



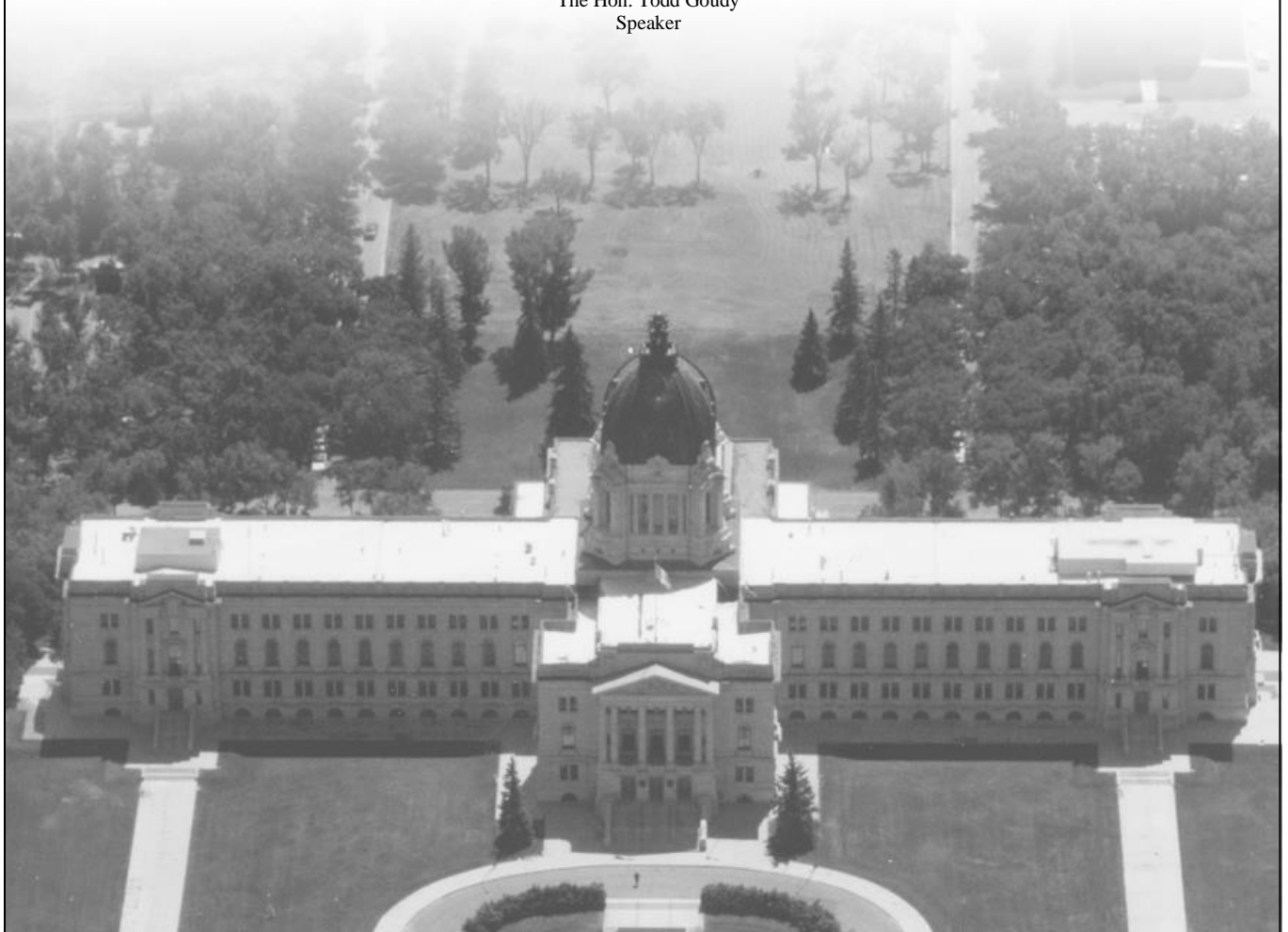
FIRST SESSION — THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE

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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

Speaker Goudy: — Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Daryl Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to welcome former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Marv Friesen to his legislature, welcome him back. Mr. Speaker, not only is it a great day in Riversdale, but it's a great day in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'd also like to welcome back the mayor of Lloydminster to his legislature, Gerald Aalbers. Apparently he didn't get enough yesterday; he come back for round two today. So I've known Gerald for a long time as his family's from Manor, which is adjacent to my home community. And I played a lot of hockey in Manor and consider him a family friend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Kim Breckner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, on behalf of the opposition, I would also like to welcome the former member of Saskatoon Riversdale. Thank you for all the work that you've done in the past four years in our constituency, and welcome back.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation].

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's not my school group to introduce — I believe the Leader of the Opposition will be doing that — but there are a group of grade 8 students up in the gallery, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to pick out a couple who I'm going to embarrass specifically. But a couple of 13-year-olds who have grown up together as neighbours and who frankly probably know more about the realities of public life than many of the people on the floor in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. They are no strangers to the Chamber. And I know Henry will want me to make the point that he is a major Cincinnati Bengals fan. But I want to introduce to the Assembly Henry Scheer. Henry, thanks for being here today.

And another embarrassment that I will foist upon her is my daughter, Finnley Harrison, who is in the Speaker's gallery. Finnley, could you please wave to everybody. And I would add, Mr. Speaker, the newly crowned tae kwon do — black belt tae kwon do — champion for her age group in the entire province. So welcome. Welcome to these students, Mr. Speaker, to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Aleana Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members, it's my pleasure to join with the minister opposite in welcoming the school group from Regina Christian to this, your legislature. Always a pleasure to have students from Regina Christian here. I think you are the school group that attends the most question periods out of any school that certainly I've seen in my last five years. Always a pleasure to have you here. So on behalf of the official opposition, welcome to this, your legislature. Enjoy the proceedings and Merry Christmas.

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

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take a moment to welcome two individuals seated in your gallery: Delora Parisian and Mandy Bull. Delora is the outgoing executive director and founder of the Eagle Heart Centre located on 5th Avenue in the heart of North Central, known for its tremendous work in the family and youth field. Mandy Bull is the current executive director. They're down the street from our constituency office over on 5th Avenue.

The Eagle Heart Centre runs programs such as the Head Start program; the adult mentoring program; and a new adventure for them, a youth home that is housing five youth that are currently in the system.

This organization does incredible work in our community. The team leads are all strong Indigenous women. They do incredible life-saving work for families in North Central and beyond, Mr. Speaker. So we have an incredible legacy that's joined us in your gallery here today.

Delora was born in Lebreton, Saskatchewan. She's literally spent her life working on these issues — decades. Although she's retiring from Eagle Heart Centre, she continues to be involved in many ways. She's consulting. Nothing is going to slow her down, as far as I can see, Mr. Speaker. So I want to welcome Delora and Mandy to this, their Legislative Assembly.

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

Jacqueline Roy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce, to you and through you today, two members in the east gallery. They are my friends and also volunteers: Mr. Glenn Tarr and Mr. Dorian Tyndale. I invited them here today because I think it's very important that we all in this Assembly invite some of our volunteers who helped us during the campaign to see that, you know, some of their work actually paid off. And hopefully I can do them proud here.

I would also like to point out that the signs that they put up in our riding, every single one of them survived the 100-kilometre-hour winds that took out our volunteers. So that's fabulous. But more to the point, Mr. Speaker, I guess I was hoping my father would be on that sign crew this year, but he is getting a little bit old.

So I would like to thank them for not only doing that but for the moral support they provided me. And the we've got your back, that's something very special to hear during a campaign, during

a frenetic time. So I would invite all members to join me in thanking Glenn and Dorian.

Speaker Goudy: — So I just wanted to join in with the members who have welcomed the RCS [Regina Christian School] grade 8 classrooms to the building, to their legislature. And I have a special individual up there as well with the teachers. Megan Hollerbaum, she is the one grade 8 teacher, and Esther Carcamo is the other teacher.

