



FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

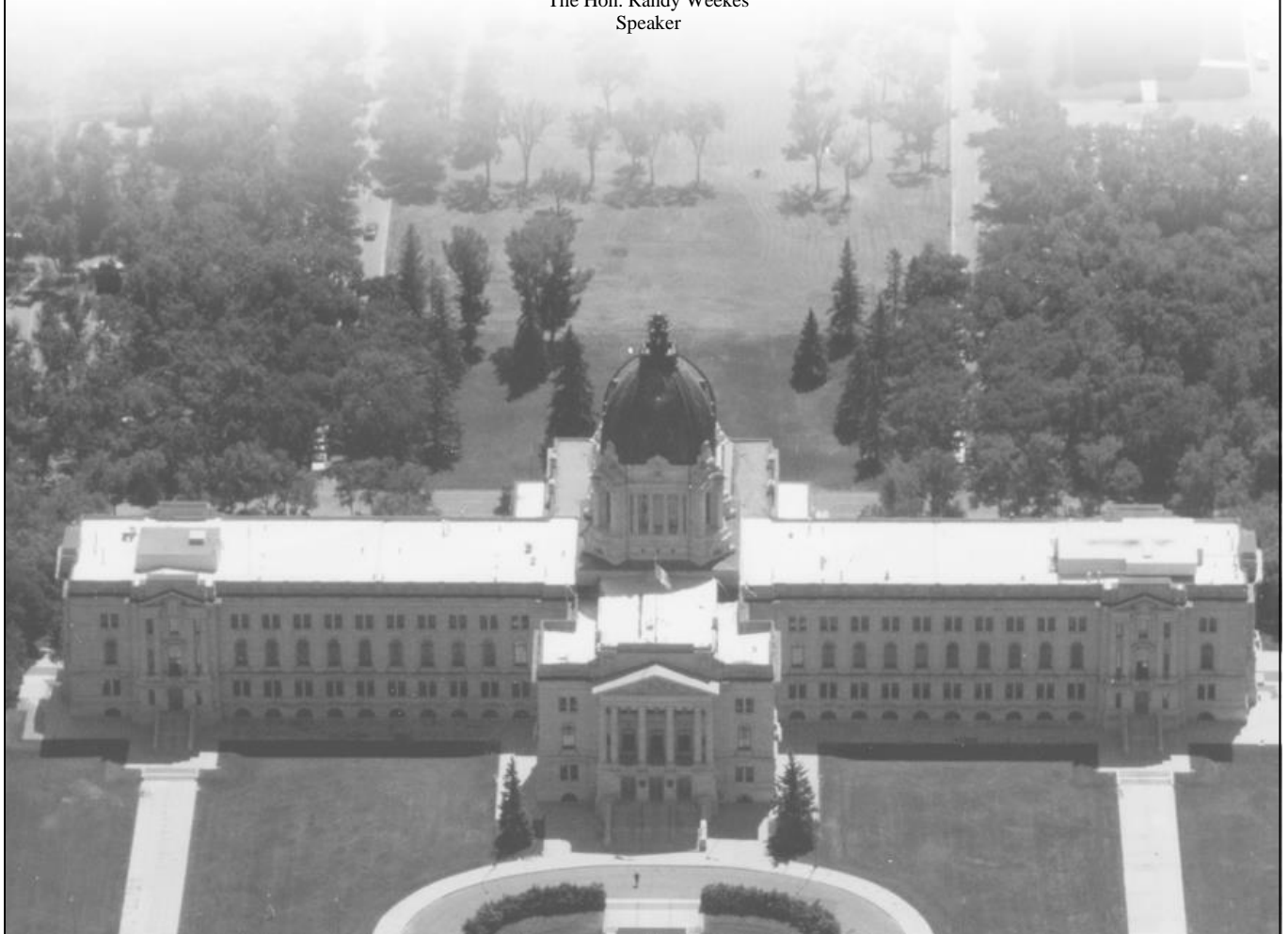
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS**

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



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**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

<b>Beck, Carla</b> — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	<b>Lemaigre, Jim</b> — Athabasca (SP)
<b>Bonk, Steven</b> — Moosomin (SP)	<b>Love, Matt</b> — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)
<b>Bowes, Jennifer</b> — Saskatoon University (NDP)	<b>Makowsky, Hon. Gene</b> — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
<b>Bradshaw, Fred</b> — Carrot River Valley (SP)	<b>Marit, Hon. David</b> — Wood River (SP)
<b>Buckingham, David</b> — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	<b>McLeod, Blaine</b> — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
<b>Burki, Noor</b> — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)	<b>McLeod, Hon. Tim</b> — Moose Jaw North (SP)
<b>Carr, Hon. Lori</b> — Estevan (SP)	<b>McMorris, Hon. Don</b> — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
<b>Cheveldayoff, Ken</b> — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	<b>Merriman, Hon. Paul</b> — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
<b>Clarke, Jared</b> — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)	<b>Moe, Hon. Scott</b> — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
<b>Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy</b> — The Battlefords (SP)	<b>Morgan, Hon. Don</b> — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
<b>Conway, Meara</b> — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)	<b>Mowat, Vicki</b> — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
<b>Dennis, Terry</b> — Canora-Pelly (SP)	<b>Nerlien, Hugh</b> — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
<b>Domotor, Ryan</b> — Cut Knife-Turtleford (Ind.)	<b>Nippi-Albright, Betty</b> — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
<b>Duncan, Hon. Dustin</b> — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	<b>Ottenbreit, Greg</b> — Yorkton (SP)
<b>Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn</b> — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	<b>Reiter, Hon. Jim</b> — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
<b>Fiaz, Muhammad</b> — Regina Pasqua (SP)	<b>Ritchie, Erika</b> — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
<b>Francis, Ken</b> — Kindersley (SP)	<b>Ross, Alana</b> — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)
<b>Friesen, Marv</b> — Saskatoon Riversdale (SP)	<b>Ross, Hon. Laura</b> — Regina Rochdale (SP)
<b>Goudy, Todd</b> — Melfort (SP)	<b>Sarauer, Nicole</b> — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
<b>Grewal, Gary</b> — Regina Northeast (SP)	<b>Skoropad, Dana</b> — Arm River (SP)
<b>Hargrave, Hon. Joe</b> — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	<b>Steele, Doug</b> — Cypress Hills (SP)
<b>Harpauer, Hon. Donna</b> — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	<b>Teed, Nathaniel</b> — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
<b>Harrison, Daryl</b> — Cannington (SP)	<b>Tell, Hon. Christine</b> — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
<b>Harrison, Hon. Jeremy</b> — Meadow Lake (SP)	<b>Vermette, Doyle</b> — Cumberland (NDP)
<b>Hindley, Hon. Everett</b> — Swift Current (SP)	<b>Weekes, Hon. Randy</b> — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
<b>Jenson, Terry</b> — Martensville-Warman (SP)	<b>Wilson, Nadine</b> — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)
<b>Kaeding, Warren</b> — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	<b>Wotherspoon, Trent</b> — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
<b>Keisig, Travis</b> — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	<b>Wyant, Hon. Gordon</b> — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
<b>Kirsch, Delbert</b> — Batoche (SP)	<b>Young, Aleana</b> — Regina University (NDP)
<b>Lambert, Lisa</b> — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	<b>Young, Colleen</b> — Lloydminster (SP)
<b>Lawrence, Greg</b> — Moose Jaw Wakamow (Ind.)	

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**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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CONTENTS

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker.....5649

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Duncan.....5649  
Ritchie.....5649  
McLeod, T. ....5649  
Love.....5650  
Marit.....5650  
McMorris.....5650  
Fiaz.....5651  
Burki.....5651  
Skoropad.....5652  
Sarauer.....5652  
Mowat.....5652  
Teed.....5652  
Domotor.....5652  
Nippi-Albright.....5660

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Nippi-Albright.....5653  
Love.....5653  
Tell.....5653  
Burki.....5653  
Clarke.....5653

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Tuition Increases at Post-Secondary Institutions

Bowes.....5654

Cherishing All Mothers

Ottenbreit.....5654

Drug Treatment Program Changes Lives

Friesen.....5654

Melfort Mustangs Compete in Centennial Cup

Goudy.....5654

Efforts to Increase Surgical Capacity Showing Positive Results

Bonk.....5655

Growth in International Exports

Harrison, D.....5655

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Encourages Emergency Preparedness

Bradshaw.....5655

QUESTION PERIOD

Cost of Living and Affordability Measures

Beck.....5656

Harpauer.....5656

Provision of Health Care in Rural Communities

Beck.....5656

McLeod, T. ....5656

Love.....5657

Clarke.....5657

Hindley.....5658

Expenses for International Travel

Young, A.....5658

Reiter.....5658

Duncan.....5658

Information on Existing Wetlands

Ritchie.....5659

Marit.....5659

Overdose Deaths and Treatment for Addictions

Burki.....5660

McLeod, T. ....5660

Ottenbreit.....5660

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE**

**Out-of-Province Contracts and Management of the Economy**

Young, A. ....	5660, 5669
Friesen .....	5663, 5670
Mowat .....	5664, 5670
Bonk .....	5665
Sarauer (point of order) .....	5666
The Deputy Chair of Committees (point of order).....	5666
Clarke .....	5667, 5669
Keisig .....	5668, 5669
Harrison, D.....	5669, 5670
McLeod, B. ....	5670
Ottenbreit .....	5670
Cheveldayoff.....	5671

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS**

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS**

**Motion No. 3 — Government Policies to Attract Capital Investment**

Kaeding.....	5671
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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

### Ruling on a Point of Order

**The Speaker:** — Yesterday, on Wednesday, May 8th, 2024, the Opposition House Leader rose on a point of order alleging that during question period the Minister of Justice and Attorney General yelled, “not true,” across the floor while the member from Saskatoon Eastview was asking a question. I committed to reviewing the record.

Members well know that accusing other hon. members of dishonesty is out of order. A voice can be heard on the video record, but it is not discernible. As such, I cannot single out a specific member to withdraw and apologize. However if any member wishes to do so, I will now afford them the opportunity.

I caution all members to be mindful of their comments in this Chamber, both on and off the record.

## 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’m honoured to rise and introduce to you and through you, several people that are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

First, Lisa Birnie, who is a senior admin in the Minister of Health’s office, and her sister Launa Birnie who works in the Premier’s office. I think both of them have been introduced in the House in the past, and I know most if not all members on this side of the House are very familiar with the team.

I have known the two of them for a very long time, ever since Lisa and I were classmates starting in grade 7 at St. Mike’s in Weyburn. And that’s where the stories are going to end. Mr. Speaker, but I think people that encounter both Lisa and Launa in this building know them to be among two of the friendliest, smiliest — if that’s a word, smiliest — individuals, Mr. Speaker.

And if you wonder where that comes from, well I’m going to tell you, Mr. Speaker. Seated with them is their mother, Loretta. Mr. Speaker, Loretta and her late husband, Glen, moved to Weyburn 50 years ago where they built a house on Douglas Road right across the street from Jubilee Park. They had front-row seats to countless baseball games over the years that have taken place. Glen was very well known in the oil and gas industry and Loretta worked many years at the Bank of Montreal, Mr. Speaker.

And they were very well known for their volunteer activities, especially with our junior hockey team, the Weyburn Red Wings. Glen drove the bus for many years, and they billeted a number of hockey players. And I know that she still keeps in touch with many of her boys and the parents of those kids to this day, Mr.

Speaker. She really was like a second mother to many of them. Mr. Speaker, in retirement Glen worked for Stagecoach Tours where he was a bus driver and Loretta was the hostess on the bus for many of those trips.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there is a danger for MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] to favour a constituent but, Mr. Speaker, with only a week left, I can honestly say that Loretta Birnie is one of my most favourite constituents, Mr. Speaker, and I am delighted to see her here today. And it’s my honour and privilege to introduce her and her daughters to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s a wonderful morning here to welcome, in the east gallery, 60 students who are joining us from Buena Vista School from my constituency of Saskatoon Nutana. I see them giving us a wave right now. I heard that they had to get up pretty early this morning in order to catch the bus and make it here for the proceedings this morning. And they’ve already had a chance to tour the building a little bit and we’ll be meeting with them afterwards for a photo and some Q & A [question and answer]. And I want to thank them all so much for coming here today to watch these proceedings and witness the legislative and democratic process in action here. I look forward to your questions afterwards.

Also joining them are their teachers, Ms. Rae Braaten, Mr. Ben Oaken, and Daisy Hart. Thank you all so much for making this a priority. Of course we know that dollars are tight for school trips nowadays. It’s very difficult to work these kind of trips into the school year and the school budget. And I just want to let you know that I really appreciate you taking this time to give your students the opportunity to be here today.

And with that I will ask all members to join me in welcoming these students from Buena Vista School to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it gives me great pleasure to introduce in the west gallery 19 students from A. E. Peacock Collegiate in Moose Jaw. Mr. Speaker, these students are here . . . Joined with them is their teacher Carrie Kiefer who’s no stranger to this Assembly and the gentleman who drove them safely here, Blaine Southgate. So thank you for that, sir.

And I would just say, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Kiefer has brought a number of classes to this Assembly and they are always incredibly well informed and well prepared for the questions afterward. And I look forward to meeting with them after question period today. If everybody . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — And ice cream.

