



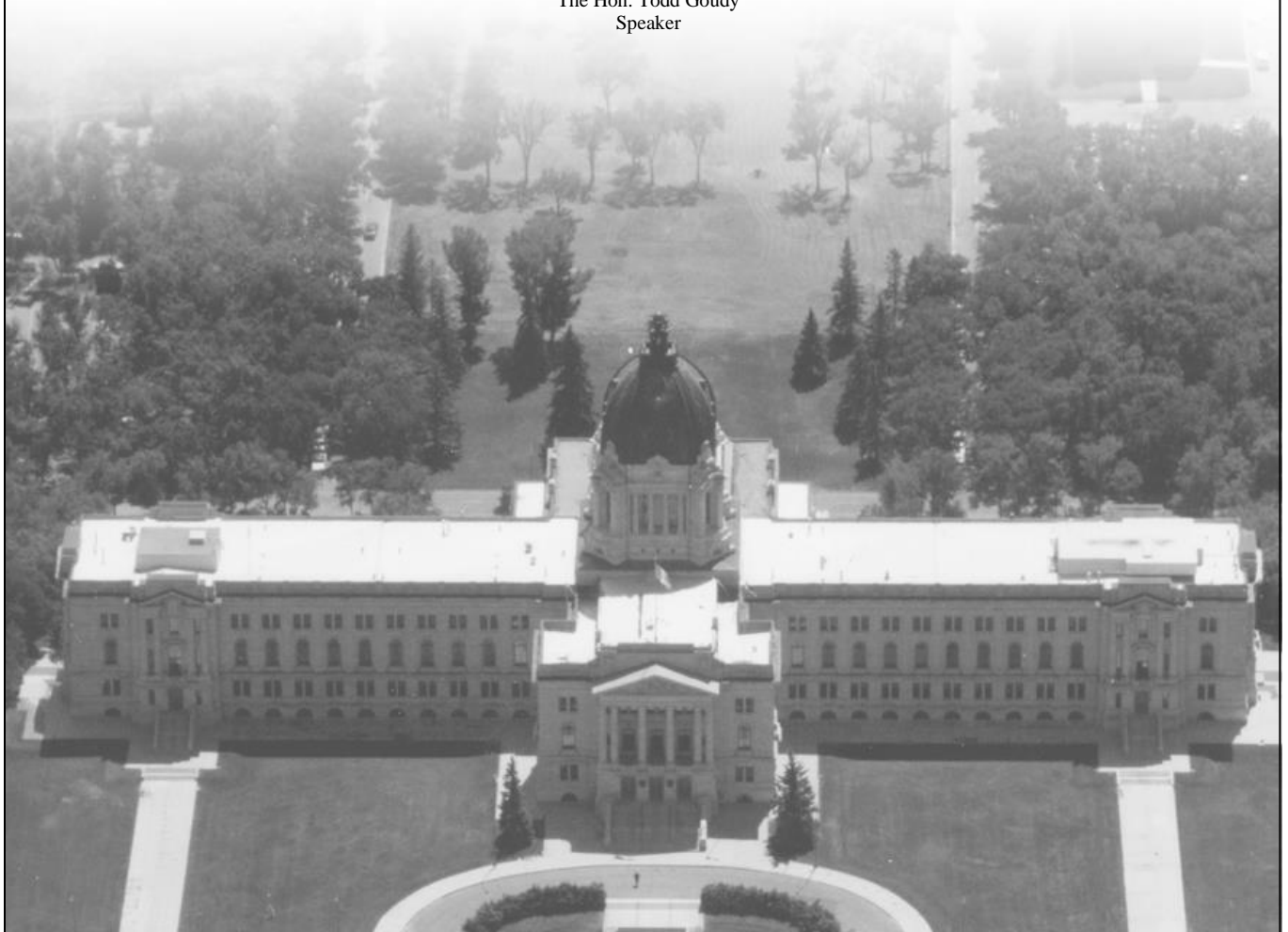
FIRST SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Todd Goudy
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
1st Session — 30th Legislature

Lieutenant Governor — His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, S.O.M., M.S.M.

Speaker — Hon. Todd Goudy
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Carla Beck

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Standings

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 34; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 27

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

Speaker Goudy: — Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I would like to make a very special introduction here today. I think I'll be followed by a number of members as well.

But I introduce to everyone in this Assembly today a man that needs no introduction in this Assembly or in the municipal world, and that's Mr. Sinclair Harrison. Or Sinc, as he's known, has joined us here today with many friends and family members, Mr. Speaker. No stranger to the municipal world. No stranger to receiving appropriate accolades and awards at the provincial level, at the federal level, and has really been, I would say a hallmark of the voice for rural Saskatchewan for decades and decades in this province, Mr. Speaker.

So more members will have more to say — I believe there's a member's statement forthcoming — but I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Sinc Harrison, his family, and his friends to his Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Mount Royal.

Trent Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's a tremendous honour to rise to celebrate the service of Sinclair Harrison, an incredible legacy in this province. An incredible leader for the entire province, certainly in rural Saskatchewan, incredible leader on matters like transportation for many, many decades in this province.

So to Sinc Harrison, we say thank you so very much for your life of leadership and service to your province, and I ask all members to join with me in celebrating that service and welcoming him and his family here today.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming Sinc and his family to the Legislative Assembly. I've known Sinc for over 30 years now. I first got to know him through municipal work. We sat on a number of boards together. I sat on the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] board of directors when Sinc was president. Chaired that board. Learned a great deal from him. Sat on the RMAA [Rural Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan] board together.

Mr. Speaker, that working relationship quickly turned to friendship, Mr. Speaker, and it included our spouses: my wife, Bonnie; Sinc's wife, Gail, who has since passed away, Mr.

Speaker. And then it spread to family members. I know the entire family. I particularly would like to mention Paula and Carlin, who we've got to be good friends with. And it became, as I'd said, a friendship. It included birthdays and weddings and anniversaries and a lot of golf trips.

I have one particular fond memory of a golf trip, Mr. Speaker. It was a late night. It involved Sinc and I and Paula. And it was the summer of 2006. I remember that because Paula and Sinc were expressing vehemently to me their lack of understanding of why I still hadn't filed my papers to run for the Sask Party nomination, Mr. Speaker. I can vividly recall the exact phrase that Sinc used, but I won't repeat it in here, Mr. Speaker, because you would admonish me for using unparliamentary language.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have them here, and I'm also delighted that once question period's over, and some proceedings in the House, they'll be coming to my office and I'll have the privilege to present Sinc with the King's Coronation Medal. Well deserved, my friend. Look forward to seeing you shortly.

Everybody please join me in welcoming Sinc Harrison to his Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. David Marit: — Mr. Speaker, I ask for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Hon. David Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I do want to take this opportunity also to introduce Sinc Harrison.

Sinc is a mentor to me — was — and probably put me in the front row of this Assembly, as he well knows. But I have to talk about what this man did for rural Saskatchewan that a lot of people don't know.

This man, along with the president of SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] at the time, had to fight off a decision made by the then government in the year 2000-2001 on amalgamation. And Sinc and then the president of SUMA, Mike Badham, negotiated an agreement with the then premier. And it was that process that saved the municipal structure in rural Saskatchewan to what it is today.

Another thing that Sinc has also done, or was part of, was the whole process of the tax loss compensation to municipalities with the TLE [treaty land entitlement] compensation to the First Nations. That's an agreement that no other jurisdiction in Canada has, and probably no other jurisdiction in Canada ever will have. So on behalf of rural Saskatchewan, Sinc, thank you for that.

But I'm not done, Mr. Speaker, because there's more. Sinc Harrison was also one of the founding members of FCM [Federation of Canadian Municipalities] rural forum. And along with his colleagues from Manitoba and Alberta, I believe at that

time Sinc, they founded rural forum at the executive table of FCM, which I was proud to serve as Chair for about four years as well.

So on behalf of all of rural Saskatchewan, on behalf of me and my wife, Lois, you know very well . . . And I would say something, Paula, but I'm not going to say it. You know what I would probably say but I won't. Our families have become very close and we're good friends. And I ask everybody to welcome Sinc to this, his Legislative Assembly.

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

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take a moment to acknowledge the lone observer in the east gallery, my constituency assistant Avery Beaudin. Those of you who sat late last night and had an opportunity to hear me provide my response to the Throne Speech heard me speak about Avery. So I'll keep it short.

I just want to say thank you to Avery for the support she offers me and also the good people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. The humour and lightness she brings in her approach, which is not to be confused with the depth of service that she offers.

The other thing that you would have heard me talk about last night is unfortunately, yesterday we had some folks into the office; they needed to use the phone. One of them — sneaky bugger — took the keys out of Avery's jacket and her car was stolen from our office parking lot. What I neglected to do yesterday was put the make and model on the record. So I would ask the good people of Regina to keep their eyes out for a little red Ford Fiesta, 101 JLM. The car's owner misses her dearly.

So with that I'd like to welcome Avery to her Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Moosomin-Montmartre.

Kevin Weedmark: — I would like to ask for leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Kevin Weedmark: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Premier, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Highways in introducing my friend Sinclair Harrison and his family in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon.

Sinc has contributed greatly to this province over the years. He's had so many honours over the years, including being inducted into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame. And he's going to be receiving another honour this afternoon.

I met Sinc when I first moved to Moosomin. And I first knew him as the very outspoken reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Moosomin. And over the years he took that role, he took his role as the long-time president of the Saskatchewan Association

of Rural Municipalities and did so much for the province over the years.

And he's never been afraid to get his hands dirty, never been afraid to do the real work, literally. I remember one time that when the Red Lily wind farm was in the planning stages . . . It was one of the first wind farms in Saskatchewan, and before it was built there had to be a tower go up to do some wind tests. And Sinclair and Mark Bateman and Samit Sharma from Gaia Power were out in the field, literally putting up the tower themselves to get that done.

So I think that speaks volumes about Sinc. He was instrumental in getting that whole project off the ground, and he was out there in the field literally, literally doing the work.

So with Sinc in the Speaker's gallery today are his friend and colleague Mark Bateman, who was the long-time reeve of the RM of Martin; his daughter Tami Moffatt and her husband, Terry Weber; grandson Kyle Moffatt and daughter Bailey; Paula Potter, her husband, Carlin, and their son Zachary and grandson Mark.

And I ask everyone to join me in welcoming Sinc and his family to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Colleen Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take a moment to introduce and welcome the mayor of Lloydminster, Gerald Aalbers, to the Assembly today. Gerald was just recently acclaimed as the mayor for his third term in Lloydminster. And I know with his leadership, even with municipalities in this province, he has done a tremendous job there, but also I appreciate the work that we do jointly today. You're working with two different provinces and different ministries in a border town. And I've always appreciated his leadership and the conversations we have in order to move things forward. So on behalf of the Assembly, I'd like to ask everyone to join me in welcoming Mayor Aalbers to his Assembly.

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

Jared Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister to welcome Mayor Aalbers to his Legislative Assembly on behalf of the official opposition. As shadow minister for municipal affairs, I look forward to building relationships with the mayor and working together in the interest of the citizens of Lloydminster to make sure they're living their best life in our province.

Congratulations, Mayor, on your re-election. And to all the other mayors and Reeves here today, I'd like to welcome you to the Saskatchewan legislature. So with that I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these fine folks to their Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Goudy: — Wow. Okay, everybody's getting up there. I recognize the . . . Oh wow, I'm sorry. My head is . . .

An Hon. Member: — The Whip.

Speaker Goudy: — The Whip. I recognize the member from Canora-Pelly.

Sean Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I would like to introduce four of my close friends up in the top of the gallery: TJ Fogg, Ronnie Grychowski with his wife, Renae, and Lee Stott. All three of these people, all four of them actually, are former colleagues that I have worked with in building highways for this province. They're in town for the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association's Infrastructure Summit.

All four of them have different skill sets, but they have one thing in common. They build the roads we all drive on. Just recently my friend Lee became a Canadian citizen, and I would like to congratulate him for that. I invite all members to welcome these four people, who have built miles of road for all of us, to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Matt Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery, I would like to welcome Donna Banks. Donna is a Ward 3 trustee with Saskatoon Public Schools. Very dedicated to the cause of public education in Saskatchewan, so much so that she serves on the executive for the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], which has been meeting here over the last number of days in Regina.

I want to thank Donna for her years of service as a trustee, for going above and beyond and serving on the executive, and for all of the ways that she champions students and classrooms in our province. I ask all members to join me in welcoming Donna Banks to her Legislative Assembly.

[13:45]

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I could just briefly join the member opposite in introducing Donna and welcoming her to her Legislative Assembly. Donna and I had a brief chat last night at a function here in Regina and where she told me not only about her history with the Saskatoon Public School Division, but also in health care as well, I believe. And anyway, Donna, thank you for the work you're doing.

She was doing her work last night as well, lobbying for her school division to be near the top of the pile when it comes to meetings and visits from me as the new Minister of Education. And I assured Donna that it is in the queue as well. And then I'll be very busy a little bit later this winter getting around and meeting with school divisions and board trustees from around the province.

So again, welcoming Donna Banks to her Legislative Assembly and thanking her for her work for public education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Athabasca . . . from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Cumberland. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the member from Lloydminster and the member from Regina Walsh Acres here in welcoming — I'm sure where we can both say the same thing, that we're each other's best friends — Mayor Gerald Aalbers. I had the honour of sitting with him on the SUMA board for a few years as a councillor. Many people would not be surprised that Mayor Aalbers is actually older than me. And what I can say is, what a handshake. It's almost like he has to carry the weight of two provinces on his shoulders.

And as a member from Cumberland, I also know the struggles that it takes to represent people on two sides of the communities. As some folks would know, Creighton, Flin Flon, Denare Beach are all communities on the borders as well. And I've really appreciated your wisdom, guidance in helping address some of the challenges that you've had to in Lloyd and always help build up municipal councillors and legislators right here on this floor. So thank you for all the work that you do. And so to you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome Mayor Aalbers to his Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Joining us today in your gallery is a good friend of ours, Deb Davies, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association is an important stakeholder that supports foster parents through education and advocacy to create healthy homes and brighter futures for children and youth who are in care. Mr. Speaker, 2024 is a milestone year for this association as it celebrates 50 years. I'd like to ask all members to join in in showing their appreciation to the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association and for the important contributions made by foster families throughout the province, and of course in welcoming Deb Davies to her Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Brent Blakley: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to also join the member opposite in welcoming Deb Davies and her important work that she does for the foster care system in the province. My daughter personally works in the foster care system as a care worker, and I certainly appreciate the work that the foster care system does. So I welcome Deb Davies to her Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it gives me great pleasure to introduce a school group in the west gallery. We have 17 students, grade 12 students from Vanier Collegiate in Moose Jaw, together with their teacher, Doug Panko, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say, Doug Panko is a frequent visitor to this Assembly with his students, and he's just been a tremendous educator and promoter of the democratic process. And I'm honoured to call he and his wife, Tracy, my friends. So I thank

him for bringing another group of wonderful students to see us.

And I do want to single out one young gentleman up there, Avery Boechler, who has been a tremendous support, Mr. Speaker, to myself as the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Moose Jaw North. Give us a wave, Avery. One of my best door knockers in the last campaign, Mr. Speaker.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to please join me in welcoming Mr. Panko and these students to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Vicki Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to briefly join in in welcoming, along with other members, Donna Banks to her Legislative Assembly. Donna has been the Ward 3 public school board trustee for twice as long as I have been the MLA for Saskatoon Fairview. I think it's been about 15 or 16 years that she's been in.

She was one of the first people to contact me when I was very first elected and give me the lay of the land from her perspective. So I still appreciate that as well as our regular conversations and meetings about what's happening in the community. I think it's so important to have these relationships with other elected officials across the province, and I want to congratulate her on being acclaimed in her re-election here, Mr. Speaker, again. So thank you to Donna Banks.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in in welcoming Avery Beaudin to her Legislative Assembly. Avery has been a long-time friend of mine. Then she became my sister-in-law. Then she started working for the member for Elphinstone-Centre. We have shared a lot in our lives together throughout working in the Cadet Program. She's also a social worker, very sharp, very driven, and very committed to her values, and it's a pleasure to know her. So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming her to her Assembly today.

Speaker Goudy: — And I would like to welcome three individuals in the Speaker's gallery. One man who I think serves both sides of the Chamber when we lose our loved ones, and last night, was Fred Hill. Funeral for his father. And so our hearts were all with you last night, though we were in the Chamber, many of us. And with him today is his cousins Terry Kesson and Debby Pike, both in from British Columbia. So welcome here today and thank you for sharing your nephew with us. He's a good man and we appreciate him.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Stonebridge.

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a teacher of 17 years and Member of the Legislative Assembly for Saskatoon Stonebridge, I rise today to present our petition calling for the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to fix the crisis in our classrooms.

