plan for growth, the province's critical mineral strategy, our labour market strategy, *Securing the Next Decade of Growth: Saskatchewan's Investment Attraction Strategy*, and recently launched Invest Saskatchewan website.

Investment drives the economy, creating additional jobs and increasing exports. We exported nearly \$50 billion worth of goods to 163 countries, the highest year ever in Saskatchewan for total export value.

A large chunk of this nearly \$50 billion is ag products and value-added ag products. Saskatchewan exported over \$20 billion worth of agri-food products. We have already surpassed our 2030 growth plan goal seven years early, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Wheat exports were up 23.2 per cent; \$4.7 billion in 2022 is now \$5.7 billion in 2023, largely due to sales to Algeria increasing 71.7 per cent and Indonesia increasing 44.3 per cent. Canola oil exports increased 1.3 per cent with the biggest export increase to

our largest and closest trading partner, the United States. Canola seed exports were also up, an increase of 17.6 per cent over 2022 for a total of \$3.2 billion in 2023.

The volume of Saskatchewan's top exports from 2022 to 2023 were potash, a record 22.7 metric tons; crude oil exports increased to 19.7 million cubic metres, Mr. Deputy Speaker; wheat exports increased to 11.9 million metric tons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that's a true testament to the success of our trade offices around the world. Nine trade offices around the world, including Germany, China, India, Japan, Mexico, Singapore, UAE [United Arab Emirates], United Kingdom, and Vietnam. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do tremendous work out of these trade offices, and I want to thank them all for their continued hard work and effort in gaining market access for us and attracting investment to this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan without a doubt is a world leader when it comes to producing food, fuel, and fertilizer. I'd be remiss if I didn't give the tip of the hat to our farmers. Our annual mega project has just started. Seeding has started in many areas of the province, and with recent rains in many of these same areas, optimism is high in our farming communities. Thank you to the farmers for their huge investment of crop inputs, and prayers for a favourable growing season. Thanks again for all you do.

[11:45]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to summarize a little bit, summarize . . . It's a recipe for a growing economy. Create a competitive business environment, this will attract investment to the province. Investment creates opportunity for new and expanded business. New and expanded business creates jobs, lots of jobs, good-paying jobs. Increased jobs attract additional population. Additional population promotes additional growth and other business opportunities. All of this makes for a strong and growing economy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Finance minister and Deputy Premier presented the 2024-2025 budget, it had significant spending increases in three main areas. Pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to grade 12 classroom funding increased 9 per cent, directly supporting our teachers and students across the province. Health care funding increased 10 per cent, continuing to provide quality health care services for the residents of Saskatchewan when they need it.

Municipal revenue sharing. Municipal revenue sharing increased 14 per cent. But it's a one-of-a-kind, made-in-Saskatchewan, revenue-sharing formula that municipalities count on to support their infrastructure in local communities, from urban, large urban, small urban, to rural municipalities alike. This municipal revenue-sharing increase of 14 per cent helps communities sustain and build local infrastructure, providing services greatly needed by our residents of the province. Classrooms, care, and community.

These significant increases are only possible, only possible due to a strong, robust, growing economy — only possible because of a strong, growing economy. Increasing spending for classrooms, health care, and communities without adding new

taxes or increasing taxes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a sign of a strong, growing economy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to jump into carbon taxes. The NDP say they're against carbon taxes, but yet they continue to support their federal leader, Jagmeet Singh. Jagmeet Singh continues to support the Trudeau Liberal minority government. He just decided to support the budget. After much contemplation, no one was surprised that he's going to support it. I think it's something about his pension maybe, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't know. He didn't really say. But it's very, very, very, very, very self-serving, I think, on his part because he is exactly the same as the Liberal Justin Trudeau government.