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — And they’ll be pleased to know that my colleague has offered to buy them ice cream. If all members

could please join me in welcoming these students and their teachers and driver to their Assembly.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Request leave for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join with my colleague from Nutana in welcoming these 60 students and parent chaperones and teachers here in the gallery today. I've got lots to say about this group today, but I'm going to start with some appreciation for these teachers.

This is the school where my children attend, and this school does just such a fantastic job getting these young learners out of the classroom. Doesn't always mean that they get big trips, early morning trips down to Regina for everything that they've got planned ahead today, but they spend lots of time learning outdoors. The school has endeavoured to take on outdoor learning during roughly 50 per cent of their instructional time. So they have outdoor classrooms. They get out to Gabriel Dumont Park and Buena Vista Park and learning in nature and land-based learning, and it's just so wonderful.

I want to give an extra thanks to the teacher that my colleague mentioned, Ms. Rae Braaten. She's been my son's teacher for the last two years and she just does such a fantastic job. We're so indebted to her as parents for the care that she puts into her classroom, to building these young learners and leaders. She's just a rock star of a teacher, and I'm so thankful for her as a parent, for her and for the whole school staff, for what they do day in and day out at that school. We're just indebted and I want to say thank you from the floor of this Assembly.

One of the things that I've been able to do with Ms. Braaten's class is last year was able to join . . . She planned a camping trip. And I know how much work it takes for teachers to plan things like this. When you get students out of the classroom on school trips, it takes a lot of time and planning. And I know that Ms. Braaten always is willing to put in that extra effort. And last spring I joined her class on a camping trip out at Pike Lake and it was loads of fun. She had everything organized and all the meals, and I got to spend some time with some of those parents up in the gallery who are here again today, sitting around the campfire and watching Ms. Braaten just do her thing and getting those kids active.

And we woke up the next morning. I had a good sleep in my tent and woke up the next morning and I said, how was your sleep? She said, well I was up really early, and I said oh, sorry to hear that. She said yeah, some of the students were up at four in the morning. They didn't know what time it was. And I said boy, I hope that wasn't my child.

And with that I'd like to introduce my son Tom who is here

today, who was one of those up early in the morning and had to be sent back to his tent. My son Tom is in the gallery today and I want to welcome Tom to his Assembly. So proud to be his dad. We share so many common interests, whether that be music or sports. He loves football and soccer; he loves being active. He's just such a wonderful, wonderful young man and really proud to see who he is and who he is growing into and to see him interact with his peers.

I drove up a car full of kids early this morning. We met at school at about 10 to 6 or so. I might have been a few minutes late. But I drove up some of these young students today and it was just a joy to see them, you know, be goofy on the whole drive here, and kids being kids.

And so I want to thank all of these students and teachers and parents for taking the time and the effort to be here. I'm looking forward to joining with some of the activities later today at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, and I hear there's some laser tag up at the end of the day. So I want to thank them all for the effort, for being here. Save up your questions for my colleague and myself. And at this point I'll ask all members to join me in welcoming all these students, teachers, and chaperones to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sitting in your gallery, it is my pleasure to introduce Water Security's executive assistant and administrators. This group of talented women have travelled from our head office in Moose Jaw to obviously observe the proceedings here today.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of them for the work they do for the Water Security Agency and their dedication to that organization, and I would ask all members to please welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the minister in welcoming these administrative professionals from the Water Security Agency to their Assembly today, from the Water Security Agency where, you know, there's such vital work that's under way right now, looking to ensure that we protect source water and ensure adequate supply for generations to come. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask leave for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in your gallery, to you and through you, I have two individuals that I'd like to introduce — actually four individuals that I'd like to introduce — but two that we're certainly honouring today.

The first one is Sheldon Green and his wife, Jennifer. If you just want to give a wave. Sheldon has been with the Government of Saskatchewan since 2001. He has a master's in city planning, and since 2019 he has been the assistant deputy minister for municipal relations division. He's actually the acting deputy minister right now currently.

He's certainly built an experience through Government Relations. Sheldon was the director and then executive director of advisory services and municipal relations branch in the Ministry of Government Relations. Sheldon spent a number of years in Manitoba before he came to Saskatchewan, so it's been our pleasure to have him in Saskatchewan for these past 21 years or more.

Sheldon enjoys travelling, cooking, and CFL [Canadian Football League] football. A little-known fact about Sheldon is that he has spent time as the director and president of the Youth Ballet of Saskatchewan. Didn't know that until my crack researchers got a hold of that one.

He is retiring from public service, but Saskatchewan will still benefit from his years of experience as he has now been recruited by the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Regina. He will be leading the executive education and professional development teams here. So let's give Sheldon a round of applause after 21 years of service.

I'd also like to introduce Ralph Leibel and his wife, Bridgette. There's not too many places in Saskatchewan, municipalities, that Ralph hasn't been in touch with at some point.

[10:15]

Ralph is retiring as the executive director of community planning after more than 40 years of service to this province, Mr. Speaker. During those years he's received the Deputy Minister's Award and the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service. He also has received the Fraser-Gatrell Memorial Award: Distinguished Contribution by the Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute.

With a master's in public administration, Ralph has been the president of the Association of Professional Community Planners of Saskatchewan and has served as an executive council member for the Canadian Institute of Planners. Ralph has also served as a senator on both the U of R [University of Regina] and the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] and has done a good job with Cystic Fibrosis Saskatchewan — has also been a passion of his. He's looking forward to his retirement and getting to work on his cars and taking those motorcycle trips when it best suits him, not when it best suits us, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to just thank both of these gentlemen for their service. I've said many times this province is well served by thousands of public servants. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, from my experience — I've got to work with many of them — these are two of the best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure again to be on my feet joining with the minister in welcoming to their gallery Ralph and his wife, Bridgette Leibel, and Sheldon and Jennifer Green. Both have had exemplary service within the Government Relations ministry for many years, as the minister has just highlighted.

And we greatly appreciate those many years of service and all the work that you do in the public interest, ensuring that our communities are positioned for success, and then further that you've also shared your expertise and your leadership through your broader work in the community, with professional associations and others outside your area. And I wish you all a very happy retirement, especially moving on to Johnson-Shoyama and offering your expertise there.

And with that I invite all members to join me in welcoming and congratulating these public servants for their years of service to the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you so much.

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

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we often say, we do not serve here alone. A lot of support from family members and friends. The first time ever actually, my sibling, my older brother Muhammad Riaz is sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. He was fourth born to my parents, and we are total seven brothers, three sisters, ten of us. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker, growing up in one house and somebody preparing the breakfast and supper and dinner, and you know, how tough was that. We had a great mom, definitely, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, he came to Canada about 35 years ago, I guess, and after that he sponsored us, me and my younger brother and my mom and dad. And we came here on July 14, 1995 in Toronto. And he actually told me that I moved in the best place here. And he acknowledged that. I do not know why he is still living in Toronto. But thank you very much. He is not only that moral support, Mr. Speaker, he is a financial support for everyone for our family.

I ask all the members to welcome my brother in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Burki:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will join the member opposite from Regina Pasqua and welcome his brother Riaz over here to his Legislative Assembly.

The member of Pasqua, we've been working together almost for six years together. And thank you very much for being supportive for your family. We wish you and pray for you for the same support for your family.

And I will ask all members in this Legislative Assembly to join me to welcome Muhammad Riaz to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Skoropad:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with my colleague the Minister of Rural and Remote Health in welcoming the school group here seated in the west gallery.

As an alumni of Peacock Collegiate, I'd be remiss if I did not welcome these students here today, and also their teacher, Carrie Kiefer, who is a colleague of mine and a friend of mine, and someone who I introduced last year. I pointed out that time that, in addition to being a great teacher, she is quite the rapper.

But I also wanted to . . . I forgot something at that time. And I've had a lot of sleepless nights because I forgot that. She's also a great dancer; that goes with her rapping.

So I would just like to welcome her here today and thank her for everything she does in the classroom. And I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their legislature.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce two individuals seated in your gallery. I have two members of my family here today. My aunt Lou Anne Turcotte and my cousin Leah Turcotte are here.

They hail both from Saskatoon. I actually had the honour of living with them for a few months when I started off law school many, many years ago.

Leah currently serves as the facility and maintenance coordinator at Ronald McDonald House, I would say easily a job, an organization, and a mission that she cares very deeply about. You may have seen her celebrating McHappy Day yesterday by serving members of the public at various McDonald's throughout the city.

And then my aunt Lou Anne, she's retired now from a long career in finance. But I would say the Sarauers have a bit of a restless spirit about them. We've never talked about this before, but I do think we're restless people. She, despite retirement, has accomplished many things. One thing that I think is really cool that I want to share is that she has walked down every single street in the city of Saskatoon. It was a feat she had a goal set that she wanted to accomplish, and she did accomplish that. She also shares a birthdate — day and year — with my mom.

It's an absolute honour to have family members here today, as it is with all family members, and I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join my colleagues in welcoming the group from Buena Vista School and specifically my friend Mr. Ben Oaken for joining us here today.

I just want to provide a special shout-out to Ben. He's become a close friend of mine. He taught with my partner about five years ago at Victoria School, and it's lovely to see him in this space

here. He's one of the kindest people I know. He has a passion for land-based learning and is deeply respected by his students and looked up to by all of us, not just because of his height, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, he and his wife, Amanda, contribute so much to our community. It's a pleasure to see him here today. Most days I run into him these days on disc golf courses. And I want to thank him for taking the time to come here with his students today, and ask all members to join me in welcoming him to his Assembly.

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

**Mr. Teed:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join with the members from Regina Douglas Park and Saskatoon Fairview in welcoming some individuals in the galleries today.

First in the Speaker's gallery I'd like to also join in in welcoming Lou Anne and Leah to their Legislative Assembly. I've had the absolute pleasure of getting to know Lou Anne and Leah over the past several summers, as I've had the honour of being invited up to the lake where they spend their summers. And the hospitality that you've shown has just been so appreciated, and I am just so blessed to call them both friends of mine. And I hope that we have many more summers and adventures and fun up at the lake.

And I'd also like to join with the member from Saskatoon Fairview in welcoming Ben Oaken to his Legislative Assembly. Ben, I think, was one of the very first conversations I had on the doorstep during my nomination in Saskatoon Meewasin. And I just so appreciated the conversation I had with you and your spouse, just about the things that are important to you, the time you spent in education, and just learning from the member from Saskatoon Fairview about all the great things that you have accomplished. I'm sad to say that I don't know if you're anymore a constituent of mine. Certainly miss you in Saskatoon Meewasin, but I know another constituency, you know, has gained a great constituent.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

**Mr. Domotor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would also like to join the minister and the member opposite in recognizing Ralph Leibel. Ralph Leibel has been a service to this province for many, many years. As a former administrator for an RM [rural municipality] that had a lot of challenging development for 26-plus years, I've known Ralph almost my whole career.

I've really valued the input and that knowledge that he had in helping guide myself and council with respect to those development issues.

And I wish him all the best in his retirement years and would like to welcome him and his wife, Bridgette, to their Legislative Assembly.



## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — Miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention: the Sask Party government voted against duty-to-consult in this province, and Saskatchewan needs legislation to ensure the provincial duty-to-consult is fulfilled and carried out with the honour of the Crown; and the Sask Party government has never addressed cumulative impacts, yet duty-to-consult must consider cumulative effects on the ability to practise inherent and treaty rights before approving projects in Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to enshrine duty-to-consult into law by enacting the meaningful duty-to-consult legislation.

The folks who signed this petition reside in Yellow Quill First Nation. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to again present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for adequate funding for education. Now folks here know that I came to this work as a classroom teacher who saw the impact of Sask Party cuts, and the impact that those are having on our students. But I also stand here today as a proud father, as a parent, someone who's been inspired by the parents who have come here to their Assembly to raise these same concerns about what funding does to the needs that our students have in the classroom.

Yesterday we were joined by two passionate mothers, B-J and Katie, and a couple weeks ago by Taya Thomas. And those parents are coming here because they want their concerns to be heard. Their concerns are our concerns, Mr. Speaker. We have a vision for a well-resourced, publicly funded and delivered education system in this province where every child gets what they need.

When parents come here to talk about their children with complex needs, they join with other parents who are concerned about . . . maybe they're newcomer families and the needs that their children have. Maybe it's a mental health need. We've heard parents come here, talk about mental health needs of their children. Maybe it's other instructional needs that their children have in schools that are going unmet today in Saskatchewan. We join with those parents.

And I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to provide adequate,

sustainable, and predictable operating funds for our 27 public and separate school divisions to ensure that schools, teachers, and other caring . . .

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — 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 NDP-Liberal government was politically motivated in issuing a carve-out for home heating; and that the Government of Saskatchewan's decision to not 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 charge 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 Regina. I do submit.

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

[10:30]

**Mr. Burki:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition to address the affordability crisis. We the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring it to your attention the following: that inflation is the highest it has been in more than three decades; that according to Angus Reid, 84 per cent of Saskatchewan people are feeling stressed about money, the highest such as rate of inflation and financial insecurity in Canada; that half of the Saskatchewan residents who were living paycheque to paycheque before transportation and food costs skyrocketed in 2022; that the Sask Party government power, PST [provincial sales tax], and tax hikes makes life more expensive. While other provinces acted, the Sask Party government continued to ignore opposition calls for gas relief.