The undersigned residents would like to bring to our attention the

following: that Saskatchewan is one of two provinces to experience a decline in per-student funding in our public schools, a loss of 10 per cent since 2012; that per-student funding over the same period increased by 8.3 per cent at the national level; that the Sask Party government's cuts to education mean that teachers, EAs [educational assistant], and support staff continue to be overworked and underpaid while students don't have the support they need; that international studies show Saskatchewan students are drastically falling behind in reading, math, and science, with Saskatchewan ranking second worst in math scores and third worst in reading among the provinces.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately provide adequate funding to public, Catholic, and francophone schools in Saskatchewan and fix the crisis in our classrooms.

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

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Brent Blakley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the Assembly today to present a petition calling for adequate and equitable rates for the Saskatchewan assured income disability program.

These residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring attention to the following: the current SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] rates mean that individuals who rely on the program live well below the poverty line; that poverty has deepened because the SAID program has not seen an increase in the basic amount in over seven years and does not account for regional realities of the cost of living, as in northern Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan people are struggling to make ends meet under historical inflationary pressures.

The prayer today reads as follows:

We call on the Government of Saskatchewan to increase SAID rates to account for inflation, respect the constitutional rights of persons with disability in Saskatchewan by halting discriminatory practices and aligning policies with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, index the SAID basic amount to inflation going forward, and provide targeted relief to those in deepest poverty such as single individuals paying market rent.

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

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Southeast.

Brittney Senger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling to address the housing crisis in Saskatchewan, for affordable home and tenant protections.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring attention to the following: the cost of housing and rental housing in Saskatchewan has skyrocketed, making it increasingly difficult for many individuals and families to secure stable and affordable housing; disastrous changes to SIS [Saskatchewan income support] and SAID have meant that over the past decade homelessness has surged, pushing people onto the streets; meanwhile the government has made drastic cuts to the housing program.

And with that, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately implement a comprehensive and affordable housing strategy aimed at helping individuals and families in securing stable and affordable housing. This would include restoration of the cuts made to the housing portfolio, investment in the development of affordable and low-income housing units, enforcement of rental protection for tenants, and allocation of resources towards the development of second-stage housing and crisis shelter.

This petition is signed by residents of Regina. I do so present.

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

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to present a petition calling for the halt to Crown land sales and a revised duty-to-consult framework.

The undersigned residents would like to bring our attention to the following: that the Government of Saskatchewan is currently selling off Crown land that has been used throughout history by Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities for ceremony, agriculture, hunting, fishing, trapping, and recreation, with no meaningful duty-to-consult policies in place; that the first right of refusal needs to be offered to First Nations involved in the treaty land entitlement process when Crown lands are being sold; that the duty-to-consult framework in Saskatchewan must reflect the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately stop the sell-off of Crown land and work with First Nations and Métis communities to develop a new duty-to-consult framework.

The signatories to this petition reside in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Call for a Provincial Strategy to Address Intimate Partner Violence

Nicole Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, on August 29th, 2023, Saskatchewan lost yet another person to intimate partner violence. Melissa Bear was only 33 years old when she was killed by her partner in Saskatoon. Not only that, but at the time she was eight months pregnant with a baby girl. The man who killed Melissa was already under a no-contact order to stay away from her, at the time of her death.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the highest rate of family violence and intimate partner violence in Canada. Now Saskatchewan worsens the statistic by seeing an increase in these crimes. Figures released by the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] show that these types of crimes have increased by 13 per cent over the past five years. In 2023 more than half of the violent crimes dealt with by the RCMP were related to offences against intimate partners or family members.

Intimate partner violence is considered a major global health concern by the World Health Organization. In some places — who have lower rates than Saskatchewan — it has been recognized as an epidemic. Yet the Sask Party government refuses to consider it as an epidemic here, and they also refuse to create a comprehensive provincial strategy as has been requested by those who work with survivors in this province.

This tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government continues to neglect this issue. Mr. Speaker, intimate partner violence is a serious issue that needs to be addressed now. The people of Saskatchewan deserve a safe community and a government who will take it seriously. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Moosomin-Montmartre.

[14:00]

Municipal Leader Leaves a Legacy of Service to Saskatchewan

Kevin Weedmark: — Mr. Speaker, Sinclair Harrison is someone who has contributed greatly to this province. To his family, Sinc is a man of compassion, integrity, and generosity. To his friends, Sinc is a loyal, lifelong friend. And to the province, Sinc is someone who made a difference.

He was elected to the RM of Moosomin Council in 1974, became reeve two years later, and served the RM for 30 years. He was elected to the SARM board in 1986, became president in 1994, serving eight years as SARM president. He was a strong, unwavering voice for rural Saskatchewan and a tireless defender of rural interests. He's most proud of his role in stopping the forced amalgamation of municipalities that the former government had attempted. His advocacy for rural Saskatchewan in that role will never be forgotten.

He made a historic contribution to this province in his work on SARM's land claims committee, helping pave the way for land purchases for both treaty land entitlement and specific land claims. He was involved in bringing one of the first wind farms to Saskatchewan, forming the Farmer Rail Car Coalition, served

on the action committee on the rural economy, chaired the Hudson Bay Route Association, ensured the Trans Canada Trail was completed across Saskatchewan, and did so much more. Through those roles Sinc has made absolutely incredible contributions to this province.

Mr. Speaker, Sinc Harrison's led a life of service and made a tremendous contribution to this province, and I want to recognize and thank him for his contributions. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina Mount Royal.

Remembering Howard Leeson

Trent Wotherspoon: — I rise to remember a prairie giant, Dr. Howard Leeson. Howard's life began in Alberta. After serving with the Canadian Army, Howard moved to the US [United States] to work and began his family and academic career. He returned to Canada and earned a Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] while also working with Grant Notley. Howard then moved to Saskatchewan and embarked on a remarkable life of service and leadership.

As deputy minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Howard worked with Premiers Allan Blakeney and Roy Romanow to patriate the Canadian Constitution and establish the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. He also inspired generations of students as a professor.

I can attest to Howard's ability to inspire, as I had the privilege to work with, learn from, and build friendship with him. He had an infectious desire to make positive change. Notably I had the honour of working with him as a constitutional expert to amend the Constitution, the first time Canada's Constitution was amended with an originating motion from the Saskatchewan legislature.

To the very end of Howard's life, he continued to offer brilliant advice with more energy than people a quarter of his age. It's without doubt that Howard Leeson's legacy and impact will live on in so many ways. There is no question that his life of remarkable service and leadership shaped and made his province and his country a better place.

I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me to celebrate the life of Dr. Howard Leeson and to extend our condolences to his wife, Ede, and their family, and to thank them for sharing him with all of us.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Yorkton Demonstrates Generous Support for Holiday Food Drive

David Chan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to recognize and celebrate the incredible spirit of generosity and community in Yorkton and the surrounding area.

This holiday season Yorkton Hyundai, N.L. Construction Inc., and Yorkton Concrete kicked off the No More Holiday Hunger Food Drive to benefit local non-profit Love Lives Here Yorkton. And the response from the community has been incredible.

Schools, daycares, and sports teams have eagerly organized their own internal food drives to contribute. Businesses and individuals alike have reached out to offer support, including monetary donations.

One local business in particular deserves special recognition for its extraordinary generosity. Just the other week, recognizing the importance of its work, Jamie Moore and YAC Auctions presented Love Lives Here with an incredible \$5,000 donation to support the food drive initiative. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge their generosity, even though I know it was not done for recognition. This donation will go a long way in assisting Love Lives Here as they provide vital support to those in need within our community.

I also want to acknowledge the three businesses that spearheaded this food drive — Yorkton Hyundai, N.L. Construction Inc., and Yorkton Concrete — for their leadership in addressing hunger in our community this Christmas. To Jamie Moore and YAC Auctions, and to everyone who has stepped up, thank you for showing what it means to care for one another. The people of Yorkton and the surrounding area truly exemplify the meaning of community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Mining Association Represents Key Provincial Industry

Sally Housser: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize today the important work that the Saskatchewan Mining Association does for our great province.

The SMA [Saskatchewan Mining Association] represents the companies responsible for over 25 different mining projects that employ over 30,000 people all across this province as they work to promote Saskatchewan as the global mining leader and innovator that it is.

From uranium in the north to sodium sulphate in the south, from Canada's first potash producer at Patience Lake, started way back in 1958, to Saskatchewan's newest rare earth mineral mining like Grounded Lithium in Kindersley, mining represents the past, present, and also the future of this province.

I would like to thank Pam Schwann, president of SMA, and her team, as well as Nathaniel Huckabay and the SMA board for representing some of our province's key employers like Cameco, Mosaic, Nutrien, Westmoreland, SSR, K+S, and Atha, and for everything they do to foster safety, sustainability, and global competitiveness for Saskatchewan's mining industry.

Mr. Speaker, mining week is still a ways away, but I'm looking forward to seeing and engaging with members of the association and industry leaders at the SMA Christmas reception this evening. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking the SMA for the great work they do for our province.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Humboldt-Watrous.

Prairie Swine Centre's Research Supports Pork Industry

Racquel Hilbert: — The Prairie Swine Centre is a not-for-profit swine research facility affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan. The Prairie Swine has served the communities within Saskatchewan's pork industry since 1991. The centre's market research program focuses on nutrition, engineering, and behaviour to ensure pork producers remain competitive and sustainable.

Mr. Speaker, our government's Agriculture Development Fund, ADF, is one of the many long-term base funders for the swine centre. Over the past five years ADF has contributed 1.9 million in addition to further supporting individual research projects. Research funding from the province was leveraged to secure more than 6.5 million in additional funding. For 30 years the Prairie Swine Centre has been a world-renowned resource, which continues to make significant contributions to the Saskatchewan and Canadian pork industry.

During the past 15 years, investment into our research program has averaged a return of \$4.10 per pig per year back to the pork industry, and increased to \$5.60 per pig per year over the past five years. This represents an approximate average annual value of 5.8 million from the centre's research program to our pork industry. These benefits to the province, to our pork industry, represent exceptional value. It demonstrates the Government of Saskatchewan's continued investment into the centre's research program. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from White City-Qu'Appelle.

Regina's Globe Theatre Celebrates Reopening

Brad Crassweller: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to offer our sincere congratulations to the Globe Theatre on the reopening of their newly renovated building in downtown Regina. After nearly five years of closure, we're excited to see the return of Regina's premier entertainment venues.

The Globe Theatre is the only theatre-in-the-round in Canada, located in the historical Prince Edward Building in our province's capital city. The Globe has undergone an impressive renovation that will ensure the theatre continues to serve as a hub for creativity and economic growth in our province. Their mission: to entertain, educate, and engage in the art of professional theatre. This week they opened their doors once again, showcasing Bad Hats Theatre's adaptation of *Peter Pan*, which will be followed up shortly in the new year with *Women of the Fur Trade*.

Thank you to all of the individuals and donors that made this project possible. Our government was proud to contribute \$9 million to the Globe Theatre revitalization project in 2019. I encourage all the members and Saskatchewan people to attend a show in their new space. Please join me in wishing the Globe Theatre all the best in their next chapter. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Funding for Education and Provision of Specialized Supports

Vicki Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier is failing to provide adequate and accessible education to our children in our public schools. Saskatchewan is last in per-student funding, and families of children with complex needs are being told that their children can't attend public school because of the limited supports available. This is a province-wide issue, Mr. Speaker.

What does the Premier have to say to countless families and children who are being denied an education in our province?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of things, Mr. Speaker. As we've talked about in the Throne Speech, a renewed focus for this government and for our school and education system to be able to support teachers and educational assistants and all those involved in the school system, and to make sure that they are having a renewed focus on K to 3 [kindergarten to grade 3] reading, as well as the expansion of our specialized support classrooms project as well, Mr. Speaker, from the current eight pilot projects around the province to 200 over the next four years, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to that, we are providing record funding to our school division partners to make sure that they can do everything they can to help us support the education of children right across this province, Mr. Speaker, a record amount of funding in this year's budget, nearly at 9 per cent. And then working very closely with school divisions, with teachers, with parents and families to make sure that we can continue to identify areas where we still have some challenges so that we can address those gaps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Vicki Mowat: — Last place in per-student funding, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of these families is here with us today. Lindsay Klassen has joined us from Saskatoon. Her six-year-old son Wyatt is being denied his first grade education at his school. Their family was told that Wyatt can only attend half days because there aren't enough resources to take him full-time.

Mr. Speaker, this province is filled with opportunity. But what kind of opportunity are we giving kids if we aren't allowing them to go to school? Does the Premier think it's acceptable that children like Wyatt are being excluded from our schools?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I welcome Lindsay to her Legislative Assembly here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, in response to the question, building upon what I said earlier, we are making record investments into the education system, Mr. Speaker: \$180 million more in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, plus significant funding, targeted funding for classroom supports, Mr. Speaker. And that is, you know, an

important amount of funding that is being put into that specific area, Mr. Speaker, \$356 million specifically towards classroom supports, an increase of 15 per cent over the previous years' budgets, Mr. Speaker.

Education is a shared priority between the provincial government and local boards of education, local school divisions. And making sure that we're working closely with them to provide the resources necessary to be able to increase the number of educational assistants and teachers that they have within their schools is something that we will continue to work in partnership with our education partners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Matt Love: — Mr. Speaker, there is only one acceptable answer to that straightforward question. No, it's not acceptable.

But this, Mr. Speaker, this isn't a one-off. I've heard from countless families who've been told the same thing, that their children cannot attend school because there are not proper supports for them at school.

Lindsay has advocated for her son as hard as she could. Everywhere she turned for help, she was told that Wyatt isn't the only one, that they do not have resources to ensure that Wyatt and other kids like him have supports in our schools.

So to the minister: how many children are being denied access to our public schools because they don't have adequate supports?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As part of the \$356 million provided in the budget this year for classroom supports, there is specific targeted funding for educational assistants, targeted classroom supports there of \$7 million, Mr. Speaker, in this year's budget for EA positions throughout the province, Mr. Speaker. Specific to the Saskatoon Public Schools, it's my understanding that they are planning to hire in this school year 811 EAs for the current school year, Mr. Speaker, which is an increase of 148 EAs, Mr. Speaker, from last year.

Does that mean though that we still have perhaps instances of families and students that are requiring support? There certainly is, Mr. Speaker, as evidenced by Lindsay's case here with her son here today, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

So we'll continue to work very closely with our school division partners to make sure that we're providing financial supports so that they can hire staff for their schools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Matt Love: — Mr. Speaker, I asked how many students are being denied an education and he doesn't know the answer. I asked this very same question last spring at budget estimates, and the former minister didn't know the answer at that time either. They don't track this information. They don't know if there are

10 or 500 kids in Saskatchewan being denied an education.

Wyatt and every other child in this province deserves an education, Mr. Speaker, regardless of their needs. Will the minister admit that he knows that kids are being denied an education right here in Saskatchewan, and will he commit to do better?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working very hard to support our partners in education to make sure that they have funding to be able to hire the number of staff that they need in their schools, Mr. Speaker. And that includes some of the record amounts of funding I have spoken to previously, Mr. Speaker.

In the case of educational assistants, I talked about specific to Saskatoon Public Schools and how many more EAs they're planning to hire in this year's, the current school year. Compared to the year of 2020-2021, there's been an increase of 313 EAs in this particular school division, Mr. Speaker.

We have a growing province, Mr. Speaker, and with that comes some pressures and some challenges, including in our education system where we have growing enrolment right across this province, but most prevalently in Saskatoon and Regina. And this is a government that is supporting that growth by building new schools, by investing in more specialized support classrooms and expanse in that project, Mr. Speaker, and investing into additional educational assistant funding, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Betty Nippi-Albright: — Mr. Speaker, Lindsay and Wyatt are my constituents. It is unacceptable that Wyatt and other kids like him are being denied an education due to this tired and out-of-touch government's cuts to education.

Not only are Lindsay and Wyatt struggling to access basic education, they have been waiting years for a proper assessment of Wyatt's needs. Mr. Speaker, they were told that they'd be waiting another two years. How many children are being denied access to education while waiting for proper care?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I alluded to in my previous answer, I talked about some of the pressures that we faced in our education system and how this government has been supporting that and trying to address those needs with record funding into the education system, whether it's through capital but also through the human resource side of things, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we are providing additional funding so that we can hire more teachers, train more teachers to be hired. And, Mr. Speaker, in our education system as well is more education assistants as well, plus additional supports that are required for students throughout schools in Saskatchewan.

We know that we, in addition to having growing enrolments in our schools right across this province, we also have increased

complexities we are dealing with in the classrooms. And we're working in conjunction with our partners in the Ministry of Health to make sure that when we do have cases and we have students such as Wyatt, that we do try to make sure that we provide them with the supports they need, and whether it comes to education or the health care side for diagnoses, that we are working to shorten those waiting times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Access to Health Care for Seniors

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I took an absolutely heartbreaking trip to Weyburn yesterday, and I met some of the seniors that are being failed by this tired and out-of-touch Sask Party government, Fred and Theresa Sandeski. Fred is dying, Mr. Speaker, and Theresa's health is deteriorating. Fred simply can't afford to die with dignity. Can you imagine that there is such a thing in this province that you can't afford to die with dignity?