And the members opposite continue to support their leader. Their federal leader continues to support Justin Trudeau. And we know they support their federal leader and Justin Trudeau because they made a trip down to Ottawa that was purely to campaign against a Conservative government. And that Conservative government is going to axe the tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they don't want that. They don't want that. Axe the tax. Get out of the pockets of consumers. Make life more affordable.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know the carbon tax was designed to increase the cost of everything consumers need. The Liberal-Jagmeet coalition proved that when they had the carve-out for heating oil for primarily Atlantic Canada. That is proof positive because they said it was to make life more affordable for people with home heating oil. And that's why we did what we did. But that's proof that it costs the residents of Saskatchewan more. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my honour and privilege to rise in the House today and enter into this debate. And I'm so happy to be joining in on this debate after the member from Cannington, after the speech he gave. Clearly seems like he's fighting a bit of an ideological war with a figment of his imagination, perhaps himself. It's very difficult to tell frankly, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you he's got a very sharp haircut, though. It's good to see that.

Including cuts, Mr. Speaker, he did mention the quote, "If it moves, tax it," using that as an analogy against something that perhaps that we would be supportive of, when in reality that is the MO [modus operandi] of the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, the government that expanded the PST and increased the biggest PST tax grab in Saskatchewan's history. Just thought I should correct the record for the member opposite. While he is fighting that ideological war with himself, he can work through those issues.

The member from Moosomin spoke about the importance of the trade offices and the importance of doing international relations between Saskatchewan and our trading partners, Mr. Speaker. And of course that is a very important part of our economy. That's something we very much support, Mr. Speaker.

Our job in the official opposition — something that I would expect a conservative government to be keen on, supportive of — is making sure that the Saskatchewan people are getting good

value for their dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because at least we know on this side of the House that that . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Please call them the Saskatchewan Party, not the Conservative government.

Ms. Sarauer: — Sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I forgot that they are not Conservatives; they are the Sask Party. That is very true. They're very sensitive about that. I'll respect that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that trade is very important to Saskatchewan's economy. We are very aware of that. We need to make sure that Saskatchewan people are getting good value for their dollars because it is not the Sask Party's money, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is the people of Saskatchewan's money. And I thought that a government like this one would be keen on making sure that there was good value for tax dollars being taken, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But that doesn't seem to be the case with this government. They don't seem to be too concerned about that anymore, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In fact the reality of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that 95 per cent of the debt accumulated throughout the course of this province's great, illustrious history was accumulated under conservative — PC [Progressive Conservative], Sask Party — governments like this one, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now again, and I'll . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Just you said it again. Don't . . . not the Conservative government. It's the Sask Party government.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be more clear about the name of this government in the future.

Now I will say it again. I always appreciate the opportunity to say it again for those in the back, for those who aren't paying attention, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've been very clear. We do not support the carbon tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is not on for this province. It is not good for this province.

The difference between us and the Leader of the Opposition and that government and that Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that she will not just take that fight to Twitter. She will take that to Ottawa to have those conversations with political leaders, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because she knows what actually gets things done for Saskatchewan is not picking fights on Twitter, but having these hard conversations face to face, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This government loves to take trips, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition takes one trip to Ottawa and you hear it called a million different things, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The reality is, she was meeting with local and national worker representatives, including the CFL [Canadian Football League] Players' Association, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And what was she talking to them about? Concerns across the country, concerns on cost of living, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and concerns about this government and what this government is doing to the province of Saskatchewan. She was willing — unlike members opposite, unlike this Premier — to meet with

leaders of any political stripes. And one thing she does that members opposite don't do is she is willing to say the same thing in every room, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And what did she say when she was in Ottawa, Mr. Deputy Speaker? That the carbon tax is not on for Saskatchewan. It is not working for Saskatchewan people. You know what the other things were that she pushed for, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Broadband, something this government can't seem to get across the boards. Do you know what she also talked about, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The importance of Evraz steel, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So maybe this government can take a lesson from the Leader of the Opposition and learn a thing or two, that perhaps instead of having nothing but Twitter fights, that the hard conversations should happen face to face, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They don't like that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They don't like that at all.