And their intern is my daughter Sara. So the one in the white sweater, give us a little wave. She wasn't able to make it to the Throne Speech with our other children that day because she was working at the school. But glad to have her here today.

Interestingly enough too, we picked up doughnuts for the kids later on. And when I was visiting with the individual selling me the doughnuts, I'd asked her . . . I said my name's Todd, and what was her name. And as she's handing me five boxes of doughnuts, she said her name was Pandora. So they're going to be opening five of Pandora's boxes in the basement after. So I'm not sure how that will go. But welcome here again. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Erika Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for real action on climate change. According to Dr. John Pomeroy, who has an article today in *The Hill Times*, Canada must lead the climate change battle in a time of disappearing ice and snow. We must prepare for earlier and smaller and less reliable snow melt, and hence less reliable river flows and lake levels that supply drinking water, irrigation water, hydro power, and cold-loving fish such as trout and salmon.

Clean water recharges our groundwater and wetlands. It supplies water for our crops and for the rivers that supply our vast irrigation districts. All of this is now at risk because of global warming of more than 1.5 degrees that's resulting in snow droughts in the West.

We must prepare for the end of our beautiful mountain glaciers, for ecological devastation in the Great Lakes, and food security as snow melt recharges that are diminishing in our soil moisture and supplies. We must increase the technology measuring these changes. He goes on to say that we need to better predict these changes to forecast how fast they are happening and build the capacity and strategies to adapt.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly call on the government to take real action on climate change.

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

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

Nathaniel Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise on my feet today to present our petition calling

on the government to reverse the ban on third-party sex ed providers in our public schools.

Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents of the province wish to bring our attention to the following: that banning third-party providers of sexual health education will mean fewer kids getting access to evidence-based sex education which we need, given that Saskatchewan has the highest rates of teen pregnancy, STIs [sexually transmitted infection], and HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] transmission in the country, has the highest rates of sexual assault and domestic violence in the country.

Banning third-party sexual health education has a broader reach as this ban impacts additional prevention education programs, programs focused on body safety, consent, and healthy relationships. And, Mr. Speaker, third-party sexual education providers are trained professionals who are best suited to teaching sexual education in the classroom.

I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents reside in Regina.

I do so present.

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

Hugh Gordon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the Assembly today to draw the attention to the Legislative Assembly of a petition to address the affordability crisis in Saskatchewan.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that inflation is at the highest level it's been in more than three decades; that half of Saskatchewan residents were living paycheque to paycheque before transportation and food costs skyrocketed in 2022; that the Saskatchewan Party government's 32 new tax and fee hikes make life more expensive, all while harming struggling industries like tourism, culture, and fitness. While other provinces acted, the Sask Party government ignored the opposition's calls for a gas price relief plan.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to call on the Government of Saskatchewan to meaningfully address the affordability crisis in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the signatories to this petition reside in Saskatoon.

I do so present.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Regina

Rochdale.

Joan Pratchler: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present our petition calling for fixing the crisis in the classrooms.

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention that Saskatchewan is one of the 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; and that the Sask Party government cuts to education means that teachers, EAs [educational assistant], and support staff continue to be overworked and underpaid while students don't have the supports that they need; and 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 scores among the provinces.

[10:15]

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 Catholic, public, and francophone schools in Saskatchewan to fix the crisis in our classrooms.

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

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

Bhajan Brar: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to suspend the fuel tax. We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: Saskatchewan people are struggling to keep up with the increased cost of food, shelter, and other basic necessities as wages have not kept up with the rate of inflation; that according to an October 2023 Angus Reid poll, more than one-third of people in Saskatchewan are struggling with the cost of living; that the Sask Party government would provide immediate cost-of-living relief to Saskatchewan families by suspending the 15 cents-per-litre provincial gas tax; that the Saskatchewan NDP [New Democratic Party], the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, among others have been calling for immediate gas tax relief for not only months but years; that other jurisdictions such as Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, and Newfoundland have suspended or reduced their provincial fuel tax to make life more affordable for residents of their provinces.