Theresa has surgery scheduled for this Friday, Mr. Speaker, leaving Fred completely alone in their apartment in Weyburn. Imagine, imagine for a moment that you know you are about to lose your partner of 41 years and being asked to make the choice between hospice care for yourself and the homelessness of your partner or, more shocking of all, Mr. Speaker, MAID, medical assistance in dying.

Will the minister ensure that Fred gets access to hospice care today?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Mr. Speaker, as soon as our office learned about Fred and Theresa's situation, Mr. Speaker, the member from Weyburn-Bengough reached out to the family. In fact, Mr. Speaker, his constituency assistant spent a couple hours with Fred and Theresa last night at their home in Weyburn, understanding their situation, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you that our office is working to find a timely and reasonable solution for the family, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, though, discussions and decisions around medical assistance in dying are deeply personal and significant. And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that any health care professional in this province, Mr. Speaker, having those discussions with a patient has a strong understanding of the patient's health and familial context, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will always work on this side of the House to have policies that offer dignity to all in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

But when it comes to dignity, Mr. Speaker, I have to ask that member opposite, is he okay with the leader of his party, the Leader of the Opposition using Fred and Theresa's story for a party fundraising email this afternoon, Mr. Speaker?

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

Keith Jorgenson: — One of the poignant words that Fred said as I was about to leave, he said, I kind of want to breathe. Mr.

Speaker, Fred is well known in Weyburn and his life's work is celebrated. He's spent most of his life helping other people. Last week he needed our help.

Fred and Theresa couldn't afford to put Fred into long-term care. He needs round-the-clock care, being forced to pay upwards of \$50 a day that they simply don't have, leaving Theresa without the income to be able to pay their bills. How did our province and health care system get to this point, Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first answer, Mr. Speaker, the member from Weyburn-Bengough has been in touch with the family. I can assure the member opposite and you, Mr. Speaker, and all members in the House that my office, the office of the Minister of Rural and Remote Health, and the Saskatchewan Health Authority are working with the family to find a timely and reasonable solution for Fred and Theresa.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me just read the subject of the email sent by the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon: "Fred and Theresa deserve dignity." Mr. Speaker, I agree. Is that dignity, Mr. Speaker, for the Leader of the Opposition to fill NDP [New Democratic Party] coffers on the backs of Fred and Theresa?

Speaker Goudy: — Sorry, I just want to . . . to insinuate that they'd be filling the coffers, you know, I would ask the member to apologize and withdraw.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — I withdraw and apologize.

Speaker Goudy: — Thank you. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Fred was a social worker for his entire life. He helped people navigate through these systems, and now he's advocating for himself. He called his MLA last week. He called the Minister of Health. Crickets, Mr. Speaker. Crickets.

What does this say about the Sask Party government's commitment to health care when their own MLAs, their own ministers of Health can't even pick up a phone call from somebody that's dying? Why did the people of Saskatchewan have to go to the media to get their government to help them?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my previous two answers, as soon as we became aware of the solution — again, my office, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health's office, we have no record of a call from this family, Mr. Speaker — but as soon as we became aware of the situation, the member for Weyburn-Bengough, his staff in Weyburn and our offices are now working with the family to find a timely and reasonable solution, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to find a solution for Fred and Theresa. The members opposite want to send emails about it. I want to find a solution that's going to work for Fred and Theresa this week.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Opposition Motion and Food Prices in the North

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's 2024 and my constituents in the North are getting sick because they can't afford healthy food. These are Saskatchewan people and they deserve support. Instead, some are suffering from scurvy. The Saskatchewan Party government chooses to ignore this. Yesterday we told this government we wanted an investigation into sky-high food prices so we can improve access to food. Today, they blocked my motion to launch that investigation.

How can this government possibly justify doing nothing while people in Saskatchewan in the North get sick, or will it take someone dying for them to care?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite just referenced that the government has blocked a motion that he brought. Mr. Speaker, the motions that are brought before this House are transcribed in *Hansard*. The members all know that these proceedings are livestreamed. Mr. Speaker, we have members opposite who are levelling accusations that are not based in fact, and I would ask the member to apologize.

Speaker Goudy: — I did notice that when the member said they chose to ignore . . . I don't know, I've ruled before that we can't, you know, say the intent of the other side. And so I would ask the member to avoid that in the future, please.

I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That minister knows better. Mr. Speaker, I served as a town councillor before I had the privilege of being elected to this Chamber. At council, we let people bring forward their ideas and their concerns. We'd never shut down a meeting to block someone's voice. Today this Sask Party government silenced my voice and my constituents' voice. They played political games in committee to block my call for an investigation into food prices in the North.

Will someone on that side stand in their place and explain to the people in the North why they would rather play political games than provide people with the support that they need?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And once again, nobody's voice was silenced, Mr. Speaker. If you check the record, the member opposite never spoke a word on the record, Mr. Speaker. So again we have an accusation being levelled, Mr. Speaker, that is not substantiated by the record. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Auditor's Recommendations on Social Services' Procurement Policies

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Sask Party government has talked a lot about decorum, about a change of tone. But what we saw in committee this morning is just the same old Sask Party government that we've seen for years. They haven't changed, Mr. Speaker. They blocked any accountability into the waste of public money on the Sunrise Motel, and how this government continued to send business to Sask Party MLA-owned hotels even after the commissioner directed them to stop.

They would rather play political games than get answers for Saskatchewan people. So if not at a committee, Mr. Speaker, where does the Sask Party government propose we get answers about what all went down at the Sunrise Motel?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday my ministry accepted all the recommendations made by the Provincial Auditor. The ministry has worked with the Provincial Auditor in its review of procurement of hotel rooms for clients, and we accept the four new recommendations to further strengthen those processes.

When we're securing hotels, the ministry balances cost-effectiveness, safety, and availability. And we rely on our front-line workers to make sure that we're keeping the most vulnerable in our community safe, warm, and secure by obtaining hotel quotes in advance and getting those people into a safe place where they need to be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Meara Conway: — Here are the facts, Mr. Speaker. Almost a million dollars of public money went to Gary Grewal's hotels illegitimately. The rates were jacked up more than 50 per cent once the public started picking up the tab. The auditor said there weren't controls in place then, and there aren't now. And the Conflict of Interest Commissioner ruled that not only did Mr. Gary Grewal break the law, but he continued to engage in government contracts even after the commissioner directed him to stop. These are facts, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

Here's another fact. The commissioner left it to this Assembly to determine the penalty for Mr. Grewal. What does the Sask Party government think would be fair?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our ministry is providing critical and immediate assistance to families, children, and individuals in crisis, and that's something that we're not going apologize for. That is something that we need to do to ensure we keep these people safe, to keep them secure.

This year we've gone further by securing one-year agreements, by obtaining room blocks in advance. Mr. Speaker, our ministry's actions are being very clear. We're responding to the

auditor's report. We're implementing and working through those recommendations, and we look forward to getting those results later in 2025. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Auditor's Recommendations on Reporting Critical Incidents in the Health Care System

Vicki Mowat: — Another complete lack of transparency from this government, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday the Provincial Auditor released information regarding the reporting and correction of critical incidents in the health care sector. We're talking about people being hurt or dying in care.

When a critical incident occurs, health care organizations like the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] have 60 days to release a report so that we can learn from the incident and prevent it from happening again. Why is the minister failing to release reports that save lives?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we thank the Provincial Auditor for her work.

Certainly when it comes to her recommendations on reporting critical incidents, Mr. Speaker, these are recommendations that we take seriously. We're planning to have all these recommendations implemented by the end of the '25-26 fiscal year, Mr. Speaker.

Again, Mr. Speaker, there are sometimes complex processes when we talk about critical incidents and how we report that, Mr. Speaker. But I can assure the member opposite that we're working on these recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Vicki Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, 90 per cent of these reports are submitted past the deadline, and that number is rising year after year. These reports prevent injury and death, Mr. Speaker. Why is the minister failing to correct these problems that save people's lives?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first answer, we accept the recommendations from Provincial Auditor. We're working on implementing them, Mr. Speaker. Some of them will take some time, Mr. Speaker, but again we plan to have all of these recommendations implemented by the end of next fiscal year. Thank you.

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

Provision of Educational Facilities

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Families in my

constituency are in great need of a new school in Harbour Landing. Our local schools are over capacity. The library and music room have been converted into classrooms. Mr. Speaker, this is not what is best for students in my riding. It is holding students back from their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Sask Party government act and ensure a new school is built quickly for families in my riding?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of significant major capital projects under way in the province right now, and there'll be additional projects in planning, Mr. Speaker. In terms of capital in this budget, Mr. Speaker, I can tell the members that since 2007 there have been 101 major school infrastructure projects across Saskatchewan, including 69 new or replacement schools that are either completed or under way right now, Mr. Speaker, plus 32 major renovation projects.

As I indicated earlier in question period, Mr. Speaker, we're continuing to work closely with our school divisions and our partners across the province to address enrolment pressures right across Saskatchewan, working with those within the Ministry of Education to be able to identify areas where there are enrolment pressures where we do need to either (a) provide significant renovations to existing schools, or (b) create and construct new schools in these areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Education and Specialized Support Initiative

Matt Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've had a lot of discussion in the Assembly today about education. We have a mother here from Saskatoon whose son is not allowed to attend school full-time because there are not adequate supports there to keep him safe and keep him learning at school. We've heard stories of schools that are crowded, losing their libraries, losing their lunchrooms, losing space because schools in Saskatchewan are crowded, and they're full of students with needs that are not being met. Yet we've heard from the minister the same old tired talking lines.

My question to the minister today: will he recognize that it was the Sask Party government's failures that drove us to last place in the country for per-student funding, and will he commit to fixing that today?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Everett Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I had indicated before, we are making record investments into education. And you saw it back in the budget earlier this year, Mr. Speaker, *Classrooms, Care & Communities*, significant investments into the education system, an increase of \$180 million into our education system, nearly 9 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And the member opposite talks about talking points that he's heard before, Mr. Speaker. Last week we had a Speech from the

Throne here in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. We talked about the expansion of, no. 1, the specialized support classrooms pilot. This is a new initiative, Mr. Speaker, a pilot introduced and unveiled earlier this year. It will be expanded from 8 to the 200 which we talked about last week in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

That is a new investment that is going to be supported by this government. We have a growing province. We have a record population in Saskatchewan, growing enrolment in our schools. Yes, we do have pressures, Mr. Speaker, but this is a government that is committed to making sure that we're supporting our education system, continuing to build this province and have a bright future in this province that is supported by this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 3 — *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2024*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 3, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read for a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It's been moved by the Minister of Justice that the Bill No. 3, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 4 — *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2024*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 4, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 4, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 5 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2024*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 5, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 5, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on House Services.

Standing Committee on House Services

Nicole Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been instructed by the Standing Committee on House Services to report that the committee has convened pursuant to rule 139 and is presenting its first report. This report outlines the composition of the standing committees of the Assembly and the allocation of government ministries, agencies, and Crown corporations to the various committees.

I move:

That the first report of the Standing Committee on House Services for the thirtieth legislature be now concurred in.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Deputy Chair:

That the first report of the Standing Committee on House Services for the thirtieth legislature be now concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Kim Gartner, seconded by the Hon. Eric Schmalz, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Jared Clarke.]

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

Blaine McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed with a grateful heart that I rise today in what I call a very sacred House, having secured the confidence of the citizens of Lumsden-Morse in the recent election. And I will never, never lose sight of this amazing privilege that each of us in this House enjoys. I will never tire of walking up the stairs in awe of the building that I am about to enter.

In the 16 months since winning the by-election for Lumsden-Morse, this is my second reply to the Throne Speech, not my 22nd like the member from Saskatoon Willowgrove. I have absolutely no chance of attaining that length of service, but I do thank you for your continued faithful and excellent service. I only see engaged, motivated, and very hard-working. Keep up the good work, my friend.

And now an acknowledgement of the Speaker himself. Well done in terms of obtaining the confidence of this House. You are a man of integrity and great character, and I am very happy to see you in the Chair and very pleased to be able to support you in that role as Deputy Speaker of the House, having gained the confidence as well of this House.

I will serve with the attitude of constantly listening and learning, and I'll aim to contribute renewal in this House. "A New Beginning," which is the title of the Speech from the Throne that opens the first session of the thirtieth legislature of the wonderful province of Saskatchewan. We have been given a majority mandate to govern and a message to listen carefully and respond to the needs of the people of Saskatchewan that we all collectively serve.

Often stated that no one serves alone. That fact is even more indelibly pressed on my mind as I recognize that I've spent most of the last 20 months in election mode — first to win the nomination, then straight into the by-election of August 2023, and then 13 months later, this general election. There has been very little time to catch my breath. But honestly I have enjoyed

every minute. It has been the honour of a lifetime to serve the people of Lumsden-Morse, and I commit again to listen and hear all the voices and to faithfully represent all my constituents.

And I need to say a thank you, Mr. Speaker, to all the participants who allowed their names to stand to run in the general election in Lumsden-Morse. Six candidates in total, and to each and every one, thank you. It is an impressive thing to stand for election, and it's opening yourself up to a whole bunch of analysis and criticism, but you have all done it faithfully, and we thank you for your involvement.

[14:45]

I was recently asked if I would engage in some of the same political activities of my predecessor, Mr. Lyle Stewart, who was laid to rest in the Cottonwood Cemetery north of Pense on August 7th, 2024. Tell me more, I asked. I was thinking they might mention the 23 and a half years of service as an MLA, possibly one of the best Agriculture ministers this province has ever seen. No, they were thinking about something a little bit different. They were wondering if maybe I might wrestle a steer at Agribition, or perhaps make a citizen arrest of a would-be carjacker. I assured them that I wouldn't be wrestling steers. Carjacker, maybe. We'll see. That's never happened. But I could milk a cow if they needed me to.

An Hon. Member: — I hope so.

Blaine McLeod: — I hope so as well. But I do trust I will bring my own unique passion to the legislature, knowing that no one, no one can exactly fill the shoes of a predecessor. But we each chart our own course and seek to leave our great province better than we found it. May you rest in peace, Lyle.

In terms of never serving alone, I have many people, many people to thank. And I want to start with my dear family. My wife of 43 years, I love you more now than I ever have, and your constant love and support has continued to sustain me and our family. Proverbs 18:22 says, "He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favour from the Lord." Marlie, you are perfect to me, and I thank you for always being in my corner.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I haven't spoke often in regards to our children, but I just want to briefly bring the House up to date. Our oldest son, Micheal, has really stepped up to allow me to fulfill this role here. Involved in our dairy farm in the business, and Micheal, I know you've learned first-hand what it means to always be on. Because you are on a dairy farm, there's never a moment where you can say, I'm leaving this job and I'm going to take a break. You're always on. And I need to tell you, Micheal, that it's really the same as an elected MLA, not with the same type of work, but you are always on. You're always in the public eye and you need to be available at all times. And I commit to do that. Absolutely.

Micheal's wife, Chelsea, is a substitute teacher, HR [human resources] involvement in our farm, and the mother of three lovely children as well. I'll get to them a little bit later.

Our next son, Mark, we call him the big guy. I know I'm a little tall but he's taller. I feel a little bit small beside him. Thank you, Mark, for your iron-sharpens-iron kind of an approach to me as

a father. I love that. Keep it up. He's helping his brother on the farm and also helping to manage their household while his wife teaches school. Speaking of Stephanie, a kindergarten and grade 1 teacher and I'm sure having a wonderful year with such delightful young people in the school at Mortlach.

And our daughter Jessica and her husband, Nathan, from Saskatoon. Jessica is a registered nurse at RUH [Royal University Hospital], and I would have to say that she has the best job in the world working in labour and delivery. Her kids often ask her, Mom, did you bring any babies home? And yes, she has brought some home — three of her own.

And I'm going to make an attempt here, Mr. Speaker, of listing all my grandkids from oldest to youngest. I may have to refer to my notes at one point in time, but here we go: Jordynn, Elliott, Levi, Evander, Eleanor, Kynleigh, Owen, Piper, Orson, and Ezra, from almost age 15 to age two and a half — we are a blessed family — all unique in their own ways with special gifts and involvements in their lives.

But I saved the best . . . No, my wife's the best. I've saved a very important person for last in terms of family, my mother-in-law. Now it's been said in this Assembly by a number of people about the butter tarts that the member from Carrot River, former member from Carrot River used to bring, and they were good. Honestly they were good. But Fred, I've got to tell you, my mother-in-law makes the best, absolute best.

Best mother-in-law I could ever have. For my birthday and a Christmas present, always butter tarts. And they're actually what I call selfish butter tarts. I don't want to share them with anybody but occasionally I do. Thank you for your love and support, Peg. You are indeed a great, great mother-in-law.