We, in the prayer read as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to address the affordability crisis in our province.

The signatories of this petition all reside in Regina and Moose Jaw. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Clarke:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to immediately address the doctor shortage in Duck Lake.

The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention that the shortage of doctors is impacting local clinics and long-

term care homes, with some unable to provide the level of care that they have historically been able to provide; that nearly 1,000 people in the Duck Lake and surrounding area are without a doctor, and this includes Beardy's First Nation, where 1,000 people are without a family doctor. We also see emergency services being closed, experiencing closures at the same time. And without these emergency rooms, folks from the Duck Lake area are forced to travel to Saskatoon, P.A. [Prince Albert] to get the care they need in an emergency.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately recruit and retain doctors to provide adequate and accessible health care to Rosthern, Duck Lake, and the surrounding area.

The signatories reside in Rosthern. I do so present.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Tuition Increases at Post-Secondary Institutions

**Ms. Bowes:** — Mr. Speaker, day after day we have raised the affordability crisis that people are facing in this province and the lack of relief and inaction by that tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government. Whether it's jacking power rates or forcing families to pay new and growing education fees to ensure their children get an education, the affordability crisis is largely one of that government's making.

A significant contributor to the crisis is the dramatic rise in university and Sask Poly tuition rates. Between 2018 and 2024 the government has cut funding to the advanced education sector in terms of real dollars. The result is that Saskatchewan now has the second-highest level of tuition in Canada for undergraduate degrees according to Stats Canada.

The financial impact of the government's cuts is a 27 per cent increase in tuition, Mr. Speaker, tuition often paid for by the families of these students. But have salaries gone up by 27 per cent, or has the minimum wage gone up by 27 per cent? The answer is clearly not.

However this government believes that a 27 per cent increase in tuition is totally acceptable. They will tell you that it's the fault of the universities, but the decision to cut university funding and dramatically increase tuition is all due to Sask Party math. A 27 per cent tuition increase equals zero new assistance in the inept world of Sask Party math.

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

#### Cherishing All Mothers

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Motherhood, we know it's not easy. They carry us for nine months, create and give us life. They nurture, feed, clothe, bathe, teach, guide, doctor, and bandage, sometimes discipline if required. They support,

transport, cheer, and at times worry and cry. They selflessly sacrifice and rarely complain. Sadly some grieve far too soon. Mothers pray, they hope, love unconditionally, and protect fiercely, yet make the world a kinder and gentler and more welcoming place.

So to birth moms, stepmoms, adoptive moms, foster moms, grandmoms, and great-grandmoms, my mom-in-law in heaven, my mom here on earth: thank you for life, for love, for being you, and for being part of us. Sometimes we don't have the right words to say or we don't say it enough. You are heroes. You are loved, appreciated, cherished. God bless you and keep you. May his face shine on you and you experience his grace, peace, and protection. May God's goodness be with you all of the days of your lives.

This Sunday, Happy Mother's Day. We love you every day.

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

#### Drug Treatment Program Changes Lives

**Mr. Friesen:** — Two weeks ago Tuesday was a great day in Regina, Mr. Speaker. I joined the ministers of Justice, Mental Health and Addictions, the members from Melfort, Regina Northeast, Regina Pasqua, Lloydminster, and the member from Regina Douglas Park at the Regina drug treatment centre. It started with a tour and an explanation of the program that has been running now since 2006, currently in Regina and Moose Jaw.

Mr. Speaker, it was great to learn about this amazing program, helping repeat offenders get back on track. The goal of this program is to break the cycle of drug use and recidivism in our community through innovative partnerships among the criminal justice system, drug treatment services, and social services agencies.

Mr. Speaker, the next part of the tour was into the courthouse to listen to these individuals interact with the judge about how their personal journey is going. There were a number of individuals in the program that have been sober over 100 or even 200 days, Mr. Speaker. And after a few minute chat with the judge, the court would clap and celebrate individual achievements. I found a number of the individuals outside court after it was out, and I was able to have a brief chat with them about how it has changed their lives.

I would like all members to join me in thanking all the people involved in this program, that is one important tool in the toolbox in the battle against drugs in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Melfort Mustangs Compete in Centennial Cup

**Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a few exciting events going on this evening. Besides the appreciation roast for the member from Carrot River in Nipawin, there'll be a puck drop at 5:25 Saskatchewan time in Oakville, Ontario where the Melfort Mustangs will be playing the Miramichi

Timberwolves for their first game in this year's Centennial Cup.

We're very proud of our Mustangs in Melfort, and this year in particular the level of playoff hockey was exceptional. More often than not, the games ended in overtime and the Northern Lights Palace was packed for the playoffs as we took down first the Humboldt Broncos and then the nationally top-ranked Flin Flon Bombers to claim the Canterra Seeds Cup. Whatever the outcome, we're looking forward to more good hockey over the next 10 days and we'll be cheering on our Mustangs as they represent Saskatchewan and the SJHL [Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League] out east.

Congratulations to the players, their coaches, support staff, families, billet families, and volunteers who all worked hard to earn the spot at nationals. They've had a great year. And to the head coach, Trevor Blevins, a local Melfort boy who grew up and had a good hockey career himself playing for the Mustangs back in '96 when they also won the SJHL championship, hopefully this time he'll be able to bring back the Centennial Cup.

Mr. Speaker, I remember another Melfort sports team who took on Miramichi back in '89. We beat them then and hopefully we're going to beat them again tonight. Go Mustangs.

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

#### **Efforts to Increase Surgical Capacity Showing Positive Results**

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to announce a record-breaking year for surgical volumes in Saskatchewan. Our province performed 95,700 surgeries, the highest annual surgical volume ever recorded. This has surpassed last year's record by nearly 6,000 procedures.

Because of this incredible work, our surgical wait-lists are trending in the right direction. The wait-list is decreasing by 4,600 or 14 per cent fewer patients waiting for surgery compared to last year. From March 31st to March 31st of this year, the number of people waiting for more than 18 months has decreased by more than 67 per cent. When it comes to hip and knee procedures, volumes have increased by nearly 800 procedures over last year, for a total of nearly 7,100 surgeries performed this year alone.

This is a remarkable achievement. Surgical staff from all our provincial centres have played an important part in this achievement by improving the quality of life for thousands of Saskatchewan patients this past year.

This year's budget provides an increase of 2.3 million to increase surgical volumes and reduce wait times further. Strategies to increase surgical capacity include developing focused improvements on orthopedics, investing in health system human resources, and expanding involvement in the private sector partners for surgical service delivery. Our government will continue to make investments that ensure patients receive the surgeries they need.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Growth in International Exports**

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Mr. Speaker, here are some of the recent increases we've been seeing in our exports. Exports to the UK [United Kingdom] are up 32 per cent, totalling \$557 million. Exports to Germany are up 237 per cent, totalling \$514 million. Exports to France are up 68 per cent, totalling \$220 million. Exports to the Netherlands are up 12 per cent, totalling \$413 million.

Additionally uranium exports to the European Union have increased by over 300 per cent, almost \$1 billion. Exports of lentils, chickpeas, non-durum wheat, mustard seed, and several types of agricultural machinery to the EU [European Union] have also increased. Our mining and agriculture sectors are important to Saskatchewan people. They provide thousands of good-paying jobs and the most sustainable products on the world market.

But the doom-and-gloom NDP opposition doesn't feel the same way. They have made it crystal clear that they oppose our key resource sectors and support the Trudeau-NDP carbon tax. And they proved us right, when their leader flew to a Trudeau campaign school to give a presentation on defeating conservatives in Saskatchewan. We know that the NDP think that our economy is a dumpster fire, and there's nothing to be proud of here.

We thank our exporters and manufacturers for their positive attitude and faith in Saskatchewan . . .

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

#### **Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Encourages Emergency Preparedness**

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May 5th to 11th is Emergency Preparedness Week in Saskatchewan. This is a full week dedicated to reminding the public to be prepared for weather and other types of emergencies. In Saskatchewan mother nature brings us floods, fires, and tornadoes, just to name a few. These and other emergencies can arise year round, forcing residents to leave their home for their own safety. This is why it is important to prepare for any type of event and keep an emergency kit.

The theme for Emergency Preparedness Week this year is "Be Prepared. Know Your Risks." The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency or the SPSA wants Saskatchewan residents to take a moment to draft or review an emergency plan for their household. Do not forget to consider everyone in your home when making your plan, including your pets and visitors.

Secondly the SPSA wants to remind everybody to keep a 72-hour emergency kit in their home and vehicle. This should contain the essentials such as food, water, medications, important IDs [identification] and documents, and again don't forget about food for your furry family members.

The SPSA website has information on emergency plans, kits, and more. I would like to recommend that all residents learn how to make an emergency kit and develop a plan for when emergency strikes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Cost of Living and Affordability Measures

**Ms. Beck:** — This tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver on the cost of living for families. Now, Mr. Speaker, it seems the last couple of days our critic for SaskPower has hit a nerve when it comes to the Sask Party's budget, a budget that pads the numbers with hundreds of millions of dollars of Sask Party carbon tax but offers zero relief for Saskatchewan people.

Why is the Premier choosing not to offer any relief at a time when so many families in this province are struggling?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — The member opposite is well aware that there's over \$2 billion worth of affordability measures in this budget, and she just chooses to ignore it. She's also well aware that we have much lower personal income taxes today than we did when the NDP were in government, and she chooses to ignore it. The cost of her suggestion on the fuel tax is about \$500 million a year, Mr. Speaker, and all of that money is dedicated to our roadways.

What she doesn't seem to be aware of is where is the money going to come from should we implement their idea, Mr. Speaker. When the reporter asked her that question, she said the GRF [General Revenue Fund]. Well you know, she needs to turn and talk to her Finance critic, and maybe he can explain to her that it's not a magical pot of gold sitting in a GRF, Mr. Speaker. That is how they do not understand the economy or finances.

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

### Provision of Health Care in Rural Communities

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this government does not understand the struggles that Saskatchewan people are going through, and this is a matter of priorities. But not only are they failing to deliver when it comes to the cost of living, they're failing, failing to deliver on health care.

Mr. Speaker, we're joined today by a delegation in your gallery that are fed up with the Sask Party's record on health care. Folks from the town of Duck Lake, the RM, and Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation are all here to talk about the shortage of doctors in their region.

[10:45]

People in that region don't have access to doctors. So what does the Premier, what does that government have to say to these leaders who have joined us here today?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government agrees that providing health care in our rural and northern communities is an absolute priority. And that's why we

have the most ambitious health human resources action plan in the nation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are actively recruiting physicians to fill the vacancies, including in communities like Duck Lake. Mr. Speaker, this year's budget includes eight more training seats for SIPPA [Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment] so that SIPPA doctors, we're now training 53 total. And those doctors largely go to our rural and northern communities, Mr. Speaker.

To help train more physicians, we've also created the rural physician incentive program, Mr. Speaker, that offers up to \$200,000 as an incentive to our physicians who are willing to work in our rural facilities that are otherwise hard to staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — News flash for the minister — they're not here to say how well those plans are working, Mr. Speaker. Now Saskatchewan people should be able to get the care that they need when and where they need it, and the people that are here today from Duck Lake and the surrounding communities are tired of talk. They want action, Mr. Speaker.

The shortage of doctors in their region is leaving eight beds at their special care home closed. Now they've tried working with this government since 2021, but there's no resolution in sight. The Premier and the Sask Party have broken our health care system, and they are clearly not the ones who are up to the task of fixing it. Why has the Premier let things get so bad in Duck Lake?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a little bit rich for the opposition to be talking about breaking the health care system when they closed 52 hospitals across rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and if given the opportunity, they've openly admitted that they would close 50 more, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is a priority for our government, it is a priority for our government to stabilize our rural and remote health care facilities. And that's why under this government, Mr. Speaker, we have 1,000 more physicians operating and working in Saskatchewan than we ever did under the NDP, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, those tired old talking lines are thin, thin relief for people who are here worried about their community and the lack of doctors. Now this shortage of doctors is bad for the RM, it's bad for the town, and it's bad for the nearby First Nation communities of One Arrow and Beardy's.

Carla Seesequasis leads Willow Cree Health Services, and they lost their family doctor last year. They have 1,600 members living on-reserve, and 1,000 of those members are left without a family doctor. Now this forces people to drive to the clinic in

Rosthern or to show up to the ER [emergency room] when they need care, an ER that the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook should know is often, often closed to short-staffing.

Does the Premier agree with me that every person living in Saskatchewan should have access to a doctor no matter where they live?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again, stabilizing our rural and remote facilities is a priority for this government. And that's why we have the most ambitious health human resources action plan in the nation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a new physician was just recently recruited to Rosthern, and the most recent graduate cohort of the SIPPA program, Mr. Speaker, is a direct result of that recruitment. That's how that recruitment happens, Mr. Speaker. And as I said, we've expanded the SIPPA program, Mr. Speaker, so that we have more SIPPA docs available across the province each and every cohort. And those doctors, again, are largely reaching our rural and northern communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Love:** — Mr. Speaker, the people who came here today deserve so much better than they're getting from this tired and out-of-touch government. Ray Gauthier is the Chair of Goodwill Manor in Duck Lake. We wrote to the Health minister in January sharing this community's concerns and we still have not heard back. Neither has Ray.