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

The signatories of this petition are residents of Prince Albert. I do so present. Thank you.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Keith Jorgenson: — I ask for leave to make an introduction. Someone arrived slightly after introductions. Is that okay?

I'd like to recognize in the east gallery, Liuba and Leo who work for the . . . Liuba works as a settlement worker for the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. Her family is from the historic port city of Kherson in southern Ukraine which has been destroyed by Russian aggression, and horrifyingly the Russians now hunt the remaining civilians with explosive drones.

I want to highlight some of the great work the UCC [Ukrainian Canadian Congress] does here in Saskatchewan. They were operating in many communities providing support work, employment training, links to employment. As an employer, I have received the assistance from the UCC in helping settle approximately 15 refugees from Ukraine.

So I wish to welcome Liuba and Leo to their legislature as new Canadians.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Blairmore.

White Ribbon Campaign Supports Ending Gender-Based Violence

Hon. Jamie Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and fellow members of the Legislative Assembly, tomorrow marks the 35th anniversary of the tragic events at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal where 14 women were murdered in the act of gender-based violence.

The White Ribbon campaign was created following the massacre to remember those women that lost their lives and to remind us that we may never stop until our society is free of violence. Ending gender-based violence is something that does not begin and end on December 6th. It is something that we must work on every day.

Mr. Speaker, today we stand up against gender-based violence, symbolized by wearing a white ribbon. There are many of us across the government who work with community-based organizations across the province to support work to prevent gender-based violence. The Status of Women office along with the ministries of Justice, Health, Social Services, and other organizations all have programs and services to support Saskatchewan citizens affected by violence.

Today we all recognize that tomorrow, December 6th, is White Ribbon campaign, a national day of remembrance of action on violence against women. In the Saskatchewan legislature and across this public service all government employees are encouraged to wear a ribbon, educate themselves, and partake in opportunities that support the campaign's goals of ending violence against women. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Queen's Jubilee Medal Recipient
Leaves Legacy at Eagle Heart Centre**

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to North Central's Delora Parisian, a Queen's Jubilee Medal recipient who recently retired after a long and distinguished career as executive director of the Eagle Heart Centre. Delora spent her entire adult life fighting for First Nation and Métis communities, bringing attention to the insidious effects of racism and working to provide culturally appropriate holistic healing and preventative services in North Central and beyond.

Delora has been passionate and strong in her advocacy on behalf of these communities. She's a proud Indigenous woman, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother who has witnessed first-hand the intergenerational trauma driving many of the challenges in her community. Delora was one of the founding members of the Aboriginal Family Service Centre and founded the Eagle Heart Centre at a time of great dissatisfaction among Indigenous advocates and organizations looking for better ways of supporting families and vulnerable children. Too often she saw first-hand how the system meant to protect often did harm. And we see so many examples of that today.

Driven by her passion for Indigenous youth who too often lack a sense of belonging or identity due to the effects of residential schools and other policies of disenfranchisement, she has left an inspiring legacy carried on by Mandy Bull and the entire staff and board of the Eagle Heart Centre.

Today I want to recognize Delora and her inspiring life-saving contribution to the North Central community and indeed the entire province. Thank you, Delora.

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

Theodore Volunteers Support Community Complex

Sean Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The village of Theodore has a population of approximately 315 people along with a strong surrounding rural community. In the 1980s there was a vision by the Theodore and District Recreation Board to construct a new community complex which includes a skating rink, curling rink, and a town hall that was finalized in 1991. The Theodore complex has a volunteer board who work tirelessly to host fundraising events to provide sports, culture, and recreation.

One of the community groups within is the Perogy Pinchers who have raised over \$140,000 selling perogies and donated all of that back to the complex. In small-town Saskatchewan a complex and recreation facility is the heart and soul of the community.