And I also need to thank those that worked with me hard on the campaign just recently passed. This year a little bit differently, we had Co-Chairs of our campaign team, Brandy and Shannon, both with very different roles and solid involvement in what we were doing.

Brandy, you did take the lion's share of the role, and we thank you for keeping us all on track and making sure we knew what we were doing day by day.

And Shannon, as we moved into a new area of our constituency, having roots in that area was a logical person to help us open the doors. And we'll speak a little more about that later. And then, Loree, our financial agent, thank you for keeping us all on track. We've got a little work yet to do to get it all finalized, but we're well on the way.

No team is complete without door knockers. Thank you to Kelly who also serves as CA [constituency assistant] along with Brandy in our office. Kelly, Michael, Dan, Lisa, Leah, Greg, Paul and Esther, Loree, Glynn, Carol, Lance, Theo. And I tell you, in our constituency there's lots of up and down on the lakeshores of Regina Beach, Buffalo Pound. We got our exercise in, let me tell you, for sure.

And our sign crew, very important: Dan, Carson, Steve, Randy, Greg, Cody, Jim, Doug, and Grant. Thank you so much for all the work and the hard work that you put in in making it all

happen. Mr. Speaker, we were able to place 60 4-by-8 signs, all with permission, on private land. The permission of 40 landowners is so appreciated. It makes a real statement in my eyes.

Now the member from Canora-Pelly talked a little bit about some wind damage that signs took this year, and we were no exception although I'll have to say that I think I might have beat you on that one. We only had three signs that needed help after horrific windstorms. The rest weathered the storms rather well. And I think I'll give my dad and my uncle a little credit in regards to that. They taught me well the ways of carpentry, and you can never brace well enough. I always thought Dad was overdoing it but he was right.

Now rural constituencies are different than city constituencies, and I just picked out a few differences. You're really working with the same wonderful people anywhere you are in Saskatchewan, but rural people, there are some differences. And there's differences in how you approach what you do.

The first difference is there's absolutely lots of travel, and we're going to talk about that a little bit more. The second is the family relationships run very deep and very strong and very tight in rural communities. And one of the biggest things I see is the sense of community spirit and volunteerism and the knowledge that if things are going to get done, we all have to be a part of it.

And, Mr. Speaker, probably the favourite thing that I saw in regards to rural constituencies, and have enjoyed it for a very long time in my life, is fall suppers. There were many of them, and I'm proud to say that even though I consumed . . . [inaudible] . . . amounts of food over that time period, I actually lost weight — five pounds over the time of the election.

So let's take a quick tour of the Lumsden-Morse constituency. We're going to start with Craven in the northeast corner. First of all I have to drive an hour and a quarter to get to Craven. This small but mighty village hosts the Country Thunder music festival, where over 25,000 people attend over a four-day event. And our team confirms that Craven might win the award for the scariest dogs in our constituency. I'm not sure what that means, but there definitely were some scary dogs there.

Down the road to Lumsden. This tight-knit bedroom community of 1,800 hosts many events, including the Lumsden Duck Derby — my duck didn't win this year — and the Scarecrow Festival and other . . . lots of events there. Proceeds from the Duck Derby, which is really, really significant here, fully supports the operation of their rink. And they as well will benefit from the increase in rink funds this year that was contained within our Throne Speech.

Up Highway 11, Regina Beach and Buena Vista host over 2,000 residents, but not all of those can vote in our constituency because there are a lot of summer homes. So it makes door knocking very interesting, but ice cream at Sara's on Centre at the end of the day was 10 out of 10.

Next we have to take the grid road to Grand Coulee, and if you're a little bit troubled by gravel roads, don't take on a rural constituency; there's lots of them. Grand Coulee, sitting close to the outskirts of Regina, hosted a great parade this summer that I

was a part of, and it's also home to Warren Steinley, the former member of this Assembly from Regina Walsh Acres as part of our government, now sitting as a Member of Parliament for Regina-Lewvan.

Next we travel just a little ways to the west to Pense, home to 600 constituency. This small town made it so close to becoming Kraft Hockeyville in 2020. Despite being the runner-up, this community still raised \$300,000 for their arena upgrades. Go Flyers. Pense Flyers senior hockey team. Go Flyers.

Travelling south on the next grid takes us to Rouleau, population of 505. This small town is the home of Dog River and *Corner Gas* and the NHL [National Hockey League] defenceman Keith Aulie. Leafs, Lightning, and go lawyers . . . Lawyers, we've got enough lawyers. Go Oilers. And Keith to this day is farming with his dad in Rouleau, Bill Aulie. Great supporters of what I've been doing. Thank you.

West to the town of Briercrest with a population of 155. This community gives my constituency office weekly calls about the shape of Highway 339. And yes, we hear you and we will continue to work on the solutions.

Heading north to Moose Jaw takes us to . . . And then north of Moose Jaw takes us to the new part of our constituency that used to be represented by the best-dressed and hard-working MLA from Arm River, Mr. Dana Skoropad. And, Dana, thank you. Thank you so much for the area that was now brought into our constituency. You clearly did some good, hard work in that area and brought us some very fine supporters.

Sun Valley and South Lake, they're communities on the shore of Buffalo Pound, are typically vacation homes to 500, but more people are living year-round as well. This area is heavily populated by Moose Jaw residents. Therefore, MLAs from Moose Jaw North and Wakamow, you may have benefited from these door knocks, and you're welcome.

Tuxford, Marquis, Brownlee, Eyebrow, Tugaske, Central Butte, and Riverhurst — all new communities to this constituency — warmly welcomed us, and we attended many fall suppers. And it's a good thing we had door knocking to work off the calories.

A quick mention of Central Butte, Mr. Speaker. This full-service town is a service hub for the area. I was impressed with the Iver Main care home when I visited them this fall, especially with one individual who is a new resident at the Iver Main care home, Mr. Galloway, who was a pharmacist for over 70 years in their town — 70 years. The local fire department is also fundraising to build a new fire hall to meet the needs of the community and the surrounding area — beautiful, big fire hall.

Riverhurst, known for the Riverhurst ferry which transports 30,000 across Lake Diefenbaker every year. And then to get to the next part of our constituency, you've got to go west on the winding grid roads — a wonderful hunting area — and you come to Stewart Valley. It's the most western stop on this tour, just north of Swift Current by 25 minutes. Then back east on Highway 1 is Waldeck. Elon Musk, little piece of trivia here, he worked on a farm near Waldeck after coming to Canada from South Africa in the 1980s.

Herbert, home to 770 constituents, hosted the 37th Herbert Stampede this past August, hosting the Canadian Cowboys Association Finals Rodeo, a real feather in their cap. And for us, as in lots of rural communities, a really special spot that we like to eat, and I highly recommend it, is Kitty's Kitchen in Herbert. Best Chinese food by far that I have experienced.

[15:00]

Further east is Morse, where I've had the pleasure to meet lots of people at the Morse Museum and Cultural Centre fundraisers. A great, old brick schoolhouse turned into a museum. It's worth a stop if you're heading west in our constituency.

Chaplin. The mine at Chaplin is known for its high-quality, natural sodium sulphate plant producing for nearly 75 years, and there's some really great potential investment happening and is happening as we speak. Chaplin also has an active rink as well as an outdoor swimming pool. Great little community.

Travelling down the highway, we pass the home of Gainer the Gopher at Parkbeg before arriving at Mortlach, home to 275. This town is the home of the Saskatoon Berry Festival. Make sure to order your pie ahead of time if you plan to attend this June, or you'll be sorely disappointed.

And then we come to the community of Caronport, home to 1,000. This community doubles in size when the Briercrest Christian Academy college and seminary students arrive in September. The Hildebrand Chapel, which this past weekend hosted their Christmas musical, is the largest chapel in the province with seating capacity well over 2,000.

And southwest across the highway from Caronport is where our dairy farm is located. Sometimes the wonderful smells from a dairy farm drift across the community. I just remind them that it's really just the smell of ice cream in the making. And then we go a little further west, just a mile or so, to my home town of Caron where I live. The population is about 150, and as I spoke earlier about relationships and relatives within community, I'm related to probably close to 15 per cent of them. The local community hall is a great gathering place that hosts barbecues, bingos, and Christmas events.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it took me about roughly five minutes to talk us through that tour. But if you were to drive it, it's eight hours — 806 kilometres. So a rural constituency contains lots of distance, and it's my pleasure and my privilege to be able to travel and be with folks on many occasions to celebrate what they're doing and to hear the concerns and the issues from them.

I want to move, Mr. Speaker, to a few Throne Speech reflections. "A New Beginning," as it was titled. Thirty-one of sixty-one are new members in this House, and in my constituency, as in other areas, I know the voters delivered three very, very clear messages. Message number one is we never want to go back to the days of decline, despair, closure, and the departure of so many of our family members, but we need to do more to address the needs of a growing population. Health care and education both need to improve, Mr. Speaker. And number three was affordability.

Now our Throne Speech spoke to these areas of concerns, and I

do want to highlight several initiatives that I have a very personal connection to. I want to talk about affordability to start with, and, Mr. Speaker, seniors have a very, very special place in my heart. Those who have sacrificed and birthed our great province deserve to live their lives with dignity and respect. No one knows how the last chapter in their lives will play out. The money that was saved to ensure a comfortable retirement may suddenly not be enough.

Increasing the personal care home benefit by 40 per cent will ensure that low-income seniors will be able to continue to live with dignity and respect in a personal care home. And as I explained, this increase to the executive director of a personal care home in Moose Jaw where my aunt and uncle were about to move into, he said to me without any hesitation, that's a game changer. And I agree with him.

But practically how does that work? A senior with a monthly income of \$1,500 currently receives a benefit of \$1,000, raising them to the income threshold of \$2,500. With the increase to a \$3,500 threshold, that senior would see their benefit double to \$2,000 a month. Currently 560 Saskatchewan residents receive this benefit that I'm talking about. With the changes coming, 1,500 more will benefit.

This is an affordability measure that impacts a very special couple in my life, my aunt and uncle, who have been like a second set of parents for us, who never had the opportunity to raise their own family. But they raised all those around them and helped in so many ways with what they've done.

They proactively moved to an assisted living residence just a little over a year ago and were set. They had the savings. They were going to be good. But no one knows what's right around the corner, and in a short period of time the level of care took a steep climb, first with an abscess on a liver that came out of nowhere and then a broken hip. And then another broken hip — both left hips, on my aunt first and then my uncle. And the personal care home supplement that they've been able to obtain removes the worry of not having enough income to meet their needs, and also removes that fear of different levels of care and not being able to be together in a personal care home. Indeed it's been a game changer for them, and I'm happy to be part of that game changer.

Mr. Speaker, affordability measures that provide a long-term benefit are what the Throne Speech contains, not temporary gas tax holidays that just come back again. And in the meantime, where does the money come from to build the roads that that's dedicated to? We have provincial income tax reductions. That's going to save a family of four \$3,400 over four years and a senior couple 3,100 over that same four-year period. Doubling the active families benefit from 150 to 300 per child — amazing.

Another one that I have personal experience with is continuous glucose monitoring system. On an annual health checkup not too long ago, my doctor said, you're getting close to the warning signs there; you better start changing some diet, and let's do some monitoring of what your blood sugar is doing. And so I experimented with it. Amazing technology. It's 24-hour monitoring of blood sugar levels, vital to providing adequate treatment regimens, to know what your blood sugar is doing.

I'm thankful to report that I'm managing to maintain good levels,

largely with my change in diet. And quite possibly I may have to share more of my butter tarts in the future. But literally with the glucose monitoring system, which is expanding no-cost coverage to seniors and to young adults ages 25 and under where formerly it was those under 18, it's literally an ounce of prevention that's providing a pound of cure.

And, Mr. Speaker, the favourite thing that I want to talk about is eliminating the Trudeau-NDP carbon tax on home heating, savings of \$420 a year. Earlier this week the carbon tax fairness bill, extending that benefit for another year, absolutely the right thing to do. Absolutely. But when we get to April 2025, what's going to happen? It's going to increase again 20 per cent. Not here in Saskatchewan, thankfully. Now the member from Regina Mount Royal made reference to not supporting the carbon tax. Music to my ears actually. But your eastern cousins clearly haven't heard that message. Maybe let's get a hold of them if we can, and tell them the carbon tax is not wanted, not needed, and regressive in every way.

Saskatchewan made the investment in rural gasification in the 1980s. That transition from home heating oil to much cleaner natural gas was visionary and made a real impact by almost eliminating our reliance on home heating oil. Now here's the reality: that fantastic investment is now — was; we changed — it was being penalized by a regressive tax that increases the cost of everything that we purchase, either directly or indirectly. There are alternative ways to reduce our impact on the environment, and it is time, high time, that that is acknowledged and moved on. I am proud and thankful to be a part of a government that will continue to protect our citizens from the reckless policies of the federal NDP-Trudeau coalition.

Health care, Mr. Speaker. One moment. Getting a little dry. Not the speech, just my throat. The completion of the Regina Urgent Care Centre has had a significant, significant impact on addressing pressures on Regina's emergency hospital rooms and the emergency wards. And I've heard this first-hand from EMS [emergency medical services] workers, who honestly have said to me, call it a game changer. Offload times have dramatically improved. Additional urgent care facilities will be opened in five more communities, and the Saskatoon location is being developed in partnership with the Ahtahkakoop Cree Developments. It's a great partnership, and it will be a welcome and needed addition in all of the locations where they will be built.

Every Saskatchewan person having access to a primary health care provider is a goal we aim to meet by 2028. And we will meet that goal by continuing to implement our aggressive human health resource plan, where we recruit, we train, we incentivize and retain health professionals. Record investment in all of that. Engaging in a patient-focused nursing task force will also help our government deliver on our campaign commitments. Constructive engagement with all partners is essential as we move towards solutions that will deliver results and efficiency in health care delivery that all Saskatchewan residents want and need.

Now just a few more points, Mr. Speaker. Education: expanding the specialized support classroom model. Now when you have a pilot project in eight schools and it's showing such positive results, the best thing to do is to make sure that more schools can

benefit from the very same thing. And so that's what we're doing. We're expanding to 200 more schools across the province over the next four years of our term.

Much has been said about improving reading levels in kindergarten to grade 3. And as you saw in my list of children, there's a lot of grandchildren. There's a lot in that group right there. Much has been said about that. Educational success comes with a solid grounding in the ability to read, and I love reading to all of them. And sometimes it's like if you don't have an hour, you'd better not start because that's how long you're going to be there.

Our children deserve a solid start in education, and so more teachers and support staff will be added to deliver the expected results. And the pressures of a growing student enrolment will be addressed with increased funding to school divisions. And we will continue to build more schools to be sure that a growing population receives an excellent education.

Mr. Speaker, to that end, here's the list: 14 new or consolidated school projects along with three major renovations, and planning started for nine new schools and two major renovations. And how will we deliver this aggressive plan without going deeper into debt? It's only with a strong and growing economy that the dollars needed will be available.

We must defend, nurture, and protect the investment climate that has brought a flurry of new projects and investments to Saskatchewan over the last decade and a half. Our government has a solid vision for a growing and prospering economy, a vision that is being fulfilled as we reach the growth targets — and exceed in many cases — that have been set in the past.

Mr. Speaker, the world needs more of Saskatchewan. We have the food, the fuel, and the fertilizer that is needed everywhere. And it is the most sustainably produced food, fuel, and fertilizer anywhere in the world. Saskatchewan is never going back to the days of have-not, and never going back to an attitude that says we will never grow and never be a have province. We will proudly take our place on the world stage and continue to grow and expand with the bountiful natural resources that we have been blessed with.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion moved by the member from Kindersley-Biggar and seconded by the member from Saskatchewan Rivers, and I will not be supporting the amendment from the members opposite. May God bless Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[15:15]

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

David Chan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with deep gratitude that I rise today to deliver my maiden speech in this esteemed Chamber. There are many who I wish to thank and acknowledge, but I first want to thank and acknowledge my Creator. To God, my Creator, I say you are first, you are all, and you always will be. I also want to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 4 territory.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour to stand in this Chamber and

represent my amazing, incredible community, the Yorkton constituency. I want to thank my constituents for the faith and trust they placed in me, and today I want to honour them. I want to honour Yorkton.

Mr. Speaker, my wife and I owe so much to the people of Yorkton. Eight years ago we made Yorkton our home and have been blessed by the friends we've made and many individuals, families, and couples who have brought so much richness to our lives. This is exactly what one can expect to find in the Yorkton constituency.

It is a community where business owners take care of you like family. I think of Alexander, owner of a local men's wear store. He's 82, able to retire, and yet he still chooses to serve his customers with the utmost personalized attention and excellence that brings one back to a time gone by — but not in Yorkton. In Yorkton it's not a time gone by. In Yorkton there's still Alexander.

In Yorkton you can go to the post office and know your postal worker by name. She'll put stickers on your parcels and weave bracelets for your kids because she knows it will brighten their day. You will always be greeted with a cheerful smile that brightens your day. And the customers waiting behind you while you chat at the counter like old friends, they're graciously smiling, knowing that you'll be mindful of their time as well. These are my constituents.