And here's the other difference between us and the government opposite, is no matter who is in power federally, we will always stand up for Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not like the members opposite — who by the way have Stephen Harper on their payroll — that when the federal election happens, and it's looking like when the federal Conservatives form government, we won't fold like a cheap tent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because the second Pierre Poilievre tells them, well, oh you know, that's actually not going to work for us nationally — like Stephen Harper did to this government — it will take a hot second before this government rolls over, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Not the opposition. It doesn't matter who is in power. We will continue to work with and stand up for Saskatchewan's interests no matter where it is and no matter in what room, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's the difference between the Saskatchewan NDP and the Sask Party government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now they don't like hearing any of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They are quite upset right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm quite okay with that. I am very happy to have this opportunity to clear the air, to once again reassert our position on the carbon tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We welcome any opportunity to do that. And again, like I said before, we will say the same thing in every room, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we are not afraid to stand up for the people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether it's about whether or not this Sask Party government is using tax dollars efficiently when it comes to the trade offices — an important question that we will continue to ask because trade is important to our economy — but also using tax dollars wisely is also important to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we will also stand up for Saskatchewan's interests in Ottawa, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again the difference between the Sask Party and the Saskatchewan NDP. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The 65-minute period has expired. The 10-minute period for question and answer period will begin. I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the member from Moosomin. To the member from

Moosomin: since this Premier took office, 40,600 jobs have been lost in rural Saskatchewan. Is that a record you're proud of, and how do you explain that?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm not sure how the member opposite could be morally or ethically serious and postulate a question like that when we've created more jobs this month than they did in their last 16 years in office.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from P.A. Northcote.

Ms. A. Ross: — Mr. Speaker, the opposition leader has claimed that the best way to build trust is to say the same thing in every room. I wonder what she was saying at the Trudeau campaign school she attended as part of her trip to Ontario. She continues to support federal policies that hurt Saskatchewan business and won't support our government in defending Saskatchewan industries from federal overreach.

Now Saskatchewan people need to know the answer to this question. To the member of Meewasin: who paid for your leader to attend Trudeau campaign school in Ottawa, Ontario?

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

[12:00]

Mr. Teed: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, our leader went to Ottawa with one message: that this opposition, unlike that carbon tax-inducing government, does not support the federal carbon tax. She said it in every room to every leader that would meet with her.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. My question is to the member for Cannington with his sharp haircut. Do you believe that it is growth that works for everyone when nearly 60 per cent of people can't afford to put food on their tables?

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

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you for the compliment from the member opposite, not once but twice today and once yesterday, I believe, so thank you. I believe it was said that I look 10 years younger than I would be back in high school.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we in Saskatchewan live in the most affordable province in the country, and it's a lot to do with the policies of this government but also the hard work and determination of the Saskatchewan people. And I want to just ask a question about carbon tax. And it's a quote from the member from Walsh Acres: "My take on the carbon tax and climate change from here in Saskatchewan is, spoiler alert, I'm in favour." That's Jared Clarke . . . sorry, the member from Walsh

Acres from October 7th, 2016 on Twitter.

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

Mr. Skoropad: — Thank you. Members opposite constantly talk down our province's efforts to tell our story abroad. For example, they called our attendance at COP28 [Conference of the Parties 28] a waste of time and resources. The many businesses and organizations that joined us at this international event, they would say otherwise.

Travis McPherson, CCO [chief commercial officer] for NexGen, a uranium company making a significant investment in our province's Northwest, had this to say:

NexGen got everything from COP28 it wanted, engaging with policy-makers to discuss and assess the nuclear baseload power to support the Saskatchewan government as it tells the world about its sustainable uranium practices and also connect with capital providers looking to Saskatchewan as a pre-eminent choice to invest in uranium mining.

Seeing as the opposition claims to say the same thing in all rooms, to the member from Saskatoon Meewasin: if the NexGen leadership was here today, would you tell them money spent to promote their industry at COP was a waste of money? Or would you again say something vastly different?

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

Mr. Teed: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to say I love all the attention I'm getting from these guys here today. Mr. Speaker, we say the same thing in every single room. Saskatchewan has a story to tell. But you know what? Let's look at our neighbours to the west, who spent \$160,000 to tell their story in COP. Guess how much we spent — \$1 million. Danielle Smith was able to tell her story at COP for a lot cheaper than this Saskatchewan government was.