Why do people need to come down to Regina in order to get a response from this Sask Party government? Will that minister meet with this delegation today?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I would just welcome the delegation here today. And of course I would be happy to meet with them after question period today if they so wish.

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

**Mr. Love:** — I'm glad that the minister will meet with them, but people should not have to get up at 5:30 in the morning to drive to their Assembly just to hear back from that minister.

Mr. Speaker, the shortage of doctors in the region has left eight of the beds in this facility empty. There are more beds empty today in Duck Lake than in all of the northeast region combined. The Sask Party has broken our health care system, and they are not up to the task of fixing it. Why has there been zero progress on fixing their issues after more than two years?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the plan that I was referring to earlier was just implemented in September of 2022. And in that time, Mr. Speaker, we have seen incredible growth in our health human resources. We are regularly meeting with our doctors. We are regularly meeting with community leaders. Again, I would be happy to meet with the delegation that's here today.

Mr. Speaker, our health human resources action plan is working, and we have . . . We know that there are challenges. We are continuing to work on those challenges to stabilize rural and northern communities, and we will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Clarke:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This tired and out-of-touch government is taking seniors for granted, and they're taking rural people for granted too. Short-staffing, short-staffing and unfilled vacancies have become the norm in communities large and small, and it's the fault of this Sask Party government. They've been in charge of health care for 17 years, and it's their record of failure that is to blame for the state of our health care system today.

Why won't the minister actually listen to local voices, like the ones who drove here today, and fix the problems in health care?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Mr. Speaker, the only ones not listening in this Assembly are the members opposite. I just said I would meet with the delegation, and I'm happy to do that, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the action plan, our health human resources action plan is showing results. We've said these numbers before, but I will say them again for the members opposite.

As a result of the initiatives in that action plan, we have 97 new positions in North Battleford, 70 of which are nurses; 69 new positions in Prince Albert, 44 of which are nurses; 47 new positions in Moose Jaw, 25 of which are nurses; 30 positions in Yorkton, 11 of which are nurses; 29 in Swift Current; 28 in Weyburn. Mr. Speaker, I can go on and on.

As I said before, we have recruited a SIPPA doctor to Rosthern who is available to the community of Duck Lake. We are continuing to work with these communities, Mr. Speaker. We recognize the challenges, but we have a health human resources action plan that is working and will continue to work, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Clarke:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The key driver of the problem in rural health care is short-staffing. Now yesterday the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses just released the results of their members survey, and the results are a damning indictment of this tired and out-of-touch government's record. Eighty-five per cent of nurses said short-staffing is putting patients at risk. Fifty-eight

per cent say they think about leaving. They are thinking about leaving health care altogether.

We'll never get a handle on the short-staffing issues in health care in places like Duck Lake until we start listening to local voices like nurses, like the folks who have come here today. When will the minister start listening to front-line workers to address the retention crisis in the health care system?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to begin by thanking our nurses, all of our health care workers across the province, Mr. Speaker. Since 2007 we've had nearly 6,500 more nurses hired into this province. That's a number that's increased in Saskatchewan, representing a 50 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker — over 13,000 RNs [registered nurse], 4,300 LPNs [licensed practical nurse], 800 registered psychiatric nurses, and 360 nurse practitioners, Mr. Speaker. We're very grateful for the work that they do.

And this is why — and the member might want to actually listen to the answer because I think others in the Assembly might want to hear it as well — this is why it's important that we continue to engage with our front-line health care providers, as the Minister of Rural and Remote Health does, as I do. We have travelled to dozens of communities. We meet with delegations when they come here to the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. We talk about the challenges; we talk about some of the solutions as well, Mr. Speaker. And it's a far cry from the way it was under those members when they had the opportunity to serve as government, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Expenses for International Travel

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This tired and out-of-touch government isn't focused on fixing the health care system they broke; they're focused on racking up some of the most outrageous travel expenses in the history of Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, today we have some awards to hand out to members of this tired and out-of-touch government, and we're going to call them the spendies.

We'll start with the most expensive hotel stay. Was it the Premier's stay in Whistler at \$531 a night? Was it the Energy minister's check-in in Toronto at \$556 a night? No, Mr. Speaker, the award goes to the man, the suit, the legend — the member for Arm River Watrous who spent \$588 a night for two nights in Ottawa last year. That's almost three times the rate at the Sunrise Motel.

How does the Sask Party justify wasting so much public money on hotels when people back home are struggling?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to grandstand and torque numbers, cherry-pick numbers out of reports. But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it's important

that this government advocates for our industry around the world, Mr. Speaker. That's why trade missions are so important. Sixty-five per cent of what we produce in this province, Mr. Speaker, is for export.

Mr. Speaker, she's heckling in her seat right now about expenses she said I incurred in Toronto. Mr. Speaker, what was reported was not just for myself, it was for a number of staff from the ministry who have meetings there, Mr. Speaker. It's for receptions, it's for rentals of meeting rooms. Mr. Speaker, my costs for Toronto were actually for economy flights and hotel rooms, are actually under \$2,000, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess we'll let the facts speak for themselves. So let's move on to the next dubious award — the joyrider, the most expensive ground transportation in the cabinet. And there's some real good runners-up here, Mr. Speaker. Was it the Education minister with his \$1,200 bill for two days in Edmonton? No. Was it the Trade and Export minister with his \$3,400 car service in London and Warsaw? No.

The winner is, Mr. Speaker, the SaskPower minister's \$3,500 limo service in a private Mercedes-Benz touring Paris, one the car log shows he used for private sightseeing to Napoleon's tomb and the Arc de Triomphe. Does the SaskPower minister have anything he'd like to say as he accepts this prestigious award?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think we've already canvassed this in this House.

The member opposite will know, Mr. Speaker, that I stayed at a hotel near the airport near the convention centre, which was about 30 kilometres away from downtown Paris where the embassy was, where I had multiple meetings at that, Mr. Speaker. But where I was able to talk about the opportunities that are in Saskatchewan for the uranium industry, for the nuclear sector, Mr. Speaker, and the work that we're doing at SaskPower to ensure that we have safe, clean reliable energy well into the future.

And I'll say this: in terms of out-of-country travel, out-of-province travel, Mr. Speaker, I think on average ours is about 2 to \$300,000 a year. In the last year of the NDP, which was 17 years ago, the NDP spent a million dollars travelling out of this province, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to exorbitant costs and travel, we will take no lessons from those members opposite.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's right — a private limo to take him to the embassy where he snagged a photo with the godfather of the carbon tax, Stéphane Dion. But let's move on.

[11:00]

The final award that we have this morning is the biggest spender award. And sadly, Mr. Speaker, this one wasn't even close. Nominees did include the Energy minister's \$28,000 trip to Toronto, the Trade minister's \$18,000 trip to London and Warsaw. But when you add in that advertising, you add in the \$750,000 pavilion, the award goes to none other than the Premier with his million-dollar week in Dubai, the most expensive junket in Saskatchewan's history.

Does the Premier have anything he'd like to say as he accepts this award while 56 per cent of Saskatchewan people cannot pay their bills?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite calls it a junket. She doesn't understand how important trade is to this province, how important it is to industry leaders, Mr. Speaker. She might wish, she might wish to give a call — I'm sure he'd take the call, unlike their federal leader, Mr. Speaker — to David Cates, who's the CEO [chief executive officer] of Denison Mines, who sent an email talking about the importance of trade missions around the world, talking about the importance of the PDAC [Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada] conference which is the premier mining conference in the world, Mr. Speaker.

She's chipping from her seat instead of listening to answers. She might be interested to know, as we were in PDAC this year, Mr. Speaker, some other ministers attended as well, but not from this side of the House. NDP ministers attended that in 1988, 1999, 2001, two ministers, they sent Eric Cline — who's apparently written a bestseller lately, Mr. Speaker — and Maynard Sonntag. Both went 2001, 2003, '04, '05, '06, '07. Mr. Speaker, maybe their former colleagues had a bit of an idea about . . .

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

#### Information on Existing Wetlands

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is wasting public dollars hand over fist. We've all seen the bad-faith billboard campaign attacking teachers. Now the Water Security Agency is using public money for ads that aren't based in fact. On social media and in public washrooms and in *The Western Producer*, of all places, WSA [Water Security Agency] ads claim, and I quote, "86 per cent of Saskatchewan wetlands are undrained." If only that were true.

We lose 10,000 acres of wetlands every year. Only 51 per cent of wetlands are actually left. Why is the Sask Party wasting public dollars on ads that don't match the facts?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would really take the words and the facts from the Water Security folks for real, Mr. Speaker, not from the member opposite, Mr. Speaker. We have an extreme staff right above me in the gallery, Mr.

Speaker. They are really dedicated to the Water Security Agency and preserving water and making sure that we do protect their wetlands and the habitat, Mr. Speaker.

Our numbers are correct, Mr. Speaker: 86 per cent of our wetlands still remain and are intact in this province, unlike our members to the east, Mr. Speaker, under the NDP where only 50 per cent of their wetlands are preserved. Sorry, I correct — 75 per cent.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Mr. Speaker, I invite that minister to give those numbers up for scientific scrutiny if he thinks that they're so strong because the number in the ad simply is incorrect. We do not have 86 per cent of wetlands. We only have 51 per cent left. And it's because this tired and out-of-touch government doesn't have a wetland conservation policy.

It's just wrong to waste public money when those dollars could be spent on health care, classrooms, and cost-of-living relief. How much public money is being spent on these election year ads at the Water Security Agency?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I will say one thing that Water Security folks have done. We have reached out to organizations and we've had public consultations, Mr. Speaker, unlike the member opposite. My understanding is she did consult, Mr. Speaker. She did. She had six, five or six consultation meetings, Mr. Speaker. The Water Security Agency folks had 80 consultation groups, Mr. Speaker.

And I am so proud of the work that they have done, and I'll stand behind the work of the Water Security folks on collecting the correct data, Mr. Speaker, and presenting it not only to me but to the public as well, Mr. Speaker. I'd gladly get into the names of every organization we've met with. I hope there's a follow-up question because I do want to start that list, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Ritchie:** — Mr. Speaker, that minister didn't even come close to answering my question. It doesn't make sense for Water Security Agency to be advertising at all. SaskTel, sure, they have to compete against other phone and internet companies. But the WSA doesn't have to compete for market share against anyone. All that this campaign is about is using public dollars in an election year to talk about what a great job this government is doing.

How does the minister defend blatantly wasting these dollars in an election year, and how much is it all going to cost?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The one figure I will give to date is our government has invested a million dollars to work with 10 stakeholder organizations on 11 different agriculture demonstration projects that we are doing here in the

province of Saskatchewan. I will stand up for the folks of Water Security Agency and the work that they're doing, Mr. Speaker.

I really do want to put on the record, Mr. Speaker, from the critic in the opposition in a Twitter post that she put about Water Security coming under Agriculture, was like putting the fox to protect the henhouse, Mr. Speaker. Does she really think, does she really think that our great Saskatchewan producers don't care about the land that they have been stewards for for generations, Mr. Speaker?

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

### Overdose Deaths and Treatment for Addictions

**Mr. Burki:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. New numbers were released from the coroner this week. They show that 143 people have died from overdoses this year. Some of these people live in my constituency. These are the people that live in all of our constituencies. The Sask Party government cuts make this crisis worse, and we are on the track of another year of record overdose deaths.

When will the Sask Party government realize they are moving on the wrong track in the wrong direction and to invest in the supports that keep people alive?

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

**Hon. Mr. T. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that the best way to prevent overdoses is to help individuals overcome their addictions to illicit drugs. And that's why our government's focus, Mr. Speaker, is on treatment and recovery.

Mr. Speaker, by making addictions treatments more accessible, we can save lives, we can heal families, and we can strengthen communities. And that is precisely what this government is doing, Mr. Speaker. We have announced a mental health and addictions action plan that is expanding the capacity of addictions treatment across this province. Five hundred spaces will be added across the province. We are at nearly 200 of those already, Mr. Speaker, and the plan is still in its infancy.

Mr. Speaker, we are making it easier for people to access those treatment spaces. And when they are receiving treatment, Mr. Speaker, we are transitioning to a recovery-oriented system of care that provides those individuals with the specific needs and the resources and the supports that they need to have a long-lasting recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — During question period I very clearly heard the member from Yorkton tell the member from the opposition to shut up. That's unparliamentary language. I ask the member from Yorkton to withdraw and apologize.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Withdraw and apologize, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — Miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I am seeking leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The member is asking leave to do an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Ms. Nippi-Albright:** — Miigwech. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome some special guests in their gallery. I just want to say welcome to Beardy's and Okemasis leadership as well as the leadership from Duck Lake. It's always good to see . . . And it's unfortunate that communities have to travel, get up at 5:30 in the morning to travel to Regina when we're sitting to bring their issues to the table. And this talks about the commitment.