I think of Ernesto. Everyone loves EE Burritos, not just for the food but because it feels like coming to your El Salvadorean uncle's home for a nice hot meal, served with genuine warmth and hospitality. And if you have time, the stories Ernesto can share are every bit as good as the delicious food.

Mr. Speaker, I think of Dr. Lawale, a doctor, a pastor, owner of a walk-in clinic, relocated from Nigeria and helping many in the Nigerian community find their footing. Because of Dr. Lawale, Yorkton is a place where upon learning of your miscarriage, the doctor at your walk-in clinic will take just a few extra moments to hold your hand and pray with you while you shed your tears, remembering you from the time you visited his church.

Mr. Speaker, this is Yorkton. These are my constituents.

I'll mention just a few more. In my constituency are the good folks who own Yorkton Hyundai, Yorkton Concrete, N.L. Construction, who this Christmas decided no one in our community should go hungry and decided to launch the No More Hunger food drive, to support local non-profit Love Lives Here Yorkton, also started in Yorkton. And Love Lives Here has this wonderful love bus ministry which serves our homeless population with hot meals made and delivered with love.

These local businesses, like so many others, give and give and give and give back to the community that they are part of. And there are so many other businesses that I could mention. The business community in Yorkton is so generous and so supportive of our sports teams, our events, our Christmas parade. And this is Yorkton.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are people like the lady who told me plainly, I'm not voting for you but thank you for knocking on

my door and I really commend you. Or the grandmother who did not want to talk to a politician but ended up sharing her concerns about her grandson's struggle with depression. These are my constituents.

I think of the young man I met at the doors who overcame addiction, choosing to focus on the positive, going to work every day because he wants to be a good father and provide for his three-year-old son, something that he didn't have growing up.

I think of the health care workers who are incredibly passionate and committed to their work, their patients, and their professionalism. I think of the teachers I met, many of whom wanted to give me an earful, all of whom do their jobs from the heart.

I think of the many new Canadians carrying hopes and dreams, wanting as a payoff for their sacrifices nothing more than for their children to have better opportunities than they did to succeed.

I think of the discouraged men working hard labour, hurting from inflation, wishing with every bone in their body that Trudeau would just please go. Mr. Speaker, I believe most of those men voted for the Sask Party. These are my constituents, Mr. Speaker.

I stand here as a proud representative of the people of the Yorkton constituency. They are hard-working individuals. They are farmers and small-business owners, educators and health care workers, and countless others who contribute to Yorkton's success. They represent many cultures from around the world welcomed by the First Nations under Treaty 4. Together they make up a community that embodies Saskatchewan's values of hard work, determination, compassion, faith, and family. This is the Yorkton constituency.

Today as I begin this journey I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my constituents for entrusting me with this privilege. I'm here because of their belief in me, and I'm determined to repay that trust with dedication and integrity.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a moment to thank my wife. It is by no means lip service when I say, without her strength, support, and steadfast determination, I would not be standing here today nor would I be able to do what I do now. Watching her navigate her own journey of healing from trauma has taught me so much about what's possible and what it takes to face the inner darkness and overcome it with the light.

Our life together has been anything but easy or ordinary. From the very beginning it felt like we were thrust into some kind of a recovery boot camp where every day came with a challenge and required us to grow and learn to trust God.

Mr. Speaker, to my wife I say thank you. I honour the incredible person you are. You have shown me what it means to take hold of the Lord with unwavering faith to face every fear, every mountain, and to never ever give up. Every day my appreciation for you deepens. Thank you for relentlessly pursuing your freedom in Christ and for demonstrating what true perseverance looks like. Your example challenges me to be a better man, a better father, and a servant to this province.

Mr. Speaker, it's often said, and rightly so, that our families sacrifice so much for us to serve in this Chamber. My family is no exception. Just the other day my daughter asked me if I was going to work again, and when I said yes, she began to sob and tell me how much she missed me. That moment broke my heart but it also reminded me of the incredible role my children play in this journey.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to take an opportunity to honour my children as well. To my daughter Shalome, you are my first-born and I'm so proud of you. Your name means peace, peace that comes from wholeness within when there's nothing lacking and nothing broken. Already at seven years old your light shines bright. You, your sister, and your brother are my inspiration. I think of you three every day, and I hope that I will make you proud.

To my daughter Ysraela, you put a smile on my face and in my heart every time I hear your sweet little voice saying, Daddy, I love you. You are both strong and tender-hearted, and Daddy loves you right back. I love you more than you could know.

To my newborn son Josiah Conaniah, though you are still a baby, you are born to be a king, a king who serves from humility and love and in reverence for the King of Kings. I love you my son. Grow in wisdom and favour. I am so happy and grateful you are here. I could never have imagined how much joy you would bring to our family.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here in this Chamber, I'm filled with a deep and profound sense of gratitude. I realize I do not stand here on my own strength alone. I am standing on a foundation that was laid here by all those who have come before me and who have stewarded this Assembly to be passed on to the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, one of those who laid the groundwork for me to be here is my predecessor, the Hon. Greg Ottenbreit, former member for Yorkton. Greg served this Chamber, our constituency, and our province with unwavering dedication for 17 years. He worked tirelessly and relentlessly. And though he is clearly an old man — hi, Greg — any one of us young guys would be hard-pressed to keep up with him for even a day. He has left a lasting impact on the community of Yorkton. And today I want to honour him for all that he contributed and for paving the way for me to step into this work. Thank you, Greg.

Mr. Speaker, my gratitude also extends to the Saskatchewan Party and their transformative leadership that reshaped this province into a land of opportunity. You see I'm not originally from Saskatchewan. I was born in BC [British Columbia] and I vividly recall visiting Saskatchewan in 2003. I was here for a conference and at the time, the sense in the air, the atmosphere was just . . . it just seemed so stifled and depressed.

And you know, the economy felt stagnant. Development was lacking, housing prices unbelievably low. I remember my friend showing me houses for sale in Saskatchewan — 25,000; 30,000. And at that time, you know, for BC standards it was unbelievable, a house for \$30,000. But even at that price, no one wanted to come to Saskatchewan, even for housing at that low price. And this reflected the stagnant demand, the reality that Saskatchewan was not seen as a place of opportunity at that time.

But when I returned in 2009 to help my parents move here, and again when I moved here in 2016 and made Saskatchewan my home, the difference was striking. Under the leadership of the Saskatchewan Party the province was buzzing with progress, development was everywhere, the economy was thriving, and there was a palpable sense of optimism in the air.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government put Saskatchewan on the map. Today Saskatchewan is the place to be. People want to move their families here. This is because of the responsible, reliable leadership of the Saskatchewan Party government over the past 16 years and the positive vision they embrace and continue to embrace for this province.

That positive vision has turned into a momentum that continues today. In Yorkton companies like LDC [Louis Dreyfus Company], Grain Millers, Richardson, they're all making significant investments, expanding their operations, and demonstrating their trust in the stability and vision of our government. These investments strengthen our local economy and benefit our small businesses, workers, families, and new Canadians alike.

During my campaign I had the privilege of hearing the stories of the people in my community — their hopes, their struggles, their dreams. One young couple shared how the graduate retention program enabled them to save for a down payment on their first home, a home where they now raise their two children. Graduates today will similarly benefit from the 20 per cent increase to this program that our government will enact with the passing of this Throne Speech. Another parent told me how much the affordability measures announced in this Throne Speech would mean for their family, easing the burden of inflation.

Mr. Speaker, my community of Yorkton, like many others, also faces its share of challenges. We have experienced a shortage of health care providers, and we eagerly await the construction of a new health care facility. That's why it gives me immense pride to know that our government has set a goal for every person in Saskatchewan to have access to a primary health care provider by 2028, along with committing 2.6 billion to health care infrastructure. These commitments are not just numbers; they are lifelines for families in my constituency.

Similarly the emphasis on education in this Throne Speech is deeply meaningful, Mr. Speaker. I think of the many parents who spoke with me during my campaign, in particular the new Canadians. Their top concern was the quality of their children's education. They wanted to see a stronger focus on improving outcomes in math, reading, and writing. I believe these parents and many other parents will be thrilled to hear of our government's focus on improving kindergarten to grade 3 reading levels. It's a step in the direction these parents have asked for, and our government's pledge to increase funding to school divisions and increase support staff will also help to lead to better opportunities for our children.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at this point reflecting on the aspirations of new Canadians, I want to share some of my own family history and how it impacts my presence here today. And I'd like to honour my parents and my grandparents. Standing in this Chamber as a Member of the Legislative Assembly is deeply meaningful to me on a personal level. Mr. Speaker, I am proud

to be a first-generation Canadian, born into a family that sought opportunity, freedom, and refuge on Canadian soil. Both of my parents were born outside of Canada. They came here as children brought by their parents, my grandparents, in pursuit of a better life and a brighter future.

My family's story is one of fleeing communist oppression and finding hope in Canada. Back in the 1940s and '50s, my grandmother and her family owned a small amount of farm land around her village in China, and they had a handful of employees to farm that land. And because of this, during the rise of the communist regime, their land was confiscated and my grandmother's family was targeted.

The legacy of Marxist thought, which inspired communism, is that though it is predicated on the promise of delivering systemic justice, its track record is that of punishing whomever it deems to be an oppressor while doing very little to address actual, meaningful outcomes for those whom it deems to be oppressed.

In the case of my grandmother, because her family owned some small amount of land, they were part of the oppressor class. And as Marxist ethics would have it, someone had to be punished for it. Call it reverse oppression. As her father had already passed away, the choice was given, either her aging mother, herself, or her young daughter. Someone would have to be made an example from her family. So my grandmother offered herself to be the one to endure this Marxist rebalancing of power, rebalancing of systemic power, which included, for her, being tied up in the centre of her village, spit upon, and subjected to physical abuse. My grandmother was subjected to public humiliation, abuse, and torture at the hands of her government. That was the country she was born into.

[15:30]

Mr. Speaker, prior to these events, my grandfather, sensing the foreboding winds of change as communist rule became imminent, made the heart-wrenching decision with his wife to leave and come to Canada. Parting from her and the family in hopes of securing a better life for his family, he came to Canada alone, working as a farmhand. Long hours of hard labour in a foreign land to save enough money to bring his wife and children to this country. It took five long years of toil and separation, but he succeeded. Not only did my grandfather reunite his family, he also built a new life here. Starting with nothing, he eventually was able to open his own grocery store and bring his extended family to Canada as well. His and my grandmother's determination and sacrifices laid the foundation for the opportunities my family and I enjoy today.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand in the legislature, the son of immigrants, I carry this history with me. My grandparents' experience under the Marxist communist regime that denied them dignity and freedom make me profoundly grateful for what this Chamber represents, and I will say it plainly, a better system of government built upon better principles. Principles of free speech and the free exchange of ideas, on compassion, and rights of the individual. Rights based on recognition of the intrinsic worth of every person, no matter how loud or strong or talented they may be, nor how weak and vulnerable or unable to speak for themselves they may be. Our system of government was predicated on the belief that every life matters. Every person matters. It's because of this

very Chamber, this very Assembly, and all who respect and participate in our democratic system that the things that happened to my grandmother don't happen here.

The very fact that I am here participating in this democratic process stands in stark contrast to my grandmother's suffering under communism. It is a testament to how amazing and wonderful the promise of this country can be and how blessed we are to have this system of government. I am so grateful to Canada for what it has given to me and my family, grateful to those who built and established this nation, grateful for the treaties that opened the door for us all. Grateful that a Canadian Chinese boy from BC, born into an immigrant family, can grow up, settle down in Saskatchewan, be welcomed by the many wonderful people who make Yorkton a community, and be elected to stand in this Chamber as their MLA. Simply wow, Mr. Speaker. I am profoundly grateful.

This gratitude compels me not only to serve but to steward what has been given to me. I understand that I'm here because of the sacrifices of my grandparents, my parents, and countless others who believed in the promise of this country, and that I'm standing on the foundation laid by those who stewarded this legislature before me. It's now my turn to honour their legacies, not only by contributing to the betterment of our province, but also by ensuring that the freedoms and opportunities we cherish endure for future generations. I will work diligently to ensure that Saskatchewan remains a place of opportunity and promise, a place that future generations will be proud to call home.

And finally, specifically, Mr. Speaker, I'm here because of my constituents, and I will never forget that my primary duty is to serve as their voice in this legislature. I pledge to represent their concerns and their stories, to champion their aspirations, and to work diligently to ensure that their needs and their voices are heard. This is not a responsibility I take lightly, and I'm committed to bringing the spirit and values of those who put me here to every debate and decision in this House.

Before I finish I want to give a special thanks to my campaign team, my campaign manager, my financial agent, all those who volunteered countless hours. Everyone who's run in an election knows how very, very, very much it takes for a year, you know, year-long, non-stop. And I want to thank all of those individuals that sacrificed to see me standing here today. And Minister Carr and others who came, Minister Kaeding, Patrick, Dylan, everyone who supported me to be here, there's no way I would ever be standing here without all of you, each and every one of you. And to my campaign team, thank you so very much.

I know my mother's watching, so seeing that the Speaker . . . hi, Mom. She's very supportive of me.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just say one more thing. My wife and I have spent the last number of years working with youth, and I want to give a special mention to them because they're a big part of why I'm here. A special mention to Kahkewistahaw First Nation, Ochapowace First Nation, Cote First Nation. The youth that I've had the privilege to interact with from those First Nations have just impacted me in a way that I really don't have time to and I can't describe. And a huge part of my motivation to be here is in thinking about their future.

I would like to share a little story, if I may. I think about our youth and what they're going through. I think about the generation that's being born today and that is, you know, the young generation today. And they're experiencing a reality that we have never faced. We don't know what it's like. We don't know what it's like to live in this world and in social media. We don't know. And among the multitude of other challenges, you know, many of the youth that I worked with were impacted by intergenerational trauma.

The story I want to tell, I had two experiences. I had a friend from BC who shared with me her name. And this, it just stuck with me because her name meant "the girl who creates the wind when she dances." More than her name or the meaning of her name was the story of how she got her name.

And she shared with me that in her culture what happens is you'd bring the child . . . When the child was born, the mother would bring the child to the community and present the child to the Elders. And this group of Elders would each look at the child and see the child, and they would each speak something — something of a blessing, something of an identity — over that child. And then finally the senior Elder would give the name, taking into account everything that had been said.

And that's how she got her name. The Elders and the community all witnessing there gave her this name: The Girl Who Creates The Wind When She Dances. And pardon me of my one correction here. She received that name when she was an adolescent. But the reason is because for her, the Elders recognize that at different stages of life she needs to be given a new name, and so they would give her this name.

I also was in the Middle East for a time in Abu Dhabi. And names there are a little bit different than here. Their name is "I am the son of," you know, bin this, like you know, bin Abdul or whatever, and that means I'm the son of Abdul. But they can carry this list for many, many, many generations. And so a name isn't just a label. It connects you to generations past. It connects you to community. It connects you to others who say, I see you; I see something about you.

And I think of . . . I wonder if in our culture maybe we've lost something. You know, I work with a lot of these children, 9 years old, 10 years old, 11 years old, changing their names, you know, changing names like it's just a label. And I know in other cultures, in my family culture we would look at that and say, you know, your name connects you. It's not just a label. It connects you to your family. It connects you to your culture. It connects you to your history.

I think of my daughter. I looked at her when she was born. I gave her that name. And I would be concerned if she were to tell me, I don't want the name you gave me, Dad. I'm going to try a different name or I'm going to try this name. You know, imagine if that girl, you know, The Girl Who Creates The Wind When She Dances, if she said, I don't want that any more. I want to be called Sally now.

So as I'm here in this Chamber, I think of those youth and what they're going through, and I just . . . My heart is to see our society come around and remember that everything that we do is for the future generation.

In conclusion, I will be supporting the motion put forward by the member for Kindersley-Biggar and seconded by the member for Saskatchewan Rivers and I will not support the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina South Albert.

Aleana Young: — Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly an honour to stand in this Assembly once again and have the privilege of getting to continue this work following the last general election. And it really is just such a pleasure to be back. This is truly the honour of a lifetime.

And if I can just be a little bit sentimental in my opening remarks, it's just so wonderful to get to come to work in this building. Every day that I have the privilege to work here . . . And for members who may not know, I share an office in the community with the member from Regina Lakeview, the member from Regina Douglas Park, and as a consequence we don't keep MLA offices there. We work out of this building, because why, you know, why charge the taxpayer for two offices?

And every single day that I get to come into this building and walk up the big steps, I do like to give one of the pillars a pat just to ground myself in the privilege that all of us share here in getting to come to work. So few people — whether elected members, custodial staff, Clerks-at-the-Table, Speakers, folks in Hansard and broadcast services — so few people have had the privilege of working in this building. And it truly is a special club that we get to be a part of. And I really like to think about that and think about the great men and women who've come before us — all of us — and the important work that has been done to build this province and protect that which we hold in common.