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

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the member from . . . Let's go with the sharp-haircut man, Mr. Speaker. To the member from Cannington: how do you explain having only balanced one budget in 10 years, and that one budget only being balanced after the egregious and unforgivable invasion of Ukraine by Russia?

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

Mr. D. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and another fine, fine compliment. Thank you to the member opposite for that. I don't know. I guess I need to get more haircuts more often.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government has invested more into this province than any governments in the past. We've built capital projects, hospitals, long-term care homes, schools. We've invested in this province for services — services that our

residents require, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These services are very warranted by the members of the province, and we are proud to do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we want to continue to do that, and we will continue to do that.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When our government went to COP28, we went to support Saskatchewan's businesses, industries, and the jobs they create. And yet we've heard the opposition criticize our efforts to develop trade relations with other nations and open up our markets to Saskatchewan producers so they can get the best value for their products.

To the member again from Saskatoon Meewasin: do you support the Government of Saskatchewan's initiatives to further Saskatchewan producers' access to international markets?

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I love this. You know what? Our Premier spent \$1 million to go to Dubai — of taxpayer dollars — to go to Dubai. But you know what he couldn't do? He couldn't go to Ottawa and get an Atlantic-style carve-out for Saskatchewan. Why? Because he has let the relationship fall into such, such bad shape.

So my question would be, why? Why hasn't this Premier gone to Ottawa and gotten a better deal for the people of Saskatchewan?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I'm wondering if the member from Moosomin can tell this Assembly how many phone calls his office has received from Saskatchewan people struggling to pay their bills.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — I've never kept track, but I will endeavour to provide you with that information. But it's not very many because mostly in our office we talk about things in my part of the province, where I have the privilege to represent, is the economy and trade because trade is so important to where I live. We have potash. We have agriculture. We have agriculture manufacturing. Oil and gas. It's just a microcosm of the Saskatchewan economy as a whole, and I'm so proud to talk about that all day, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Ms. C. Young: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Regina University despises hearing good things about our economy. They've even insinuated that the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] are liars. They've claimed our trade missions do nothing and our trade offices are just filled with empty suits.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're proud of the great work being done by our trade missions and the offices we've opened in several different countries. We're seeing record increases of 237 per cent in trade in Germany, 68 per cent increase with French trade, and so much more good news that the opposition doesn't want to hear.

To the member from Regina Douglas Park: do you support the member from Regina University's constant attacks on our trade missions, and why do you oppose getting Saskatchewan products to market?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — You know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I'm very honoured to have the member from Regina University as a colleague and as a friend, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know what she cares about? Good value for taxpayers' dollars, something that this government does not seem to care about one bit.

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

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, we hear a lot of finger pointing by this government for all of their problems at the feds. So my question to the member from Cannington . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The 75-minute debate period has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 2 — Suspension of Provincial Fuel Tax

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

The Deputy Speaker: — It is my duty pursuant to rule 54(3) to warn the Assembly that the member is about to exercise his right to the debate, and afterwards all members will be precluded from speaking to this question. Therefore if any member wishes to speak, let them do so now. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be fairly brief here today because what matters to Saskatchewan people is voting on this motion and suspending the fuel tax for Saskatchewan people and offering some relief at a time where Saskatchewan families and businesses are facing so many pressures, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen this government really fail to respond to the cost-of-living challenges that families have been facing, a once-in-a-generation cost-of-living challenge that they've been enduring, and a government that inexcusably has only made it more expensive, has only made it worse.

We see other provincial governments all across Canada that have acted during this period of time to provide relief, many extending relief and cutting or suspending their fuel tax, Mr. Speaker. But here in Saskatchewan with this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government, all we've seen is more costs, more taxes, more bill hikes, Mr. Speaker, for families and people who are working so damned hard just to make ends meet, Mr. Speaker.