So I just want to say gichi-miigwech Beardy's and Okemasis for coming to your legislature to raise awareness and alert us to the 1,000 residents in your community that do not have a family physician. And thank you to Duck Lake for also coming here to raise those issues. And I hope that you will be able to meet and get your concerns addressed in an expedient manner, and not wait for another two years. So gichi-miigwech for showing up. And to you and through you I ask all members to join me in welcoming these folks to their legislature.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

#### Out-of-Province Contracts and Management of the Economy

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure as always to be on my feet for another 75-minute debate, and unfortunately our last 75-minute debate, which I say with real sincerity. This was a process I did not know about prior to being elected. I'd tune in to question period every once in a while but I'd, you know, turn off the Legislative Assembly channel after QP [question period] ended and I missed so much.

I think this is a really enjoyable process, and I look forward to moving my motion today in a timely fashion and hearing the comments from members opposite because, you know, sometimes, sometimes the party on the opposite side, this party, we use these 75-minute debates as wedges, Mr. Speaker, to try and make each other feel a little bit uncomfortable. But this motion, Mr. Speaker, should really be something that one would think both sides of the aisle would agree on.

The motion today, Mr. Speaker, really what we're calling on, we're asking this government to stop handing contracts, stop using public dollars handing these contracts out to out-of-province or out-of-country companies, spending money with



companies out of province, out of country instead of here in Saskatchewan with Saskatchewan companies, creating Saskatchewan jobs, Saskatchewan workers.

Now last week, Mr. Speaker, we got a great rundown of Adam Smith, great refresher from the member from Moosomin. And now before we get into the many, many, many egregious examples of this government handing contracts unnecessarily to out-of-province and out-of-country companies, unfortunately, all too often connected to friends, insiders, or perhaps donors, I'd like to talk about a basic economic concept inspired by the member for Moosomin. And this is a concept called "leakage."

Now leakage, Mr. Speaker, occurs when there's a withdrawal of money from the economy that results in a reduction of national — or in this case subnational, provincial — incomes. It disrupts the flow, the flow of capital from producers to consumers, which is supposed to occur in an endless loop.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Justice and Attorney General enjoys, you know, raging about the "hard left" in some sort of transatlantic tribute to Margaret Thatcher. And it is all a bit rich coming from a government that's created something like 18 Crown corporations during its time in office, a government that has the biggest spending of any government in history, that has — I can't even remember; have they doubled or tripled the debt? — tripled the debt, has balanced 1 in 10 budgets. But, mister deputy deputy speaker, that was last week's debate so I'm getting behind myself here.

But sadly for that minister and her acolytes, leakage is not a Marxist principle, mister deputy deputy speaker. This is basic Keynesian economics.

**An Hon. Member:** — Keynesian.

**Ms. A. Young:** — Keynesian. Thank you. What did I say? Keynesian. God, I've been talking too much today. Thank you to the member from Moosomin.

[11:15]

Unless this is a government that believes in supporting other economies, like the economy of Alberta for example, mister deputy deputy speaker, or Palm Beach, keeping public spending, keeping jobs and income here in Saskatchewan is something one would think we should all agree on. So again, mister deputy deputy speaker, I look forward to today's debate.

Because let's talk about the real application of this principle of leakage. For every woman in Saskatchewan being sent out of province for basic health care, for every woman who has to travel to Calgary for a mammogram, with a government donor, with a private company, sole-sourced no less . . .

But let's just talk about that woman. That woman leaves Saskatchewan for basic health care, which is egregious enough. But that woman is spending gas. She's spending accommodations, or perhaps this government is paying for that. Honestly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't know. If they are, I'll give them credit for that. But there's gas. There's accommodation. There's restaurant meals. All of this is being paid for, and it's not generating economic activity here at home in Saskatchewan. It's

contributing to the economy of Alberta.

Meanwhile Saskatchewan families, Saskatchewan businesses, Saskatchewan employers have to deal with the costs and the loss associated with the temporary absence of that woman, who again has been forced to travel seven-odd hours. Don't know where she's coming from, this woman who's not imaginary, all too real. Those families, those businesses, those employers, they have to deal with her absence.

Meanwhile 865 small businesses here in Saskatchewan have closed under this Premier's watch. Our hospitality sector here in Saskatchewan — hotels, accommodations, restaurants — all hardest hit by the pandemic, are struggling to recover, and yet what are we doing? We are using Saskatchewan taxpayer money, which should be precious, should be treated with respect and consideration, we are using that to pay a company in Alberta to do that work. And not only that, we are allowing that money to be spent in Alberta gas stations, Alberta hotels, Alberta restaurants.

That, Mr. Speaker, is leakage. That is not good for the economy of Saskatchewan. And I would think that members opposite would agree, especially when so many industries, Mr. Speaker, are struggling here at home.

Now I foreshadowed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of the many examples of this government spending Saskatchewan taxpayer dollars with out-of-province and out-of-country companies . . . And now I'm not sure. The Minister for SaskBuilds and Procurement, I can't hear him but I'm happy to read your comments into the record, sir . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You'll read them in after?

**An Hon. Member:** — No, you can read them.

**Ms. A. Young:** — I can read them?

**An Hon. Member:** — They'll be in *Hansard*. They can hear.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I ask the member to address the Chair, please.

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm not sure if the Minister for SaskBuilds and Procurement understands how *Hansard* works. He's only been here for a few years. But I guess I'll go back and check.

So let's talk about what we believe on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, because again, I hope this is a unifying 75-minute debate for the Chamber. We believe that Saskatchewan tax dollars should be used to create wealth and opportunity here in Saskatchewan. We should be hiring Saskatchewan companies, creating Saskatchewan workers, creating Saskatchewan jobs, helping Saskatchewan businesses, building made-in-Saskatchewan products.

People in Saskatchewan, regardless of their partisanship, you know what they hate, mister deputy deputy speaker? They hate seeing Alberta licence plate after Alberta licence plate after Alberta licence plate on highway maintenance projects every summer. All the while they're seeing Saskatchewan licence plates sitting outside of health clinics in Alberta while women

struggle to access basic health care here at home. People in this province, not New Democrats, not Sask Party voters, normal everyday people in this province, they know that Saskatchewan people should not have to travel to Alberta for basic treatment.

The Saskatchewan NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not interested in betraying taxpayers by cutting backroom deals with out-of-province companies and donors to benefit those companies, all the while degrading Saskatchewan economic activity.

And as I said off the top, mister deputy deputy speaker, I think this is a motion that we should be able to agree on here in this House. But unfortunately the record shows that this is a government that would rather hand contracts, give money to out-of-province or out-of-country companies and donors. They'd rather do that than support Saskatchewan workers and Saskatchewan companies.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, to get into some of these examples, they cost this province at least 60 jobs by awarding a California-based company a tire contract. Now I know the Minister of Environment has claimed . . . I believe the quote was something like, this will create dozens if not 15 jobs. But what we know for sure is that 60 jobs here in Saskatchewan have been lost by giving a company in California a contract for work that was being done here in province.

They blew billions and billions of dollars on a French company building the Regina bypass, a company whose workers will never drive on that road, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they gave sole-source contracts, sweetheart deals, and wildly inflated payments to donors based in Alberta.

But I want to go back to that bypass for a second, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because one time while having a beer I did the math. And did you know if you built, if you paved that bypass out of toonies, it would still be cheaper than what this government paid to a French company, a \$2 billion highway? Like wow. I drive on that bypass, mister deputy deputy speaker, when I'm heading from the south end out of town, and it sure is beautiful. I don't know if it's \$2 billion beautiful, mister deputy deputy speaker, but it sure is a beautiful drive because it is empty. My kids and I play "count the cars" on the bypass.

When it comes to out-of-province workers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, we've called for a Grow Your Own strategy here in health care. We believe in training, recruiting, and retaining workers here in Saskatchewan. We know that working with Saskatchewan people, investing in Saskatchewan people, supporting Saskatchewan people in investing and staying in their own communities is the best for this province. It's the best way to encourage people to stay in smaller centres, is to give them those economic opportunities.

Members opposite will know this. I represent the south end of Regina, but I love this province. I like to travel in this province, and when I get to many of the communities that members opposite represent, which are wonderful, vibrant places, you know what some of the biggest employers are? Not exclusively but some of the biggest employers in those communities are long-term care centres. They're health care facilities. They're schools. And they're the associated small businesses and supports that exist in communities where you have economic activity, where

you have those long-term generational jobs that are what make our communities rich and vibrant.

But if we continue to use public dollars in Saskatchewan to support jobs and economic activity in other provinces, that will be to the detriment of all of us, and it will be to the detriment of some of those communities that depend on us investing in them with these long-term generational job opportunities, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask, on the subject of health care, the members opposite to sit down and listen to the nurses, the health care workers in your communities. Strike up a task force involving health care workers to make sure that we can retain people, keep them in those jobs, keep them in those communities. But this government can't. They're looking abroad. They're using travel nurses, contract nurses, some of whom I know are Saskatchewan residents. But they're bringing people in because they can't retain nurses, physicians, surgeons, or specialists in this province.

This is a government that has service disruptions in at least 53 hospitals, for the most part due to lack of staffing. And this is a government that continues to ignore these clear calls. And when it comes to jobs, mister deputy deputy speaker — boy, these 75-minute debates sure do fly by when you've got a song in the heart — we know that Saskatchewan people deserve better than a last-in-the-nation job record. We believe, mister deputy deputy speaker, in supporting local businesses who hire local people, who create local opportunity, who build local wealth.

We want people investing their time, their energy, their volunteer hours, and also their money here in Saskatchewan communities. We believe in supporting local, and we know that head offices which we've seen flee the province under this government are equally as important to measuring the potency of an economy. But, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that's a leader with the worst jobs record in all of Canada, having lost 6,000 jobs — all of them full-time — last March and is responsible for stagnation and decreases outside of Saskatoon in Regina.

And with that, Mr. Speaker . . . Attention to the member from Moosomin. I would move:

That the Assembly calls on the government to stop handing public contracts to out-of-province companies connected to the government and instead prioritize the creation of jobs in Saskatchewan through hiring Saskatchewan workers and companies for public projects.

Mister deputy deputy speaker, I so move.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — It has been moved by the member for Regina University:

That the Assembly calls on the government to stop handing public contracts to out-of-province companies connected to the government and instead prioritize the creation of jobs in Saskatchewan through hiring Saskatchewan workers and companies for public projects.

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

**Mr. Friesen:** — Wow, Mr. Speaker, wow. Really, for something completely different. You know I wasn't sure where I was going to start, but the member from Regina University keeps talking about going out of province. Why are we going out of province and hiring people?

Why did Ryan Meili go out of province to hire a photographer? Why did he do that? Mr. Speaker, why did the member from Regina Walsh Acres hire a campaign manager from Toronto for over \$10,000, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Why did the candidate from Lumsden-Morse get a campaign manager in from Ottawa for \$9,000? Yeah, say one thing, the same thing, in every room. Really interesting. It doesn't appear that way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at all.

Based on this motion, I find this motion . . . When I read this I couldn't wait to be part of debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I really do believe that a few lessons are in order for the NDP opposition. Clearly it appears that the NDP opposition has no idea how contracts are awarded and really the procedure in this, and what the priority is of this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The priority of this government is to absolutely hire companies from this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In fact when given the opportunity, over 90 per cent of Saskatchewan companies get the contracts, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and overall over 80 per cent do.

Now let's talk, because the NDP opposition like to cherry-pick the numbers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so let's talk about the small amount that don't get the contracts. I'm not sure if they understand but some of the capacity of the businesses in our province, they don't have the capacity to do some of these larger projects. But of course like the NDP opposition, they normally do, they will tell you one little piece, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and leave out the whole important context about what the real story is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So for the members opposite, the majority of the contracts by far are awarded to Saskatchewan companies, and there are some contracts that are awarded to out-of-province.

Now let me ask. I kind of have a follow-up question on this. To the member for Regina University: would she like to tell our big corporations, our big construction companies that they're not allowed to work out of province? You know, it's interesting because highways — I don't know, maybe another new story for the NDP opposition — but they actually go from province to province. So when a highway's getting built . . . From the member from Lloydminster, when a highway's getting built through Lloydminster, is it a Saskatchewan company, an Alberta company, a collaboration of them both? Hard to say, but they work together on projects like this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and . . . [inaudible].

[11:30]

Here's a problem the NDP opposition never had. They didn't have the problem of infrastructure and awarding contracts, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They didn't have the problem of that. Because you know what? You know what their idea of exports was, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They exported our nurses, our doctors, our teachers of schools, and our children, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That was their idea of exports.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm trying to keep on task here but we're

talking about . . . Another one of the things that Regina University talked about was going to these trade missions. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to give them a little economy 101 on investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I really believe they need economy 101 on investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because when an organization, a government, a company makes an investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you make an investment, this is what happens on this side of government, Mr. Speaker. When we make an investment we get a return. You can talk . . . Just take one example, and that's India. Over 70 per cent increase in exports to India, Mr. Deputy Speaker. An investment. A return.