As is customary, I'd like to start by thanking my constituents, the good people of Regina South Albert, who've placed their trust and their faith in me. This is not a responsibility that I take lightly. And while it is a little bittersweet not to be the member for Regina University any longer, I am pleased as punch to hand that title off to my new colleague who just gave a stellar maiden address here in the legislature and I'm quite confident will be the best member for Regina University that this Assembly has ever seen.

But you know, as the new candidate for Regina South Albert, for me knowing my constituency had changed by about 30 per cent following the boundaries and I'd only won by a couple of hundred votes in the last election, which was quite close, you know, I really knocked on thousands of doors, tried my best to engage with my constituents, to represent them. And I'm so grateful again for that responsibility and the privilege of being able to serve them here for the next four years.

I'd like to thank my opponents from the Green Party, the PC [Progressive Conservative] Party, and the Saskatchewan Party. And I'd like to in particular give a shout-out to the candidate for the Saskatchewan Party, Lucky Mehrok, who I had the opportunity to meet, both him and his wife, Manpinder, several times over the course of the campaign. And I could not have asked for a nicer opponent.

I've had the privilege of getting to bump into him a couple of times since the election and just want to take this opportunity to

thank him for such a good campaign — he was out there working hard, knocking doors — and wish him all the best in his endeavours with his wife, with his business, and with his three beautiful daughters.

I also wanted to thank the countless voters who opened their doors and their lives to me and to my team. Thank you so much. I know this is a sentiment shared by members on both sides of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, but knocking doors is such a privilege. For anyone who hasn't done it, outside of this building it is so grounding and humbling.

[15:45]

People are so generous, Mr. Speaker, with what they share with you, with how they treat you, and the trust they place in you when they share their views and their values, their stories, which are sometimes very, very hard to hear, very hard to share, I imagine, Mr. Speaker.

But knocking doors for a month in this beautiful October that we had was truly just the loveliest way to spend that month, on the doorstep in the fresh air in the sunshine, largely with my friend Ashantay just talking to voters.

I want to then take, of course, a moment to thank all of those wonderful people who worked so tirelessly on our campaign: my incredible staff, our volunteers. And again those countless people who share their views, their hopes, and small glimpses of their life with our campaign team — the seniors, the students, the doctors, the teachers, the retired professionals, new Canadians, business leaders, lawyers, those moms and babies.

True story, Mr. Speaker, some of my best sign deliverers were my friend Shayla and her seven-month-old baby, Ruth, who just did an astonishing job in between naps dropping off signs. And I want to say a massive thank you: our roving canvassers who did such a phenomenal job, and my shared officemates, the campaign team from Regina Pasqua as well as from Regina Lakeview, and all of our staff from here in Saskatchewan and from away.

We did have a few staff from away, Mr. Speaker, in my office, and I'm not going to go into the details. I had it in my notes, but I'm not going to tell this story. There was a young woman in our office who was from Ontario. And when she first got here she said, gosh, are Saskatchewan politics as interesting as politics in Ontario? Have you heard about the Greenbelt? Our politics are scandalous and cutthroat. And I remember just thinking, my gosh, where do I even begin with what's happened in Saskatchewan politics in the last two years.

And now I will not get into it, Mr. Speaker, because it feels slightly indiscreet, slightly indecent to go over it in the legislature in my maiden address. But Saskatchewan politics, I think, are truly some of the most interesting anywhere in Canada, certainly the most passionate and the most heartfelt. And that is a tradition I know we're all proud to be a part of and I look forward to continuing over the next four years.

I want to thank our central campaign team, our incredible campaign director, Cheryl Oates, the war room. I want to thank my local executive of Bert, Donna, Alex, Susan, Marylou, Lisa, Ahmed, Heather, and my fearsome, my fearless, and my much-

beloved constituency president, Kent Peterson.

And of course I want to give a special thanks to my family, Mr. Speaker. Without their love and continuing support, none of this would be possible for me. I want to thank my husband, my partner, Taylor, who is such a wonderful supporter. He's in the past year started a new career of his own. We do our best to try and be supportive of each other, and I'm so thankful that he supports me in getting to do this work. I'm so lucky to have such a wonderful partner and such an engaged dad and someone off on a new journey of his own professionally. And I couldn't be prouder of him.

I also want to thank my two sweet children, Hara and Kit, who are so excited but also so relieved that the election campaign is over. My children are fairly young but I don't think they're the youngest in the House anymore. I think that probably falls to the small . . . the mini-mes from Cumberland, Mr. Speaker.

But a brief update on my kids just because I love them so much. My son Kit — his full name is Coinneach, an old Gaelic name that we've burdened him with, with far too many vowels, but we just call him Kit — he's going to be two in March. He is sturdy. He is affectionate. He's incredibly energetic. He cuddles and holds on like this tiny, blond, dark-eyed little koala. There was a brief moment when I thought he would be very laid back, go with the flow, very relaxed, you know. I'd have one more energetic child and one that was a little bit more mellow. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. He is just as opinionated and headstrong as his sister. He loves the outside, balls, books, shoes, baths, dropping things, dropping himself, falling off or into every couch corner or height he can find. And he does this all while explaining, whoopsie or uh-oh, which are his favourite words. He also eats Kraft Dinner with truly a historic level of enthusiasm, Mr. Speaker. That is really remarkable to see.

My daughter Hara, she just turned four. She's feisty. She's loving. She's imaginative, loves singing, dancing, swimming, snuggling her mom, and waking up in the middle of the night to just take a little break. And she's just amazing at making friends and being kind. You know, honestly, Mr. Speaker, I thought the 2020 election campaign would probably be the most challenging physically and emotionally for me, kind of on a personal level.

But you really don't know what you don't know, and running an election campaign, as I'm sure members on both sides know with a young family — or doing anything with a young family — can be a real challenge. So I just really wanted to thank my kids for being so understanding of everything that took their mom away from them.

And I also want to give a special shout-out to my constituents. There were two days in the election campaign where, due to child care, I had to bring one child door knocking with me. It was that or not go. So I brought Hara, who had a whale of a time. She loved it. It may have traumatized her when I took her out trick-or-treating for Halloween a week later. She kept calling it door knocking and going up to people's doors, ringing the doorbell, taking a respectful step back, her hands behind her back, waiting. And she'd say, Mom, we don't have any flyers. And I'm like, no, no, like they give us candy now. But I wanted to give a special thank you to all the constituents who opened their doors to us that day. We were met with snacks, warmth, puzzles, and in one

particularly memorable interaction, the offer of a kitten, which I was sad but not sad to decline.

Normally I'd make a point of thanking my dad, but as I mentioned the other day, he was up north in Cumberland, helping the member there secure his seat. And I want to thank that member and his family again. Just what a remarkable opportunity I know that was for my dad. He just had a wonderful time getting to truly experience the North with northerners on an election campaign.

I want to thank my friends because I never see them. I'm a terrible friend, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure all of us are. When we think about the people who we see the least in our life, it's probably our friends outside of politics who are the most patient with us.

And I used to joke, Mr. Speaker, that the most important person in my life after my children was my CA, Jocelyn Adema, with no disrespect to my husband. But I can't say enough about what an extraordinary leader she is, what a strong professional, how capable she is. And despite all of that, Mr. Speaker, she has left me. She's still my friend, but she's taken over the role of director of tour for the Leader of the Opposition, and I couldn't be prouder of her and more thankful that she's taken on this role to help us all.

Like to recognize — I'm almost through my thank yous — my interim CA, John Tzupa, for helping shepherd our office through this transition; my wonderful practicum student, Ashantay McKenzie-Missens; and our office staff here. Cheryl and Jannet, a lot has been said about them and the hole that their retirement, their departure, leave certainly in our office but also our heart. I know personally they always took such good care of me from my first days in this beautiful building.

I want to recognize also our brain trust of Kelsey and Zoé; Brock, Chris, and Landen in comms; our trusted, true, and brilliant Mitch Bonokoski, our director of research and now deputy chief of staff; our new chief of staff, Jeremy; and everybody who's worked in our office over the years, Mr. Speaker, from Emily to — I don't know if I can name her if I'm speaking about her — but the member for Regina University, who was our chief of staff, as well as Janielle, Dave, and our former chiefs of staff, Kat Norton and Warren McCall. We've just been so lucky in the people who helped us along over the last several years and are continuing that good work.

And of course I'd like to thank my leader, the member for Regina Lakeview, who I've had the pleasure of knowing for well over a decade, before politics. And she just ran an absolutely breakneck campaign. It was such a joy to watch. It was full of heart and vision, and I am so excited for the next four years under her leadership, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also be remiss if I didn't offer a warm welcome and thanks and appreciation to you on your ascension to the Chair. Congratulations on attaining what has historically been often the most thankless job, and recently one of the more controversial jobs, in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. You know, I know you and I know many in this building beyond will be watching these proceedings carefully to ensure that they go forward in a mindful, equal, egalitarian, and respectful way, and I want to offer my sincere congratulations to you.

You have our commitment on this side to be thoughtful, to be respectful. And that is a commitment to members opposite as well, but that does not mean we are going to shy from uncomfortable, direct, or difficult issues. Nor does it mean we're going to cede debate on issues that we believe matter to the people of this province. We'll be unrelenting, Mr. Speaker, because democracy isn't just something that we care about on Remembrance Day. It's something that we have to guard and protect every single day. It's something that we cherish, especially in these times of uncertainty, times of division, and times of war. So I'd like to thank colleagues on both sides, new and returning members, for their commitment, their support, the energy and the integrity that they're bringing to this role.

And now to my colleagues on this side, Mr. Speaker. I know we didn't win, and I know that's kind of the ball game, right? That's the point. That's what we do. And yet I was talking to a former member of the Legislative Assembly who had served in both opposition and government. Actually I was talking to two. Both had served in opposition and government, which is a rarity in this place these days. The first was a former MLA for the Saskatchewan Party, and he said — I'm not going to directly quote him, but it was something like — I remember an election when the winners seemed like losers and the opposition, even though they lost, they felt like winners and they acted like it. They brought energy, they brought enthusiasm, and people began to see them as winners.

The second member I was talking to, Mr. Speaker, was actually former premier Calvert. And hopefully he doesn't mind me sharing this. I didn't check with him first. He shared with me that the most fun he had in this legislature prior to being premier was after the 1986 election when their team, though in opposition, they were on the hunt. They were full of energy and they were a team. So to my teammates, I am so pleased to serve alongside you and so eager to get to work. And like the member for Regina University said, we are going to be tough as nails.

In sitting to write this speech, which is not my maiden address, Mr. Speaker, but my inaugural address in this, the thirtieth legislature, I thought a lot about the campaign. And I do want to recognize one thing that was particularly meaningful for me, a positive in the campaign, and that was the attention paid to fertility care. I was really glad to see that in the platforms of both parties in this election. It's not enough. It's not what was asked for. It's not what's needed. But I'm so proud of the advocacy that the people of this province, from all over this province, put forward over the last several years to push for change.

Some of that advocacy work was hard, Mr. Speaker. I've spoken about it in the past. We talked about it during the campaign. I hate and I still hated the heckles and the derision and what I felt was a level of disrespect. And I still don't love that people are still expected to have that money up front, because for families who don't have that money up front, they can't grow those families.

So I think this is still something, Mr. Speaker, that I hope is addressed because a tax credit doesn't help people who can't afford it in the first place, and not having money shouldn't be the barrier to people who want to have children and grow their families and grow this province. But I am so proud, Mr. Speaker, that we are no longer one of the only provinces in Canada that

offers nothing for fertility care and those who need access to it.

So I thought about the campaign, Mr. Speaker, and we came through a campaign that was energetic and at other times was divisive, as election campaigns often are. And we've heard in the last couple weeks, Mr. Speaker, a lot about the need for decorum, for respect in this Assembly. And I'd like to quote the former member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, the great Warren McCall, who said when we were discussing this . . . He said, I'm from a show-me state. Don't tell me; show me.

So to the members opposite, that's our ask. Don't tell us; show us. We're not stupid. We're not suffering from mass delusion, Mr. Speaker. We haven't forgotten the past words and actions, things that have happened inside this House and outside of it, haven't forgotten how this Assembly broke for the holidays last year, Mr. Speaker. It's also not lost on us that this commitment for decency, for decorum is coming now, when it's not four-to-one odds. Now it's a fair fight. That's not lost on us.

[16:00]

And there have been opportunities even recently to show this change, Mr. Speaker. And I ask, what harm is there in investigating food pricing in northern Saskatchewan? Beyond maybe addressing food pricing in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I thought about what we heard in this campaign and what we continue to hear from people in the province. And it's concerns that will not be new to members on either side: cost of living, concern for health care, education; people who couldn't get calls returned, emails, couldn't get that engagement from their elected officials that they so desperately needed; business owners who used to be able to pick up the phone and have somebody answer and feel that respect, feel that engagement, who got nothing.

This is the first election, Mr. Speaker . . . It's the third one I ran in. This is the first election where I would knock on the door and somebody would come to the door and they would say, well my son-in-law is a teacher, or I'm a teacher, so you will have my vote. I've never heard people who care about education self-declare that way on the doorstep. Ditto for people with young children. Ditto for health care workers.

We heard concern for cost of living, which is a really neat term, Mr. Speaker, one that really concerns that angst, that anger that people fear in this province — people who are working harder than ever and falling farther behind, people who feel poorer than they were five years ago.

Yes, we have a province that's more affordable than, you know, the GTA [Greater Toronto Area] or Toronto. And yet people are still struggling here worse than ever. And what does that tell us, Mr. Speaker? Should be an honest day's work for an honest day's wage. And the people of this province should be left with money to spend, to save, to take a vacation, enjoy the life that they work so hard for. And yet despite the wealth of this province, Mr. Speaker, and the hard work, people still struggle, and so we will be unrelenting.

And this should be a call to arms for everyone in the province,

Mr. Speaker. This should be of concern to everybody because, Mr. Speaker, when I think about the economy, when I think about what's at stake in these next four years, I think about the past, actually, and what has been built in this province and what is eroding. Those are the institutions that are part of our legacy here in Saskatchewan. When I think about a bright future and a strong economy, when the economy does well, Mr. Speaker, people do well. And when people aren't doing well, it is hard for the economy to do well. We need a plan for this province, Mr. Speaker, to meet the needs of the public.

The uranium, the oil, the gas, the forests, the soil, the life that we have in this province, Mr. Speaker, the economy that we could and should have here, the benefit of the economy in Saskatchewan should go to the people of Saskatchewan. The interests and the resources of this province should support people here, not people in Alberta or shareholders in California. We in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, must control our future and keep our future in our own hands because there is nothing more admirable than being self-sufficient and self-reliant.

The most progressive thing that we can do in this province, Mr. Speaker, is invest in ourselves, invest in Saskatchewan families, workers, and businesses. We need to stop selling off Saskatchewan and selling out Saskatchewan. We need that strong economy, Mr. Speaker, because a strong social net is not possible without a strong economy.

And our forefathers, they knew this. This is a province that literally bootstrapped itself into Confederation, and we did it together. When Saskatchewan wasn't being served by the big interests on Bay Street, we did it ourselves. And we did it with Crowns. We did it with co-ops, with small businesses, with innovation, families, and farms.

If we don't protect those institutions, Mr. Speaker — be it Crowns, be it our small businesses, be it our industry, our forests, our mines, our farms, our families — we will forfeit that opportunity that we have here in this province. And we only have to look to Alberta or to Ontario, across this country, to see the results of privatization of essential services delivered by Crown corporations on affordable, reliable power; on affordable, reasonably priced insurance; on connectivity; on the accessibility of cell service.

So today, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to just take that brief opportunity to draw some attention to some of these new realities that I think we need to acknowledge and grapple with if we are going to be up to our task of bringing growth and prosperity to everyone in Saskatchewan. And I think, Mr. Speaker . . . I worry, Mr. Speaker, that this may mean different things to members on different sides of this aisle, and I hope I'm wrong.

So to members opposite, that is my ask: please prove me wrong. Because the most progressive thing that we can do and the most progressive thing that we will do is build a strong economy and a strong province of self-sufficient, self-reliant people who help their neighbours and believe in building this province together, believe in leaving it better than they found it. Because it's very hard to lend your neighbours a helping hand if you're just hanging on by your fingernails.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're a team who believes in change. We're a

team that believes, and we believe in hope. We've changed this legislature, and we are going to change the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to end on just this: you know, it's not just New Democrats in the province who feel this way, and I hope that message has been heard loud and clear through the election results. Anybody can walk down a street in Saskatchewan and see that their community is struggling and see that this beautiful province has not been stewarded with the love and care and respect that it deserves.