You know, 57 per cent of Saskatchewan people are finding it difficult or very difficult just to put food on the table, Mr. Speaker. That should shake every last one of us. That's the majority of Saskatchewan people, from corner to corner to corner in Saskatchewan, who are struggling with the cost of living, struggling to put food on the table for their children, Mr. Speaker, seniors that are making awful decisions, Mr. Speaker, that impact their health and well-being, and a government that — worse than doing nothing, Mr. Speaker — has made things worse. We see the biggest tax hike in Saskatchewan's history that adds up every year. We see a government that's continued to add more taxes on that front, more bill hikes on front after front, Mr. Speaker.

Now suspending the fuel tax of 15 cents a litre on gas and diesel would offer some meaningful relief to families in the coming months. We've seen this action both to the west and to the east, both in Alberta and Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. It's a measure that will provide some relief and allow families to be able to have some of their needs being met in a better way, Mr. Speaker.

And in Saskatchewan, or anywhere across Canada, but in Saskatchewan and our rural province, driving is a necessity. Whether you're getting to work or getting into town or whether you're getting kids to activities or getting to training or getting to see a loved one or getting to health care, Mr. Speaker, driving is a necessity. And the 15-cent-a-litre provincial fuel tax is wrong at this time, Mr. Speaker.

Now we brought this forward a number of months ago. This government could have acted any one of those days. They failed to do so. They failed to include it in the budget. They failed to support the motion on this front that we brought a couple years ago. So we've been consistent calling for this relief for a long time. This relief would provide savings to the average family of about \$400, Mr. Speaker. Those are real dollars at a time that families are facing real hardship.

You know, this Assembly expresses itself in a united way with our opposition to the federal carbon tax. We hear that day in, day out from the opposition. We hear those concerns being identified by the government, so we stand united on that front.

But where the province can act today and offer relief for families and farmers and businesses going into the spring here, Mr. Speaker, is to suspend the fuel tax here today. So far this government's been stubborn and has dismissed the need for this important call. I look to maybe the backbenchers, Mr. Speaker, that weren't a part of making the budget that was presented, to stand up for their constituents today.

You know, we had our good friend from Moosomin up here today. And I know the folks in Moosomin and Wolseley and Wawota and up to Rocanville and in between, Mr. Speaker, they would appreciate seeing the suspension of the 15-cent provincial

tax on gas and on diesel. Mr. Speaker, I know the same to be true in every corner of this province, from the far North to the southern corners, and certainly in our towns and villages and cities across this province.

So I call on members opposite to do the right thing here today, to recognize the challenge and hardship that families are facing across Saskatchewan on this front, to help correct the record of this government that's only stacked on more costs to families at a time that they are already facing so many.

So I call on all hon. members in this Assembly to do the right thing and to vote today to support the suspension of the provincial fuel tax on both gas and diesel — 15 cents a litre — and to provide a little bit of relief for families that deserve nothing less. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Pursuant to rule 27 it is my duty to advise the Assembly that this item of business has been previously adjourned three times and that every question necessary to dispose of the motion will now be put.

[12:15]

It has been moved by the member from Regina Rosemont:

That this Assembly calls upon the government to suspend the collection of the provincial fuel tax from gasoline and diesel for a period of six months in order to help families struggling with the high cost of living.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion please say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion please say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Speaker: — I think the nos have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:15 until 12:31.]

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member from Regina Rosemont. All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 9]

Beck	Nippi-Albright	Mowat
Wotherspoon	Teed	A. Young
Burki	Clarke	Sarauer

The Deputy Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion please

stand.

[Nays — 31]

Morgan	McMorris	Harpauer
Merriman	Tell	Makowsky
Skoropad	Kaeding	L. Ross
J. Harrison	Hargrave	T. McLeod
Buckingham	Fiaz	A. Ross
Dennis	Kirsch	Lambert
Ottenbreit	Francis	C. Young
Steele	D. Harrison	Bonk
Nerlien	B. McLeod	Grewal
Goudy	Keisig	Lemaigre
Jenson		

Procedural Clerk (Ms. Gudereit): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 9; those opposed to the motion, 31.

The Deputy Speaker: — I declare the motion not carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that this House do now adjourn. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:35.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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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
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Minister Responsible for
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Hon. Gene Makowsky
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Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
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