The NDP's idea of investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over \$450 million spent to out-of-province, out-of-country companies, even . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'll give you some examples, absolutely. So 90.8 million lost in a communications company in BC Telecom — 90 million, 90 million. Forty million dollars lost in another communications company, an Australian-based communications company. Apparently they like giving their money to Australia, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Austrian? Ten million dollars to Craig Wireless, a Manitoba investment company, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

They're talking about not giving money out of province, and yet here's \$450 million given to out of province. There's well over 450 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Do you want one more? Okay, \$24.7 million to an Atlanta-based dot-com start-up. Yes, it was Retx. Unbelievable. And apparently we spent \$3 million, the NDP opposition spent \$3 million on a failed company trying to compete with eBay. Do you know that one? Yes, it's awful, exactly. So talk about awarding contracts to out of province, out of country . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will take no advice from the NDP opposition.

So what did 450 million get us, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Zero. Actually I'll correct the record. It actually got us in the negative, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

When we make these investments they are proving to be a working process and program with almost 50 billion in exports last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We are on the right track. Under the NDP they didn't even have . . . They barely had 16 billion in exports, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I've already talked about what their exports were.

Job creation. Let's talk a little bit about job creation, hey? Nineteen thousand jobs last year alone, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You want to talk about job creation? Now there's an interesting kind of narrative that the NDP have been giving us. And I just want to just kind of turn the tables on this a little bit because, you know, the NDP's idea of construction was really two people taking a two-by-four. One person would hold it. The other one would pound the nails in.

What were they doing, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They were closing hospitals, closing schools. That's their idea of construction in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we don't think like that at all.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's been so much . . . She's alluded, the member from Regina University . . . And I've got to pick on her because I don't know where she cherry-picks her stats from, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But you know, just as recent as last

evening, I was with Dr. Larry Rosia from, the president of Sask Polytech . . . And again, nurse retention. They keep talking about retention, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know what the retention rate is at polytech in the nursing program? Over 95 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know what, you know what the retention rate of the Indigenous nursing students is? They have jobs right away. They don't have jobs; they have careers right away. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know what the retention rate of Indigenous nursing program is at polytech, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Over 99 per cent. Over 99 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I've talked about the president of the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, Peter Stoicheff. I sat on a board with him, a Meewasin board, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Under the NDP 20 years ago, you know what the retention rate of our nursing grads was? You know what it was? Less than 25 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yes. You know what it is now, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's well over 75 per cent, and I think we might even . . . [inaudible] . . . 80.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's interesting to be here and to listen to the opposition's, again, cherry-picked numbers from wherever they are grabbing them. I have no idea. But we choose on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, to engage with our nurses, our doctors, and to engage with the training programs at polytech.

And the thing that we are not going to do, we're not going to do what the NDP opposition does, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's retain bad ideas. We have never yet got an answer from them on how they're going to pay for the programs they want to deliver. We've never got an answer for that.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I challenge you to ask me some questions so I can continue.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's always interesting to see what the member opposite chooses to do in his final few days left in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I clearly am speaking in support of this motion here today and want to echo many of the comments that the member from Regina University made . . . Mr. Speaker, it seems we've touched a nerve over there. And perhaps the minister wants to participate in the debate or maybe some other tasks he could participate in as well, some other casework that's coming in through his office, Mr. Speaker.

But you betcha I'm happy to speak about this issue and to talk about how we need to make sure we have good-paying jobs in our province for Saskatchewan workers, and that we have a mechanism in place to make sure that these workers are factored into these decisions that are made across different ministries, Mr. Speaker.

And when we see a trend like this, we have to speak out. And we hear consistently from folks across the trades that these are concerns that they have. And that has been since I was first elected back in 2017 and when I was jobs critic at that point, Mr.

Speaker. We've been hearing about these issues and out-of-province contracts since that point.

What's become increasingly, glaringly a concern, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that many of these contracts are being handed out and that there isn't the participation in a due process, Mr. Speaker, in competing for these contracts. So while the member from Saskatoon Riversdale wants to talk to us about how it works and how the economy works and how contracts are supposed to work in some, you know, condescending fashion, Mr. Speaker, this is about the principle behind it of allowing a fair competition to take place instead of handing out these contracts to friends, donors, and insiders in the party, Mr. Speaker. So that's what we're standing up for today, and that's what we will stand up for every day in this Assembly.

It's become all too common to see Saskatchewan products not being produced in Saskatchewan, to have Saskatchewan businesses not being included in competitions, to see Alberta licence plates on highways, Mr. Speaker, working construction. You know, the member from Riversdale talked about how, you know, some of these contracts, people from our province, these companies just can't . . . You know, it's too complex for them. It's too big.

Mr. Speaker, we have folks within this province who can build our roads. We absolutely do. There's no doubt about that. Mr. Speaker, we know that people should not have to make their way to Alberta. It's just ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, what we're hearing from these folks.

And I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, these conversations about pothole filling, I don't know. This has only come out in the past few weeks. And it's almost like, again, where the government feels like they've found an old book that had some talking points from 20 years ago and they decided, oh, this book looks pretty good. Maybe we should dust it off and pull out some old talking points. Because they don't have anything to criticize today about the work that we are doing, about the work that the Leader of the Opposition is doing today. So you go ahead. You go ahead and bring out the talking points from 20 years ago and see how that resonates with people across the province, Mr. Speaker.

The Sask Party's handing money to out-of-province donors when they should be supporting Saskatchewan-based companies and workers. This has cost the province. We talk about the tire contract, Mr. Speaker, a topic of conversation that's come up over and over again in question period here with a lack of transparency, with that at least 60 jobs with the California-based company to a tire contract with zero transparency, no releasing that contract, no releasing the report that recommended these changes, Mr. Speaker.

They blew billions of dollars on a French company building the Regina bypass, a company whose workers will never drive on that road. And it included significant cost overruns, Mr. Speaker — which folks should remember in this province and people in this Assembly should certainly remember — and costly errors, Mr. Speaker. And they're giving out sole-source contracts, sweetheart deals, and wildly inflated payments to a donor based in Alberta.

And I want to talk a little bit about the health care piece of this,

Mr. Speaker, which probably doesn't surprise a lot of folks because we've had some conversations about this. But there are some really important things here that we want to chat about. So we've called for a Grow Your Own health care strategy to train, recruit, and retain health care workers in our communities.

I'm not quite sure that the member from Saskatoon Riversdale understands what we mean when we talk about retention. He specifically . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And yeah, there's no condescension on the other side for sure, Mr. Speaker. I'm not quite sure he understands what we mean when we talk about retention. I didn't know we'd have to define this for the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Allow me to define "retention," Mr. Speaker: people sticking around in their jobs. That's what we're talking about. He's talking about people being hired out of school. Yes, something we absolutely need to be proud of and there are some incredibly impressive rates coming out of Sask Poly. We will agree on that 100 per cent.

But people need to stay in this line of work, and what we see increasingly, what we saw from the SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] survey is that 85 per cent of nurses right now, 85 per cent of nurses right now have been put in a situation where patient care has not been and safety has not been upheld, Mr. Speaker. And this is a common trend. These are the same numbers we saw in 2023 from the SUN survey. They are very similar numbers to what we saw in 2022. Things aren't getting better.

As this government pats themselves on the back and gives out these expensive contracts to out-of-province donors . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Friends.

**Ms. Mowat:** — And friends, essentially putting people in a position where they're either going to wait, if they stay in Saskatchewan, or travel for basic access to health care to Alberta for a pretty penny, Mr. Speaker. The results of this are still completely lacking transparency, so we don't even know how much is being charged per procedure. We don't know how many procedures are taking place. But the numbers we have seen when it comes to mammograms, Mr. Speaker — 10 times the amount that other private clinics are charging. And without a fair process, without a request for proposal, without some transparency here, instead of just handing over this contract what we see is that taxpayer dollars are being spent in this way.

So 1 person or 10 people can get care. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that we are not getting value for money, and this government needs to be transparent with the people of this province about these sweetheart deals that they are handing out.

[11:45]

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, people don't want to travel to another province. I know that they struggle. They said we'll do 250 surgeries; oh no, now we're only doing 90 surgeries — for \$6 million, Mr. Speaker. Because they call people and they ask them, would you rather wait or are you going to drive yourself to Calgary for a surgery and pay on your own dime, Mr. Speaker, for knee or hip surgery to make this trip? And you know what people say when they call our office, which I can guarantee they

say when they call their office? No, I should not have to do that.

This is the birthplace of Medicare and we deserve better than that, Mr. Speaker. We deserve so much better. And the people of this province deserve so much better. And, Mr. Speaker, if you have any opportunity to chat with these folks, if any of the members opposite have an opportunity to chat with these folks, often elderly people who are struggling, struggling with quality of life issues, struggling with mobility issues when you're waiting for a knee or hip surgery, Mr. Speaker, these are not the same demographics of folks who are like, sure, I'll just hop in my car and drive to another province to get my surgery. There are significant barriers to making this happen. It's creating a two-tiered system of health care, Mr. Speaker, and it's not delivering results. We still have the worst wait times for knee and hip surgeries in Canada, Mr. Speaker. This isn't about ideology. This is about results.

And we will look at this in a pragmatic way any day of the week and say, what value are we getting for these contracts. And, Mr. Speaker, that is the bare minimum we should be requesting from our government, that we should be expecting from our government who is entrusted to spend our public dollars wisely and is absolutely shameful in how they are handing out these contracts . . .

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I did get a haircut, yes. I just want to say I don't think that this debate is about out-of-province health care contracts. Like, that's a human resources issue.

I know that my constituents, I know that the constituents of all the people on this side of the House are extremely happy that this government is trying their best to reduce surgical wait times. They're not so concerned where it's done, how it's done. They want to know that we're working for them to get these procedures looked after.

But, Mr. Speaker, I just want to maybe address some of the, not inaccuracies, but maybe lack of knowledge on the other side of actually how contracts work. We are bound by something called the Canadian internal free trade agreement. And this is called CFTA [Canadian Free Trade Agreement]. And I know there's two jobs critics over there that they should know their file and know what this is. This means that we have to allow contractors from other parts of Canada, other provinces, to bid on contracts in Saskatchewan. That also in turn allows Saskatchewan contractors to bid on contracts in other provinces. This is what we talked about last week in our debate — trade, how trade has lifted us out of poverty like no other system that's ever been developed before.

But this is about political philosophy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I want to read again what I said last week, and that is one . . . Saskatchewan Party's guiding principles. The first principle, if you were to read them, and that's economic growth, job creation through the private sector, not government, as the engine of the economy, Mr. Speaker. And maybe we'll just dive a little bit deeper on that and we'll maybe talk about this.

With the private sector, it is efficiency and innovation that is the basis for the private sector. That's how they operate, Mr. Speaker. Private sector's companies operate in a competitive environment where efficiency and innovation are crucial for survival. That means that they're quick. They're nimble. They have to respond to market signals, Mr. Speaker. This is the invisible hand that we talked about last week.

Mr. Speaker, another thing that we'll talk about is profit motive. Now profit motive of private companies means that they're constantly seeking ways to streamline processes, adapt to new technologies, and to remain innovative and to remain competitive, Mr. Speaker. And that you can see in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is full of companies that are innovative and respond quickly to the market. They see a need and they fill it, Mr. Speaker. This drive for efficiency often leads to job creations as companies expand operations, develop new products or services, enter new markets, thereby stimulating economic growth, Mr. Speaker.

And I can just name so many examples, even in the constituency I have the great fortune to represent. I think of Seed Hawk, for example, where under NDP governments, the agriculture industry in this province was on its . . . it was getting its last rites basically, Mr. Speaker. The only way for them to survive was they had to be innovative, come up with a new product, a new way to do what they were doing so they could hope someday to make a profit. And they're still dealing with the Wheat Board at that time, for example, which is something I know that the members opposite supported and probably still do support.

But it was this need that they filled that created innovation, created an innovative product, and now, Mr. Speaker, they've sold that company to a foreign company who now has operations here in Canada. That's new money coming into our economy. That's not recycled money like you'd see under a socialist system. That is new money coming into our system, and that new money is creating jobs. I think there's hundreds of jobs in that part of the world now that were never there before because of the innovation of actually two very good friends of mine.

But if we look at the public sector, the public sector also has a role to play, Mr. Speaker. The role of the public sector is stability and social services. The public sector . . .

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Point of order.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Okay, what is your point of order?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite just called us socialists. If I can't call the government conservatives, then he should not be able to call us socialists, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I take this under advisory and will . . . Speaker will let you know by tomorrow.

**Mr. Bonk:** — Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, I said under a socialist system. Mr. Speaker, the public sector plays a vital role in providing stability and essential services to society such as health

care, education, infrastructure, and public safety. Mr. Speaker, this is extremely important and I know that all members of the House would agree that we have to provide our citizens with the essentials like the education, health care, and the infrastructure such as roads and our train tracks and our transport systems to get our products to market, as well as public safety, Mr. Speaker.

Investment in the public sector can create jobs directly and improve societal well-being by addressing infrastructure needs and providing essential services to citizens. But without market forces, these systems tend to expand as we've seen. But, Mr. Speaker, government policies have a direct role in facilitating job creation. And policy matters, Mr. Speaker.