Mr. Speaker, I think about a bright future. I think about a strong economy. And I hear this government say that they have heard the need for change. And while I've listened to the Speech from the Throne, I've listened to the answers in the House this past week. Some of the speeches are responses to the Throne Speech. And I listen to all that talk about change and, Mr. Speaker, I worry that that is not going to be change that works for everyone.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I guess my final message is going to be that we're going to push hard. We're going to push back, especially considering so far this week, even today, we've seen every opportunity to demonstrate that change in a real way missed. And people do need change.

Mr. Speaker, I think as what may be — I should have checked this — the first MLA for Regina South Albert, I hope, as I said four years ago, I'm going to do my best in this role to be guided by common sense, basic decency, hopefully a sense of humour from time to time, although that may be questionable, but most importantly I think the memory of the conversations that I've had on the doorsteps, the memories of what's happened in this legislature and outside of it, because we've got a job to do, Mr. Speaker, and we will be unrelenting. You have my promise. Now let's get to work.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Warman.

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's great to be on my feet this afternoon. And I'd like to begin by congratulating you on becoming Speaker of the House. We've known each other for probably about four years, a little more than four years, and I think you're going to do a terrific job. You're already demonstrating that and, you know, really, honestly I can't think of a better person to be sitting in that Chair.

And to your colleague from Lumsden-Morse, the Deputy Speaker: again congratulations to you. And I think you two will do an absolutely terrific job in maintaining, you know, the House and everything that goes with it.

So that's where I'd like to begin today. And I'd also like to congratulate all the new MLAs from both sides of the House. The last few days we've had a chance to listen to maiden speeches. We've learned a little bit about your personal lives and some of the triumphs and some of the tragedies and some of the genuine stories. And it's really enlightening and I think it's really exciting — 31 new members in this Assembly. And everyone is bringing a whole bunch of new perspectives, and that's a good thing for our province. So to all the new MLAs: really enjoyed listening to your maiden speeches, and really looking forward to what you've got to offer over the next four years.

In addition to that, all the returning MLAs and my colleagues on this side of the House as well as the members opposite that are returning, congratulations on a successful re-election. You know, election time, it's a fun time. It's campaign time. You get a chance to talk to people you maybe don't normally get a chance to talk to during your term as an MLA. So you know, those campaign days are long. No one's going to argue that. It's go, go, go, and then you can finally take a breath after you're done. And you know, it's so satisfying on election night when you see the results come in and they're in your favour. So to all the members that were re-elected, congratulations and welcome back.

Speaking of campaigns, I had a terrific campaign team this time around, Mr. Speaker. It's my second campaign, and you know, my campaign team was headed up by Ivan Gabrysh. And Ivan is a retired city manager for the city of Warman, a lifelong resident of the province, mainly in Warman, Hague, that area. And Ivan was my rock. He was essentially my boss for 28 days — well maybe even longer; probably closer to 50, 60 days — where he said, you know, well put the coffee down; you got stuff to go do; get out and go do it. So for Ivan and his leadership in my campaign office, I just want to say thank you.

Some additional people: Whitney Friesen. Whitney, I believe he said this was his ninth provincial election campaign where he was involved as either campaign manager or financial agent or a volunteer coordinator. And he kind of does it all. I mean he's in there. So to Whitney: I know you're probably one of four people watching right now, so thank you so much for everything during the campaign.

To my sign crew, headed up by Gerald Vance. We also had Angela. We had Don, Terry, Josh, Jerry, Tim, and a few others as well. And we're missing one of our campaign team this time around, from 2020, and her name is Darlene Buyck. And Darlene was the face that greeted people when they came through the door in 2020.

And Darlene had to move into a home earlier this year, so she wasn't able to join us in our campaign. We did however take her a sign, a lawn sign for her suite in Saskatoon, and had a good visit with her prior to the . . . or maybe it was just after the writ was dropped. So to Darlene: we want to thank you for everything that you've done. Thank you for all the support over the years, and know that we're thinking about you and we'll try to get in to visit you very soon, okay.

So had a great campaign team. It was a fun 28 days. We knocked a lot of doors and spoke to literally hundreds if not thousands of people.

Prior to the election I was invited to serve in cabinet at the end of May. So I got to know some people that I had known but didn't really know, and that was my staff in the SaskBuilds office, that staff headed up by Sean Wilson as chief of staff. And they say you never forget your first. Well my first ministry, so I'm not going to forget Sean. I'm not going to forget Bonnie. I'm not going to forget Puja, Josh, Rashawn for the four and a half months that I was there. Man, you talk about a group of people that can take an individual from knowing this much to knowing this much in a short period of time, that was the group. So to that staff in the SaskBuilds minister's office: thank you so much for that four and a half months. It was extremely enjoyable and very

rewarding.

My current ministry, the Social Services staff upstairs, again I don't know what to say. They are some of the most professional, some of the hardest-working people that I've ever been able to work beside, and I'm so proud of the work that they do. And that's Lee Guse, my chief of staff, who is everything "goose." So if you're looking for Christmas gifts for Lee, anything with a goose will probably do. Just keep that in mind.

My senior admin, Ariann. What a way to begin every morning, walking in, "morning." And you know, conversation just starts to flow and it's, you know . . . Ariann is a great senior admin. She keeps me organized, you know. I can't say enough. Jessika, Kamel, Wynonna, Zach — they're all absolutely amazing people, and this province is served very well by my minister's office staff.

[16:15]

I want to also say a big thank you. In the first four years I served as a private member I spent a lot of time in the caucus office and learning the ins and outs from the caucus office staff and learning about all the work that they do and the invaluable work that our caucus office staff do. So to our chief of staff, Ang Currie, to Kim, Troy, Mathew, Shelby, Cien, Aliyah. You know, I try to get down there the odd time for coffee when I've got a few minutes, when I'm not busy in my office. But you know, every chance I get, I try to come by and say hello and find out what's happening in the world of caucus.

Going back to the campaign, I just want to give a shout-out to the other candidates in the Warman constituency who ran. Putting your name on a ballot is not something a lot of people want to do. Let's be quite honest. Politics, it's difficult. It's difficult on your psyche sometimes. It's difficult on families. And for those individuals that did put their name on a ballot, I want to say thank you. And that includes Erica Baerwald, Eryn Early, Mark Friesen, and then we also had a Green Party candidate that I can't recall right off the top of my head. But I do want to say thank you to them for putting their name on the ballot and participating in the campaign.

I want to say thanks to the building staff. We have LDSU [legislative district security unit]. We have, you know, people in Hansard that are recording everything that we say, Legislative Assembly Service custodial staff. We've got Linda and the staff downstairs in the cafeteria, which happens to be one of my favourite places to go — just saying. I know. You're a runner, Mr. Speaker. We might have to start running a little bit. We've got Pages. We have the Sergeant-at-Arms office. And there's so many individuals that make this place run smoothly and efficiently, and I just want to say thank you to them as well for everything that they do.

My family, I'm not going to forget them. Most important people in my life. My wife, Angela, who up until Throne Speech day had never sat in this Assembly. For four years she had not been able to attend a sitting day. She's been to the legislature but we haven't been sitting, so this year's Throne Speech was an incredibly momentous occasion for her.

She was able to come and actually see what we do. Even though

it wasn't a typical sitting day — it was Throne Speech — she was proud. I've never seen her eyes that big. She was so happy to be here, Mr. Speaker. Four years she waited for this moment, and she's going to be back soon. She's hooked. So I want to say thank you to my wife, Angela. You know, we're 19 years now married, two wonderful children. We've got a son, Asher, who's now 18, and a daughter, Kolbie, who is 10, turning 11 in February — two very active children.

Asher graduated from high school earlier this year and he's currently working, and I think he's going to be having a career in the military very, very soon. He's been meeting with different members of Reg Force in the army, and I think that's the route he's going to go. And I'm proud of him. I'm very proud. I've had people say, well aren't you worried? I'm not worried in the least. If my son as a young man wants to serve his country, so be it. I'm proud of him for doing that. So I hope he does pursue that course. No matter what he decides to do for a career, Mr. Speaker, I'll be proud of him regardless. He's a smart young man and he's got a great future.

My daughter Kolbie. You want to talk about two polar opposite kids? There you go. Kolbie is like her dad — creative, just doesn't have an off switch. She's go, go, go. And she cares about people. She has a heart of gold, Mr. Speaker.

A couple weeks ago we got, it was in the neighbourhood of around a foot of snow. It was a Sunday morning. I get my ski pants on and I get my jacket and my balaclava and my gloves, and I'm getting ready to go blow snow with the snow blower and get the driveway cleaned out. As I'm doing that, as I'm going along with the snow blower, I notice Kolbie going down the sidewalk with her shovel. I'm like, well okay, where is she going? Couldn't figure it out.

It wasn't until I put the snow blower away and I was shovelling up some of the loose snow that the snow blower couldn't get, she came back with her shovel. And I said, "Where were you?" And she says, "I was down at the park." I'm like, "Well why were you at the park with your shovel?" She says, "I was making a path to the different play structures, so little kids wouldn't have to go through the snow if they wanted to go play."

I thought, you know, that's pretty neat. For a 10-year-old to take that kind of initiative to go think of kids younger than her that might want to go play at the playground and couldn't get through deep snow, she shovelled out a trail for them. I thought, that's pretty cool. So I'm very proud of my daughter. She's thoughtful, she's caring, and she's so creative, Mr. Speaker.

And she's also a drain on my bank account and my wife's bank account because she's a cheerleader, and anyone that knows anything about cheerleading knows it ain't a cheap sport. And again being that she's a cheerleader, I'm very, very proud of her. And they have a competition coming up in Lloydminster, so I've already promised the member from Lloydminster that we're going to be up there this weekend. Maybe we'll have some time for a coffee and we'll visit and that kind of thing.

You know, the member from Regina South Albert made reference to she's the first MLA for Regina South Albert. Well I'm proud to say I'm the first MLA for Warman. Not Martensville-Warman any longer, Mr. Speaker, but just Warman,

right? And it's the constituents of Warman, the constituency of Warman, the city of Warman that returned me to this legislature. And I just have to say thank you. I have to say thank you for that support, and know that every day that I'm here, I'm working on their behalf.

When we look at the Throne Speech, Warman's actually mentioned in the Throne Speech, and it made me so happy when I saw that. Warman's grown, Mr. Speaker, by over 160 per cent since 2007. One particular reason why Warman has grown by 160 per cent since 2007, Mr. Speaker, when did we form government? What year was that? 2007. People see opportunity under this government. Warman has grown from roughly 4,000 people to over 14,000 people as we stand here today. People see opportunity in this province.

Even more encouraging, Mr. Speaker, this growth has been fuelled largely by young people, young families. The average age in Warman is 35.3 years of age. That means kids. That means vibrant neighbourhoods. That means lots to do. And it's a great place to raise a family. And that is something I am so proud of, being from Warman.

We have a very robust housing market. I often joke with the member from Swift Current, every time I go home, especially during construction season, there's new basements that weren't there when I left for Regina four days ago. There's new houses that have been framed that weren't there, you know. We have like a 124-unit apartment complex that was started back in the spring, and it's nearing completion. Like the growth is just absolutely amazing. We've got another ice surface being added on to the Legends Centre or the Warman Home Centre Communiplex. We've got construction everywhere.

Warman Truss is effectively doubling their production line building trusses. Well strong economy means things are being built, so if there is more trusses being needed around the province, that's why they're doubling their production, because the demand is there. That means we have an economy that is firing on all cylinders and things are busy.

As I said, we have a strong and growing business community. We have lots of small businesses opening up. Literally every week there's a new business or two opening up in Warman. Lot of them are family businesses. I think of, you know, Pretty Little Pieces clothing boutique. Laskowski and Wright accounting, chartered professional accountants, just built a brand new complex that will house not only their accounting firm, but they've added staff and they've also built extra leasable space for small businesses. We have a game store in town — like board games — where you can go in. You can sit down; you can play board games. You like it, you can buy it and take it home.

These are the businesses that make the fabric of our communities. And when we have these types of businesses in our communities, Mr. Speaker, it makes every community in our province a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Warman is just one example of that. It's happening all over the province, Mr. Speaker.

I should go past Warman and really talk about some of the other communities in my constituency. I've got the town of Hague now, and Hague is an absolutely wonderful community. You talk

about having some of the best burgers in the province — Jake's in the Shell on Highway 11. You get a chance to stop at Jake's, you do it. It's a burger that quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, you don't want to miss.

And if the burger doesn't quite fill you up, just a couple steps down in that same complex there's a bakery. That bakery has some of the best cinnamon buns in the province, bar none. I've been visiting there, and if you can't really tell, which is why I've said to the Speaker maybe it's time that we could start running together. He could show me a thing or two.

But in all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, the town of Hague, you know, fabulous people. And it's a community that I've known for a while prior to being elected. We used to own the community newspaper that served that area, and Hague was part of our area. So I've gotten to know some people there over the years, not just since it became part of my constituency. So lots of familiar faces. Met a whole, whole lot of new ones as well.

And then if you go straight west of Hague you run into the town of Hepburn — another community, Mr. Speaker, that's growing. There's new houses being built in Hepburn. That wasn't the case back in the '90s. You know, Hepburn was a village of probably 500 people, 600 people. They're now nudging close to 1,000 people.

And they have a museum of wheat. If you're looking for some history of our province and how agriculture ties into our smaller communities, plan a trip and go visit the Hepburn Museum of Wheat in the summertime. It will absolutely fill the gaps in terms of what you thought and what you might think. And everything will be there for you. And it's such a wonderful place, Mr. Speaker.

And then there's all the smaller hamlets and settlements in the constituency, places like Neuanlage. Neuanlage at one time was a Mennonite settlement that had probably 15, 20 homes. They were all on an acre or two. Neuanlage is probably close to about 800 people now. Like it's an organized hamlet, but it's bordering on town status. No businesses in Neuanlage but a lot of residents, a lot of great brand new homes, young families. Places like Rheinland. We have places like Blumenheim. You know, there's several.

And this is what makes the constituency of Warman unique in our province, is there's so much Mennonite history there. And I'm so proud to represent that area and all the agricultural producers that are there as well. So I've got a nice mix of urban and I've got rural, and that makes me very happy because I grew up as a small-town kid. So I've got the best of both worlds, and I couldn't be happier.

You start talking about this year's Throne Speech and all the positivity. This side, we are a very positive group of people. We have been for the past 17 years as government.

[16:30]

There is no room to start running down our economy, running down our people, running down our province. We're very, very happy. We are very confident. And what we are doing as a government is growing our province. And when you grow the

province, it gives you the ability to pay for the services that people are expecting.

I'm just going to touch on very briefly something in my ministry that I think is very important to people all around the province, and that's our Saskatchewan accessibility plan. Our Saskatchewan accessibility plan was released yesterday, and there's so much in here that I really think, people, if you haven't had a chance to read through the accessibility plan, you need to.

It touches on several goals of our government: improving employee knowledge and awareness of accessibility; making government buildings more accessible; making our provincial parks more accessible; improving the accessibility of government programs and services.

Making digital content. You wouldn't think . . . well, you know, it's online. But there's disabled people in our province that struggle with the things that are online. So making that digital content more accessible to them is a goal, and it's a goal that over the next three years we're going to work on and we're going to achieve.

You know, supporting a diverse workforce within government. Making sure that we can do more to accommodate and welcome disabled people into the workforce within the provincial government context and, by extension, into small businesses and throughout our communities. So I just wanted to throw that in there. I know the accessibility plan maybe wasn't part of the Throne Speech, but I think it's an important part of what we're doing as government when it comes to serving the people of this province.

And another area within my ministry that I really want to point out in the Throne Speech is the SAID program, you know, increasing that threshold by \$1,000. That is going to help those that are receiving SAID benefits do more. That will be coming into effect as part of our Bill 1 through, I believe, the affordability Act.

Another one, my grandparents are no longer around. My parents are, but I'm getting close. So when I saw that the personal care home benefit is increasing — not going to be long, just saying.

An Hon. Member: — Six months.

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Six months. Well my wife says, like I have no more to go white. Everything's white now. So I've crossed the bridge. We're kind of on the back nine here, as we like to say in golf.

But in all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the Throne Speech and I look at what we're doing in education, when I look at what we're doing in health care, what we're doing to keep our communities safe and keep our residents safe, and really refocusing on a new beginning as a government makes me so proud to be able to hold this document up and refer to it. And I really look forward to being part of this group as we move forward on this Throne Speech.

So you know, I look at what we're doing. And is it a challenge? Yeah, it's a big challenge. We have some big things to do. But it's this group, this group on this side of the House that I know,

just from conversations — and some of them I've only known for probably a month or two — but I can tell just in those initial conversations that they have the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan at heart. And I'm so proud to be able to serve with this group. And we're going to do it, Mr. Speaker.