Government policies and regulations significantly influence job creation in both sectors. In the private sector, policies that foster a favourable business environment such as tax incentives for investment and deregulation can encourage job growth. Similarly public job sector creation can be influenced by government spending priorities as well, such as infrastructure projects or social welfare programs. And these are also very much needed, Mr. Speaker. And I don't think you'll find an argument on this side that we need both public and private, but finding the right balance between private sector-led growth and public sector intervention is essential for job creation and economic development.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to go back just for a second to the Saskatchewan Party guiding principle: economic growth and job creation through the private sector, not government as the engine of the economy. And like I said before, if you were to change those two words and then place them in different order — private sector and government — you would have exactly the opposite. You could explain our two parties, Mr. Speaker. We believe in the private sector as the driver of the economy and they believe in the public sector as the driving the economy.

And Mr. Speaker, I'll just read something. I know I always like to read a little bit of Milton Friedman in. I think he had a lot of very valuable insights. And one of the things he said is:

If a private organization makes a mistake, if it does something badly, it will lose money and it will go out of business. If a public organization does things badly, and invariably makes a mistake, it will be expanded. It will be expanded because it will say we just didn't have enough resources. Or it will be left to stand and another organization will be created to do the job that it was intended to do.

Then he goes further and he says:

I have never argued that government initiatives are not as good as private initiatives. The problem is not in what the government tries but in the absence of any mechanism for recognizing error.

Mr. Speaker, we have faith in the people of Saskatchewan. We know that they are the job creators. They are the backbone of our economy, Mr. Speaker. And if you look back in a little bit of history here and you see what happened in 2008, KPMG was contracted to review Crown investments made outside of Saskatchewan by the previous NDP government. They lost \$463 million . . . or they invested \$463 million; they didn't

actually lose that much. They lost more because they had a negative return of minus 15 per cent, Mr. Speaker. These captains of industry there who are always telling us how to spend the taxpayers' money, Mr. Speaker, they don't have a very good track record of it.

But I want to go back a little bit. George Orwell said something really interesting. He said, "Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them." Now that is the opposition in a nutshell, Mr. Speaker. They support the carbon tax. Half the members don't support the carbon tax. They attend a Trudeau-Singh campaign school, but no, they weren't there.

Mr. Speaker, you have to be straight with the Saskatchewan people. They just want genuine . . . They want authenticity, Mr. Speaker. That's what the people want. They want you to do what you say you are going to do. And as the former premier Brad Wall would say, they want you to leave it a little bit better than you found it, Mr. Speaker. These are what the Saskatchewan people want. They want us to work hard for them. They want us to spend their money wisely, Mr. Speaker.

And with that, I will not be supporting the motion put forward by the member from Regina University.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

**Mr. Clarke:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've got a motion in front of us today calling on the government to stop handing public contracts to out-of-province companies connected to the government and instead prioritize the creation of jobs in Saskatchewan through hiring Saskatchewan workers and companies for public projects.

You know, this seems like a no-brainer, Mr. Speaker. It's hard to think that we can't agree on this motion in the House today when the government should always be prioritizing Saskatchewan people and making sure Saskatchewan people are getting ahead.

This is a government that we've seen in power for 17 years, and for a long time they have draped the Saskatchewan flag around them and said they are in it for Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan companies, Saskatchewan economy. And yet — and yet, Mr. Speaker — there is a list, a long list of companies and examples of places where this government has chosen to export jobs out of this province and send them to another province, another part of the country, and even out of this country.

We only have to look as far as the last few weeks. We could talk about Shercom, a Saskatchewan-based company taking tires, recycling those tires in Saskatchewan, creating jobs, doing environmental work to recycle this substance and produce a product that can be used on driveways and playgrounds all across the province.

This is a Saskatchewan success story and yet — and yet, Mr. Speaker — this government decides without letting that company know, that Saskatchewan company know that they're doing an RFP [request for proposal] to split up the province so that there's two sections of the province where there are tire recyclers now.

And as a result, boom, 70 Saskatchewan jobs gone, just gone.

And here we are asking questions about this because there's a lot of, there's a lack of transparency around this whole situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We asked for the business case as to why the province should split the tire recycling into two portions. We'd like to know what was the business case. Ah, we got the report, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but surprisingly, or not surprisingly perhaps, it was completely redacted, meaning that all of the text regarding why this decision was made was blanked out. So there's nothing for us to learn about why this decision was made. And so what's the end result, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Job loss in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan people lost jobs to a California-based company. Help me, help me understand how this makes sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[12:00]

Another example that goes a little bit back in time, 2013. Let's talk about hunting and fishing licences, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is a service that used to be provided in this province, providing Saskatchewan people with Saskatchewan jobs, good-paying jobs, you know, driving the economy. And yet, RFP, oh, those jobs are gone, Mr. Deputy Speaker, out to a Nashville-based company, Tennessee company that is based out of Texas.

So this was, I mean, this is from question period back on April 30th, 2013. This is from Cathy Sproule, one of our members, asking the government, and I'll quote here:

As the minister indicated, the Sask Party's new online hunting, fishing, and trapping licence system is being run by an American company. So people in Saskatchewan are clear, that means a summer fishing and camping trip means registering a campsite online with an Ontario company and a fishing licence with an American company. So much for Saskatchewan first, Mr. Speaker.

The licensing company currently runs their call centre out of Tennessee. If someone wants to purchase a licence over the phone, they must call the Nashville-based number and pay a fee some are calling the Tennessee convenience fee.

Mr. Speaker, why would the Sask Party government use a United States-based system to sell licences, and why would they charge a fee for someone to order the licence over the phone?

This is an example that goes back over a decade, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think demonstrating a habit of exporting Saskatchewan jobs out of this province and out of this country.

I mean, I'm critic for Rural and Remote Health, and we hear a lot from folks across the province around the state of health care. And there's a lot of examples of again the same scenario coming from this Sask Party government of exporting jobs. Linens, linens in hospitals, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Surely to goodness there must be a company in Saskatchewan that can do the laundry from hospitals in this province. No, they are sent, our linens out of hospitals are sent to Alberta, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They are sent to Alberta. Help it make sense.

Had a call from a constituent who was in getting liver dialysis —

is that right? Liver dialysis — and the linens had been stalled coming in. The shipment of linens had been stalled coming in because of a storm, so folks who were getting dialysis were sitting without blankets, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because those linens hadn't made it from Edmonton. So again another example of this Sask Party government . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's true. I was told this by a Saskatchewan resident . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's got to be true. Thank you. I appreciate that.

You know one of the things that we've talked about is making sure that we are supporting and growing the Saskatchewan economy. We need to be hiring Saskatchewan workers, growing Saskatchewan businesses, and building made-in-Saskatchewan products. We want to make sure that when we're paying, using public dollars, that we are supporting Saskatchewan companies and keeping those dollars in this province instead of exporting jobs out of this province day after day after day, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, this government talks about, you know, we need . . . They talk about the pride that they have in the growth of the economy under their watch, and yet this Sask Party government and the Premier has the worst jobs record in all of Canada. In March we saw a decrease of 6,000 jobs, and we saw 91 local businesses lost in the last year.

Now when we bring these concerns up to the government, they dismiss them. They think that, you know, we are making this stuff up. Of course we're using statistics from Stats Canada. We're making sure that our numbers are accurate and real. But we bring in folks, real Saskatchewan people who are struggling, and they come here because they want the government to listen. Whether it's education, whether it's health care, whether it's the cost of living, people are struggling in this province and they're being failed by this government.

Just earlier this week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had folks in, two mothers who have autistic children, you know, and we outlined the case of how those kids are being let down. And you know what this government does? They double down on their message that they're spending record amounts of money in education. Yet here are real Saskatchewan people, real families who are struggling, struggling to get the support that their children need. Those are real issues, Mr. Speaker. They deserve to be respected. They deserve to be heard.

And it would be lovely, it would be lovely for this government to show a bit of humility and acknowledge that there is a problem, but they never say that there's a problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We want to support, we want to support Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan companies, Saskatchewan businesses. That's our promise, and we will always do that.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Mr. Speaker, always happy to get on my feet and enter into debate today. You know, my colleagues did a great job of talking about our position on the issues, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I want to use the time that I'm allotted today and just talk about the industrial work sector and how actually things get built. And you know, I'm truly hoping that the members opposite will listen and actually learn a little bit today.

Now 20-odd years ago I was working up at Prince Albert, was one of my very first industrial jobs, at the Prince Albert pulp mill. There was a large contingent of British Columbia people, tradesmen, working there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then after that job completed, we were off to Hudson Bay. Weyerhaeuser was building an orientated strand board plant there. It's actually probably one of my favourite jobs because I started that job and there was absolutely nothing there but a bare field, and 14 months later they were actually making chipboard. It was very interesting. Their main market was being shipped to Japan from that plant there.

After that went to Regina, to Co-op Refinery, worked there. There was a ton of tradesmen from Manitoba working on that job, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then things got very slow in Saskatchewan and the majority of Saskatchewan tradesmen went to work at Fort McMurray. It was booming at the time, and there was a lot of work in Brandon at the liquid fertilizer plant.

Then in 2007 something changed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't know if I can put a finger on it. I can't really remember. Ah, it was a new political party, led by Brad Wall, that had the privilege of forming government. New ideas, new enthusiasm, and newfound pride among Saskatchewan people, businesses, and industries. Those following years were very good with projects at Belle Plaine, two canola plants in Yorkton — both are now doubling in size — a large expansion at the Co-op Refinery, K+S Potash. Billions of dollars of investments, all employing people from all across Canada, and those were good money jobs, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It's important . . . I just really want to put it on the record here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The American economy at that time was in a downward spiral due to the housing bubble, and we withstood all of that outside pressure in this province here due to the strength of our natural resource economy.

And something else happened around that time too. It was around like that 2015. I had my first opportunity to actually work with some Albertan tradesmen in the province. And what did . . . Oh, I remember. Rachel Notley had the privilege of forming government in Alberta, and I got the chance to work with a lot of Albertan welders.

Now I just wanted to just provide some historical reference just so they know how fluid construction labour is all across the country. Workers go to the jobs. And any policies brought forward by governments to prevent this is narrow-minded and does not take into account the big picture. Certain industries, they expand and they contract due to global circumstances. And it's government's role to understand this and bring forward policy to support industry and their workers, not hinder it.

Also it's critical to understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, employers like hiring local for the simple fact it saves them money. Subsistence and travel are very expensive, and they always try and hire local as much as possible. Nothing would hurt our economy more than some narrow-minded protectionist policy that — heaven forbid — the NDP Party would ever bring forward if they had the privilege of forming government.

While we're talking about history, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's look at the NDP Party record. I want to read a quote into the record:



Crown Corporations minister Ken Cheveldayoff today announced the province's Crown corporations are moving to a Saskatchewan-first investment policy in light of results of a KPMG study that showed many of the previous governments' investments have lost money.

"We contracted KPMG to review Crown investments made outside Saskatchewan by previous governments," Cheveldayoff said. "Over time, there's been almost half a billion dollars invested with a target return of 22 per cent. Alarming the actual overall rate of return on these investments was a negative 15 per cent."

And this is from 2008, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it really shows how the previous NDP Party government totally mismanaged all of our Crown corporations.

Let's look at some more. From 2001 to 2005, SaskTel invested \$70 million in something called Navigata. Navigata — like I don't even know what that is. I googled it. I googled it. It wasn't very much help, but I did find out they have 49 followers on Twitter. So that's 70 million bucks, 49 followers on Twitter.

In 2005 they wrote off 15 million. And just for the members opposite, when you write something off that means you lost the money. From 1994 to '96, SaskTel invested 16 million in NST Network Services to build fibre optics for cable companies in the United States. By 1997 they'd lost all the money and closed the company. 2000, Craig Wireless . . . [inaudible] . . . invested 10 million in Craig Wireless. In two years the company was totally worthless and was written off as a total loss.

Oh, I'm running low on time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. 2007 when the NDP . . . In 2007 there was 400 cell towers across the province. I want to talk about our record, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Today there's over 1,000 cell towers in Saskatchewan. Fibre internet is available to over 300,000 homes and businesses in the province, and 99 per cent of Saskatchewan people have access to wireless and internet services. The 2020 election platform, the NDP Party platform had exactly zero investment in rural connectivity — zero.

Now let's talk about something very quickly here that the members opposite don't like talking about but I really do. Let's talk about pipelines. Between 1999 and 2001, the former government through SaskEnergy put \$12 million in a company in Chile that delivers natural gas, and after 10 years had an incredibly weak rate of return. I really wish they would support pipelines across Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

On this side, SaskEnergy purchased \$35 million worth of pipe at Evraz. And I know the members opposite don't understand, but Evraz really doesn't produce much pipe that SaskEnergy needs. Evraz builds a lot of large-diameter pipe, and SaskEnergy really doesn't use much of that.

[12:15]

I'm almost out of time, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Order, order.

**Mr. Keisig:** — I'm almost out of time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I have to get a couple last things on the record. My seatmate often talks about the Saskatchewan Party guiding principles. And the first one — my colleague talked about it — economic growth and job creation through the private sector. Each and every member on this side supports that idea wholeheartedly, but any policies that they bring forward that could potentially interfere with us trading with our nation of Canada can never be supported.

You know, if they brought forward their protectionist policy, then all of my friends working in British Columbia at the Kitimat LNG plant, are they going to be removed from their job? What about all the boilermakers working right now in Ontario at Darlington? Protectionist labour policies have never worked across this nation. I have no clue why the NDP would support that. The NDP Party does not support workers, it does not support businesses, and it sure doesn't support the province. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — The 65-minute period has expired. The 10-minute question-and-answer period will begin. I recognize the member from Cannington.

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Recently the Leader of the Opposition said, the way to earn trust is to say the same thing in every room. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's fact-check. Let's fact-check that a bit. In this room they condemn any out-of-province contractors, but in their backrooms as most recently as this past August, the member for Walsh Acres paid over \$10,000 to a union from Toronto to run his campaign.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Walsh Acres just said we need to be hiring Saskatchewan workers. To the member from Walsh Acres: why didn't you hire someone from Saskatchewan?

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

**Mr. Clarke:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My campaign manager lives and works in Regina, so I thank the member for the question.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Earlier we saw the Minister for SaskBuilds and Procurement trying to get into the debate, but I'm going to put my question to the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood. But maybe the minister would like to listen up.

Since you brought up the mill in P.A., to the member opposite, do you have some information that you could share with us about when that mill is going to be open?

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't have any current information on the mill, but I can tell the members of the Chamber that this province supports all of our industries. We support our forestry industry. We support the OSB [oriented strand board] plants. We support the pulp industry. And we will

always stand up for Saskatchewan's interests. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Cannington.

**Mr. D. Harrison:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the confusion and delusion continues on that side of the House. And the members talk about value for money and yet condemn out-of-province contracts. But in the 2020 election campaign the NDP spent half of their budget — \$500,000 — on out-of-province consultants.

To the member from Saskatoon Fairview: why don't you hire good, quality Saskatchewan people?

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, these questions are out of order as they relate to party business, but we're not afraid to answer any questions, Mr. Speaker. My campaign manager was from out of province and now he lives here, so I guess I brought someone to this province, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

**Mr. Clarke:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood: does he have a single decent explanation for why sole-source contracts are offered to out-of-province companies when local companies could do the same work?

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't know where they're getting this information of the sole-source contracts. There's an RFP process that is very public. It's very open. It's very transparent. The Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement runs a very organized ship, and we support Saskatchewan businesses all across the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. B. McLeod:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP say that the best way to build trust is to say the same thing in every room. Well if that's the case, how can they criticize out-of-province contractors and private investment into our province yet also solicit out-of-province companies for \$2,500 tickets to the leader's exclusive cocktail party? To the member from . . .

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I will ask the member not to ask the party question. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, since the members opposite seem confused, I do have additional copies of the orders in council if they want to look at them here. Two orders in council were used to authorize spending to award sole-source contracts of unknown amounts for out-of-province breast cancer care and knee and hip surgery, Mr. Speaker. I've got them here if they want to see them.

To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: why won't you be straight with the people of the province? What are you trying to hide?

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

**Mr. Friesen:** — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we are very proud of our Health ministers that have worked so hard, even the former Health minister, on the most ambitious HHR, health human resources action plan in the country, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it is proving results with retention. And I'd mentioned this is in my speech — and if they would've been listening, Mr. Deputy Speaker — over 95 per cent of nurses from polytech are staying here. Over 99 per cent of Indigenous are staying here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this side of the House we care for the people of this province, and we are going to get them the care they need whatever it takes.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. Talk about out-of-province contractors. How about out-of-country under the NDP government? The NDP government of the day invited Al Gore to Saskatchewan for a closed-door speaking event, had SaskTel pay his \$125,000 speaking fee, and now they're soliciting out-of-province companies \$2,500 for parties.

To the member for Fairview, Saskatoon Fairview: do you support your leader soliciting out-of-province companies for \$2,500 cocktail parties?

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I caution the member, do not ask the question on a party basis. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what decade we're in anymore. I don't even know what leader they're talking about. It's very clear that they have nothing to criticize about the NDP of the here and now, Mr. Speaker. We'll give them an opportunity to ask some more questions, but this is embarrassing, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. A. Young:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Now I heard the member from Riversdale say that the reason some of these contracts are going out of province to their friends and donors is because Saskatchewan companies, Saskatchewan businesses just can't compete.

But my question's to the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood. Does he understand what a sole-source contract is?

And if yes, why would the government allow a tender to go out that specifically excluded Shercom, which is manufacturing products right here in Saskatchewan?

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question to the member opposite: does she understand what an . . .

[Interjections]

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Order, please.

**Mr. Keisig:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sometimes there is only one person, one specific industry that bids, a sole-source contract. But the vast majority of them are RFPs that go out. People bid. It's a very open, very transparent policy. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. The member from Saskatoon Fairview, my colleague from Saskatoon, invited some criticism, so we're happy to indulge her. To the member from Saskatoon Fairview: let's talk about some out-of-province investments. I know the members opposite don't like to talk about their record, but let's give it a try.

The NDP invested \$70 million in Navigata, a Toronto-based company; \$16 million in NST Network Services, a US [United States]-based company; \$7 million in Gas Sur, Chile-based; \$25 million in Retx, the NDP invested through the Crowns with a target rate of return of 22 per cent. The actual rate of return was minus 15 per cent.

Does that member opposite think these investments were good for the people of Saskatchewan?

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what year we're in. I don't know what decade we're in. I don't know who the leader is. Mr. Speaker, they have nothing to criticize today.

And here's the problem; they've been in government for 17 years, Mr. Speaker. And we're talking about the record today, and they have absolutely nothing to say to defend their own record today with the people who are sitting at that bench today, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker. It's embarrassing, and it's very clear that they have absolutely no legitimate . . .

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

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

### Motion No. 3 — Government Policies to Attract Capital Investment

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

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am the last thing between now and the end of session when it comes to private members' debates, so you're going to have to bear with me, I'm afraid. So first off I would like to put on the record that I'm seconding the motion presented by the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on Monday and Tuesday this week, I and many of my colleagues attended various parts of a fascinating conference put on by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce called Food, Fuel, Fertilizer Global Summit. It was truly an incredible lineup of who's who in the business sector operating in Saskatchewan. Not just industry players but government, business representatives attended from really around the globe to hear and share their stories of business development and expansion in this wee province.

Saskatchewan isn't just a supplier; it's a symbol of reliability and sustainability. And that story was told over and over again at the conference from leaders in the uranium industry, the potash industry, the ag processing industry. And that conference was a time to position Saskatchewan as a compelling investment destination and a hub for global brands seeking to contribute to a very sustainable and a thriving ecosystem. And it was a great opportunity to share Saskatchewan's story.

But do you know who was missing on the agenda? An angry and out-of-touch NDP opposition. You know, unfortunately the daily nauseous drivel of negative news, craftily curated negative statistics and data from members from Regina University, Saskatoon Eastview, Saskatoon Meewasin, you know what, wasn't on the agenda and would not have been tolerated by the participants in the summit.

What was on the agenda was the pride and the promise of a number of our business leaders talking about our province's unparalleled resources and the sustainable practices in how they're able to meet global demands and position Western Canada as a prime investment hub. These business leaders recognize that with a strong economy you build strong services.

In fact the general theme running throughout most of the conference, and definitely on Tuesday, was a statement by two major industry players in this province indicating if — and I say if — there was ever a political change in this province, they would have to re-evaluate their future capital expenditure plans for this province. Two companies that have invested over a number of billions of dollars, current capital investment, and they publicly stated that if this government changed, their plans are going to change.

Obviously they recognize that the no-development-plan NDP

opposition cannot be trusted with running the economy of this province. This is an NDP opposition that so far their economic election platform is to close every international trade office that we currently operate in the world and do business by fax and handwritten letters through Canada Post.

[12:30]

Oh, platform number two, I forgot. Platform number two is to stop fixing roads because they're getting rid of the gas tax. And I'm sure platform number three will be the full implementation of the Leap Manifesto. This is definitely an angry and out-of-touch opposition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan's network of nine international trade and investment offices have been instrumental in connecting the province to global markets, which in turn benefits the local business community. With new investments flowing in and doors to international markets being opened, the province is well positioned to provide the fuel, fertilizer, and critical minerals that this world needs. Private capital investment is projected to reach 14.1 billion in 2024, an increase of 14.4 per cent over 2023, which is the highest anticipated percentage increase in Canada. And these numbers are not the numbers that the member from Regina University spouts off in hope of attracting business.

Fun fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker: as of October 2023, Saskatchewan exported \$41.3 billion in goods. Over \$1 billion in goods were exported to the Andean region, the Asian region, Brazil, China, the EU, India, MENA [Middle East and North Africa], the US. In 2023 the Government of Saskatchewan international trade office network facilitated over 22 trade and investment missions.

Our presence in Dubai at COP28 [Conference of the Parties 28] was a huge success, as indicated by the number of companies, agencies, and institutions that were included in the trip. MOUs [memorandum of understanding] regarding SMR [small modular reactor]; development with companies like BrewNature, Black Fox Distillery, to name just a few, came back with successful sales and contracts made. Local ag producer Kristjan Ebert got the message out on how sustainably produced our egg products are. The federal government even came by for a visit at our booth.

There's a long list of successes from literally every trade office that we have opened that support clean electricity, pulse crop use development, our education institutions, value-added crop processors, and skilled recruitment that had been facilitated out of many of our trade offices. Maybe the NDP opposition would like to talk to a few about their successes. I have their cell numbers if they're interested.

You know, these are industries and institutions that this federal Liberal-NDP coalition government is on a mission to eliminate. And by full association, this provincial NDP opposition, by their support of the ill-conceived federal policies, are going to and will crash this economy.

I think I'm probably unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the most disappointed personally by the rhetoric chirping I hear daily from the member from Saskatoon Meewasin who joined me on a trip to India and experienced first-hand the value of having boots on the ground, eyeball-to-eyeball conversation with business and

political leaders on their soil in their offices. And that's what international trade offices do, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If we do not have a strong economy, we cannot continue to make the significant investments that we're making in classrooms, care, and communities. And that strong economy is allowing us to provide record increases in education funding, record increases in health funding, and record increases in municipal revenue sharing that all of our municipalities depend on.

Since we've been provided an opportunity to form government, the private sector capital investment has been in the multi-billions of dollars. And all the previous NDP had attempted to be in business by nationalizing the oil and gas sector, the potash sector, they're losing over \$200 million — as we've talked about quite often now — in out-of-country and out-of-continent ill-conceived investment schemes. Their economic record is not one that instills a lot of confidence in their leadership abilities.

And that opposition bench that is going into the next election does not instill any confidence in our business sector. I know. I hear from them daily in my office in Melville-Saltcoats asking if these NDP are really for real. None of these NDP passively owned sector invested in their communities, in their operations, in their people, until those businesses came back to the private sector during this government's tenure.

The potash industry had minimal investment under the NDP and resulted in no entrants coming into this province until that government changed. And once it changed, investment flowed in the billions by Mosaic, BHP, K+S, and Nutrien. However there are dark clouds on the horizon as the NDP economic geniuses like Eric Cline, Erin Weir, and this NDP opposition indicated if they were in government — and I hear it right now from across the way — if they were in government they would insist that these Saskatchewan-economic-supporting companies like these potash companies need to pay more.

Basing their flawed research from one year, one year of extraordinary profits generated in 2022 — which was considered a supercycle in the potash industry, which was a once-in-a-decade outcome from unexpected and dramatic world events — their ideologically based views fail to recognize that the global potash market is fundamentally unpredictable. When potash prices rise, so do the taxes paid by producers. The momentary upswings help producers survive the prolonged downswings.

Huge capital dollars are required every year to keep producing, and those spends go directly back into this province's economy. And now, because of this federal Liberal-NDP coalition government, these companies are required to spend even more to decarbonize in this province. Saskatchewan producers face fierce competition for market share, and it's only growing.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, another fact overlooked by these economic geniuses is that getting Saskatchewan's potash to market is by far the most challenging and costly route in the world. In fact it costs producers more than \$97 a tonne Canadian to ship from Canada by rail into southeast US, more than it does for a Russian producer to land product in that same location.

If this NDP opposition is allowed to carry out their extreme taxation strategies, they would effectively end Saskatchewan's potash industry as we know it, and with it the high-paying stable

jobs, massive economic and social impacts that these industries provide. And it is quite evident that this NDP opposition has learned a lot at that federal Liberal-NDP campaign school, including how to implement failed economic policy that would have significant negative effects on rural Saskatchewan, an area that they think they want to get into.

And that is why I second the motion put forward by the member from Moosomin and will re-emphasize that this Assembly denounces the provincial opposition and the federal NDP-Liberal coalition government for the lack of support for policies that support economic investment and increased trade for our incredible province.

I adjourn debate.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Thank you. I would move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair of Committees:** — Carried. This House stays adjourned until Monday, 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:38.]

# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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

**Hon. Lori Carr**  
Minister of Highways

**Hon. Jeremy Cockrill**  
Minister of Education

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

**Hon. Bronwyn Eyre**  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

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

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Finance

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

**Hon. Everett Hindley**  
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**Hon. Gene Makowsky**  
Minister of Social Services

**Hon. David Marit**  
Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for  
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation  
Minister Responsible for  
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**Hon. Tim McLeod**  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,  
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

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Minister Responsible for the Status of Women  
Minister Responsible for  
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**Hon. Christine Tell**  
Minister of Environment

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**  
Minister of Advanced Education