The Throne Speech is a guiding document, and we are going to accomplish what we have in there. We are going to work hard. We're going to listen to the people of the province, and I really am looking forward to being in here each and every day working on behalf of the people of this province.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the amendment put forward by the opposition, but I will be supporting the motion made by the member from Kindersley-Biggar — who has great hair, by the way — and seconded by the hon. member from Saskatchewan Rivers. And we will work on his hair next. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to rise in this House again as the member for The Battlefords, after again being given that honour by the residents of North Battleford and Battleford and the rural municipality of North Battleford in this past October's election.

It's not an honour that I take lightly, and I'd like to remind all members in the House, there's really no bad seat in this House. It's an honour to serve here. There's 61 seats. We are elected by the people, for the people, to serve, and you know, I've heard many members say it already. You know, it is an honour to be here, and it's a gift that's given to us by the residents of our communities.

And I hope that I never forget that, you know, and what helps me with that is I've got a town of Battleford flag and a city of North Battleford flag in my office. So I really like flags, Mr. Speaker, and so those flags help remind me who I represent each and every single day. And I'm very grateful to them for the opportunity again to serve them here in this legislature.

You know, when it comes to the campaign that was run over the last several months, Mr. Speaker, I always find it so humbling when . . . I mean obviously for any of us it's our name on the sign or our face on the billboard or us commenting in the newspaper or on the radio or whatever it may be. But, Mr. Speaker, I always find it so humbling when people step up and offer to help you for free. They're volunteers, you know, and I think that's such really an incredible thing.

And you know, I'm blessed again with a really solid campaign team this year and I would just say . . . I'll get to the people that live in and call The Battlefords home in a minute. But, Mr. Speaker, I would just say I was really fortunate to have, you know, several of our other candidates and really just friends that I've made over the last four years touring around the province, Mr. Speaker, come to The Battlefords and help me knock on doors on a Saturday or a Tuesday, or you know . . . And that was also humbling to have people drive four, five hours each way and take time either out of their campaign, or you know, that they're running for themselves or another campaign that they're working

on.

And you know, I think about the group of young people that we had up from Saskatoon one of the days, and just really humbling, Mr. Speaker, to have those folks come and put in some elbow grease to help us get back to this place, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we had just a fantastic local contingent of people step up. And you know, the two people I need to thank in particular, Mr. Speaker, a husband-and-wife team, campaign manager and financial agent — Susan Knibbs, my campaign manager, and Alvin Knibbs, my financial agent. And you know, obviously when you're the candidate you put a lot of . . . I mean you're in campaign mode 24-7, and same with your spouse and family in a way. But I got to say Alvin and Susan just did, I would say, an incredible job in terms of motivating volunteers, organizing volunteers. And you know, we helped each other stay focused on what mattered in the campaign, and again that is The Battlefords and the people of The Battlefords. And you know, that was really refreshing to be able to run a campaign like that.

So many other names though. I think about Bart Wood who ran our sign crew. And you know, in addition to running the sign crew, I mean he was door knocking with me solid pretty much from June a couple nights a week at least all the way till October 28th. Just a fantastic volunteer.

My friend Warren Williams, who was actually able to join us here for Throne Speech last week. And you know, Warren took a week and a half off work at the end of the campaign to help get our campaign over the line. When you've got friends that do that for you, that is incredibly humbling, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very honoured by their contributions.

You know, Linda and Greg and Shane and Al and Duane and Derek and Viv and Gord and Herb — that's Herb Cox by the way, Mr. Speaker, former member for The Battlefords — Karen and Darcy and Gail and Dennis and Claudette and Jardeth and Danae and Scott and Julia, Schalon and Karen. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I'm probably missing, you know, 5 or 10 more. You know, I tried to look at my spreadsheets and make sure I had everybody, but I'm sure I missed a couple folks that maybe snuck in and door knocked a couple nights that I overlooked.

Again just a big thank you, a big thank you to the campaign volunteers that saw fit to put their shoulder to the grindstone and again give me the honour of being back here in this House, in this seat, Mr. Speaker. And I'll have more to say about the campaign, you know, and what I noticed on the campaign maybe later in my comments, Mr. Speaker.

I also need to thank my two constituency assistants that served up to the writ drop and then obviously were back to work November 1st after the election, back to serving the people of Battlefords and trying to deliver for our community. You know, and that's Gail Feser and Claudette McGuire. Real privilege to get to work with these two ladies. You know, people that are well known in the community. I've talked about them before. Been able to have them down to the legislature before, and I hope they can join us again here in Regina at some point soon.

You know, these are ladies, responsive and resourceful, and again all about making sure that people in our community can

access the services that they need to access. And you know, I think so much of what you do locally is not what you do, but how you do it, right. And you know, sometimes I think as MLAs we don't always have the best answer for our constituents, right. And I just want to thank Gail and Claudette for their work and sometimes being able to deliver tough news or unfortunate news in as nice of a manner as possible.

You know but, Mr. Speaker, the most important thank you really goes to my family. And I would say, you know, the politics over the last year got pretty personal at times, and nobody pays the price for that more than our families. And you know, I'll just say for my family and my wife's family, constant support over the last four years, especially over the last year or so as I have been in a more public role serving in the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and continue to support in ways that are emotional and spiritual but also very practical as well in supporting my wife and I.

I'll say my wife, Meagan, continues to be the best door knocker in The Battlefords, Mr. Speaker. Again you know, proved her mettle again. Had great numbers in 2020, and she's competitive. She's a competitive lady, and I knew that once we got closer to the election those competitive juices would start flowing again. And they did, Mr. Speaker, and she delivered again as the top door knocker in our constituency. And you know, I'll just say did so many days, many hot summer days pushing a stroller up and down the streets of our community with our little guy in tow. And so it's nice, you know, a little guy from a young age getting to meet so many constituents and getting to meet so many people. He's getting really good at saying hello and goodbye.

So you know, Mr. Speaker, something that occurred to me a couple weeks ago, they were able to be here for the swearing-in ceremony. And for those of us that were elected in 2020 for the first time, Mr. Speaker, we didn't have family or friends come to our swearing-in ceremony. And you know, the folks at the Table will remember this. It was kind of a solitary experience. You know, you came to the Table; you took the oath; you signed the book. And I remember even the rules around the pen. It was like, you're going to sign the book and take that pen. Don't put that pen back down. That's your pen.

[16:45]

And we did that with an empty gallery, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to say, you know, for I guess the fellow class of 2020, it was such a privilege to have . . . Many of us had our friends, certainly our family and maybe some friends here, and that was a really sweet moment.

And a sweet moment obviously because, you know, if you're taking the oath you were victorious in the preceding election of course. But it was even more sweet just given, as I said, the sacrifice of my family and them being able to be here, and that was really special for me, Mr. Speaker. And I didn't really think it would be special, but I'm so glad they were here for the swearing-in ceremony here a couple weeks ago.

You know, Mr. Speaker, as we get back to work here in the legislature, I'm always reminded about the important work that's done by the staff in this building, Mr. Speaker. And you know, as MLAs we get just really the incredible opportunity to work

with great people in our caucus offices, Mr. Speaker.

But I think specifically about the folks that I've had a chance to work with in the Education minister's office: Mitch and Amy and Haben and Kaylee and Hunter and Aaron as well just over the last year. I've so enjoyed working with them. And you know, we had some interesting days in Education over the last year but, Mr. Speaker, we always had fun. And you know, I just think even when things are tough, you still got to find the joy and the humour in things. And I just want to thank that team for working with me over the last year.

I'm excited now with our new team in room 204, you know, really excited to get to work with them, Hillary and Ang and Lisa and Clint. And then obviously all the folks in the Minister of Rural and Remote Health's office as well. You know, these are people that . . . They are on the front line. They're taking calls from folks and working to solve problems at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to thank them for really their commendable work each and every single day.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate you on your election as the Speaker. And I know you've been congratulated 60 other times, or almost 60 other times now, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to say, I was thinking about something the other day. I just want to say first of all, you've been a strong MLA for the Melfort constituency. I've seen that first-hand in the files that I've been able to serve in and be able to come and visit your constituency and see how you comport yourself in your community and how you hold the respect of the people in your constituency. And that's quite commendable and, Mr. Speaker, it's no surprise that you would be honoured with the role that you've been given now.

But I was thinking about — I don't know if you remember, Mr. Speaker — a helicopter ride that we took with a couple of constituents of yours, maybe a couple years ago over the Quill lakes. And you know, I love telling this story. I had never been in a spray helicopter before, and boy, it was quite a ride. And I was maybe not prepared for the G-forces that I was going to experience. And you know, we're climbing up and coming back down hard, and you've got a field of blooming canola, you're looking right down at it, and all of a sudden the very skilled — I think he was South African — pilot, yes, he pulled up just right at the right time and then we were just . . . oh, it just felt like we were, you know, mere inches above the flowering canola.

And so I was just thinking, Mr. Speaker, the role that you've taken on — it's a tough one. I hope it's not as tough as the helicopter ride for you, Mr. Speaker, and we'll certainly do our best to make it not that way for you, Mr. Speaker, in this House.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to speak too long, but I do find the Throne Speech replies and the budget replies, you know, an important opportunity to draw the contrast, to draw the contrast between the different perspectives that we see in this House. And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say up front, it's very important that we have different perspectives in this House. It's very important that we have debate and that we have people from all different sorts of backgrounds.

And you know, I think I've got to say, this is probably the interesting part of hearing maiden speeches of the new members, Mr. Speaker, on both sides of the House, is hearing a little bit

about their backgrounds, understanding where they come from, the events in their life that have influenced them and shaped them, and made them pivot in their lives in different careers. And you know, certainly choosing to get into elected life is a pivot for anybody quite frankly, Mr. Speaker. And so it's fun to hear about the inflection point for people on both sides of the House.

But I do think, I always take the opportunities in these replies to really draw the contrast and draw the contrast as I see it provincially, Mr. Speaker, but also draw the contrast as I see it locally in the community where I spend the most amount of time, where I call home, Mr. Speaker.

And so I just want to go through several areas, Mr. Speaker, you know, and these are all areas that are addressed in the Throne Speech. And so I'll talk a little bit about, you know, what we are bringing forward in the Throne Speech. But also I think it's important again to talk about the contrast in this House, Mr. Speaker, and in this province. That's really important.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I'll start with the area of education, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to say, I'm very pleased to see the new Minister of Education expanding the specialized support classroom pilot from 8 schools to 200 schools over the next number of years. And I'll just say, you know, it's interesting. I remember when we introduced that pilot, it was derided. It was derided by members on the other side — it's only eight classrooms. It's only eight classrooms. It won't make a difference.

Well you know, Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to go through I think five of the eight specialized support classrooms around the province. And it's important for me, you know, to visit at least one in every of the four communities where we had them placed. You know, and I had the opportunity actually to take the Premier one of the last times he was in The Battlefords to St. Mary School with Light of Christ Catholic School Division. And I'll take this opportunity to really give a shout-out and thank Glen Gantefoer, the board Chair at Light of Christ; Cory Rideout, the director of education; and really the folks, I would say all of the superintendents in that division.

I'd say I leaned on them. I leaned on them quite a bit over the last year in terms of helping us to figure out what this program could look like, and then what it was important to measure, and then how we were going to evaluate success of the program, and look at the expansion that we recently announced in the Throne Speech, to 200 schools.

You know, Mr. Speaker, and the program at St. Mary's, they've termed it "Connections," Mr. Speaker, improving connections with students in their school that are part of the specialized support classroom, connections with other students, connections with teachers in the school, Mr. Speaker, and connections at home as well.

And I think that's so important, Mr. Speaker, and that's been a big priority for me, Mr. Speaker, in all these specialized support classroom pilots that I was able to visit, is how are we engaging . . . Hey, you know, we know what we're doing in the school building from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., you know, or whenever the bells ring in an individual school. But how is this affecting the experience for that family at home? Because we know so much

what happens at home, it comes to school and what happens at school, it goes home in many ways, I think. And so you know, it's really encouraging for me to see, specifically at St. Mary's, you know, the principal, Emilie there and her team, just do a really incredible job at St. Mary's. And we've seen . . . I think the Minister of Education shared a quote actually from Cory in a question period this week just about the positive impact that we've seen out of that program.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I've had lots of opportunity to have conversations about education over the last year or so, Mr. Speaker, and I think about, I try and think about and distill what I've heard all around the province from different people and to where people believe that we should go with education in this province, Mr. Speaker. And you know, when it comes down to it, I think it's about outcomes. As parents . . . You know, I'm a parent. I don't have a child in school yet but already thinking about where my child will go to school and what their experience will be and how can I support my child in that experience. But I would say what parents and grandparents and families are looking for is outcomes.

And I had an interesting moment actually during the campaign at our local debate that we had, and there was a question about . . . a question posed to the NDP candidate about, okay, you've promised significant addition of investment. What are the outcomes that would come from that investment? And, Mr. Speaker, I can't remember the exact quote, but the quote was something like, you know, the investment is more important than the outcomes. And, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't disagree more.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that obviously investment's important, but what we're getting is outcomes for investment both as a taxpayer and a parent, and just a community member, Mr. Speaker. That's what matters, Mr. Speaker. It has to be outcomes.

And I think about, I think about things that we've done in education over the last year to focus on outcomes, Mr. Speaker. I think about banning cell phones during classroom time so that our kids and teachers can be focused on what they're learning, focused on curriculum, Mr. Speaker.

I think about bringing in the financial literacy credit, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that kids who graduate high school starting in a couple of years — so it's the grade 10 class this year that will be the first cohort — are learning practically how to manage their own personal finances. Mr. Speaker, what more practical tools could we possibly be teaching in school? I think that's a perfect example of that.

I think about where we're moving on education in the areas of literacy and assessment, Mr. Speaker. That is so important to drive better outcomes. So important, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, and I would just say, you know, the other outcome that I think people are looking for, Mr. Speaker, and you know, something that I remain very personally proud of, is making sure that parents have an opportunity and a right to be involved in their children's lives. That is absolutely crucial to educational outcomes, Mr. Speaker. We see this in research around the world. When families are engaged, the outcomes for kids are better. And so I am proud to be part of a government that will stand up for family involvement in their children's lives at

school, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you know, the other large area of focus in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, is health care. And, Mr. Speaker, you know, two main priorities out of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, really making sure that over the next four years we get everyone in Saskatchewan attached to a primary care provider.

Mr. Speaker, we are at about 84 per cent of Saskatchewan residents have some sort of access to a primary care provider right now, whether that's a physician or a nurse practitioner, Mr. Speaker. And this government is committed to making sure that whether you live in The Battlefords or whether you live in Regina or Saskatoon or Melfort, Mr. Speaker, or communities smaller than any of those, that we have some sort of access to a primary care practitioner in this province, so that when your family or my family or our children need medical attention, Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity to be attached to someone to go get those services, Mr. Speaker. That is absolutely key for this government.

The other piece is around surgeries and delivering more surgeries. This is where, going back to outcomes, outcomes matter, Mr. Speaker. And you know, it's interesting. I find, you know, the contrast sometimes from the opposition NDP, Mr. Speaker, is yes, we want more surgeries, but we don't like these privately delivered, publicly funded surgeries. Well, Mr. Speaker, newsflash, there's going to be more of those in the province, Mr. Speaker.

This last fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, we did about 17,500 publicly funded, privately delivered surgeries in this province, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and I'll tell the entire House, it's not just going to be 1,000 more, a couple thousand more, 3,000 more, Mr. Speaker. We're going up. We're going up. We're going to be doing more publicly funded, privately delivered surgeries because we are looking for innovative options to make sure people have the care that they need, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the other key piece of contrast that I think is so important in health care . . . And I have not observed a wider contrast between the two sides of the House in health care except when it comes to mental health and addictions. And I don't mean, Mr. Speaker . . . Everybody in this House cares about making sure that our family and friends get the services they need, but I think that the point of disagreement that we have between the two representative parties in the House, Mr. Speaker, is how we deliver those services.

And, Mr. Speaker, this side of the House is going to be focused on recovery. And, Mr. Speaker, I would invite the members opposite to get on board with recovery. This is what it's about — making sure that our friends and family can recover and get healthy.

Mr. Speaker, I can see that I'm running out of time, Mr. Speaker. But I just want to talk one more thing about affordability. This is an NDP opposition that has tied themselves to a singular affordability policy, Mr. Speaker. It's a temporary gas tax cut. It's temporary, Mr. Speaker. That's the only issue that they've brought about on affordability, Mr. Speaker.

Somebody opposite, Mr. Speaker, said that the Throne Speech didn't touch on housing. Mr. Speaker, I direct them to page 8 of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, talking about, Mr. Speaker, the home renovation tax credit, the first-time homebuyers credit, Mr. Speaker. The only housing policy we saw from the NDP during the campaign was rent control, Mr. Speaker. That's not going to promote housing in this province, Mr. Speaker. We are focused on making life more affordable for people in this province, Mr. Speaker.

That's why I will be supporting the motion brought forward by the member from Kindersley-Biggan, seconded by the member from Saskatchewan Rivers, Mr. Speaker, and I now move to adjourn debate.

Speaker Goudy: — It now being 5 o'clock, this Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
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Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
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