This past year the volunteer board has conducted some major renovations to improve their five-star facility. A slogan in the complex lobby reads "Built by Volunteers, Run by Volunteers," which is a true statement of their dedication over the years.

I would like to thank the Theodore board and community members for all of their work. Thank you.

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

St. Nicholas Day

Keith Jorgenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize St. Nicholas Day, or the Feast of St. Nicholas, which is celebrated in much of eastern Europe. In Ukraine it's an important day of giving. Kids wake up excited to look for hidden candies or presents in a shoe or underneath a pillow. It's also an important day of charity, where people provide gifts to those less fortunate than themselves.

We can all picture adorable children, overwhelmed by excitement, awaiting candies and presents. I remember my own children at that age positively vibrating with excitement as Christmas approached. Sadly children throughout Ukraine who would normally be excited about the coming of this day are spending their days in darkness and the cold in bombed-out cities, separated sadly and tragically by the people that they love because of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

As a Ukrainian Canadian and a father, this makes me both sad and angry, Mr. Speaker. Let us not look away. I ask all the members present here to acknowledge St. Nicholas Day as a symbol of joy, love, and charity and resilience in the face of Russian state terrorism.

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

**Wilkie EMS Professional Recognized
with Governor General Medal**

James Thorsteinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This spring Jackie Gerein of Wilkie was one of 13 emergency medical services personnel to receive the Governor General medal.

Her career began in 1999 with the community Wilkie Ambulance Service. Mr. Speaker, Ms. Gerein has always had a fascination for the profession, and has always wanted to help her community. She also stated that the rewarding moments are when you show up for people when they call and seeing her patients back out in the community after recovery, doing well.

Gerein, with close to 25 years' experience, was shocked and honoured to be recognized for her service. Mr. Speaker, she is always encouraging those wanting to join the EMS [emergency medical services] to talk to their local ambulance coordinators. Gerein says the most important quality you need to do the job is to be empathetic to your patients and have their best interests in mind; the other skills will be learned.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating Jackie Gerein on her recent Governor General medal, and I would like to thank her for her service to the community of Wilkie and the province of Saskatchewan.

Thank you.

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

Condemnation of Violence in Pakistan

Noor Burki: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to condemn the brutal crackdown we saw in Islamabad, Pakistan last week. Thousands of supporters of Pakistan imprisoned ex-prime minister Imran Khan were faced with violence from law enforcement. This situation posed a serious threat, not only to the principle of democracy, but also to the fundamental human dignity. So far nearly 1,000 PTI [Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf] supporters have been arrested and dozens have been killed. There are reports of hospitals being overwhelmed by hundreds of severe injuries from gunshots. No political party, citizen, or individual should ever face such inhuman treatment for freedom of expression.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to say that in our democratic system people can protest and express their freedom of speech. We recently had an election here that was open and fair. The people of Saskatchewan were able to voice their support and vote without fear of intimidation or retribution.

My dream is that every person in Pakistan, people around the world can one day do the same. Democracy is so important, Mr. Speaker. Let us never take it for granted. Thank you.

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

Community of Abbey Supports Local Arena

Doug Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The village of Abbey was faced with the major cost of \$20,000 for repairs to the local skating rink, the home of the Abbey Eagles, I must say. This was a huge cost to the community of just a 120 people. On November 23rd the community of Abbey held an event called the Harvest Bash to raise the funds to support the rink. The event hosted over 120 people for supper and a live auction.

The evening was well attended, and the night being kicked off with a prime rib supper. The organizers of the Harvest Bash held auctions and duck races. These events helped raise \$40,000 for the local rink. Justin Duncan, who served as the MC [master of ceremonies] for the event, thanked everyone for attending the evening and supporting the Abbey arena.

Mr. Speaker, our government recently announced the doubling of the rink affordability grant from 2,500 to \$5,000 per rink, which will help support communities like Abbey. Our local rinks are often the heart of our communities during the winter and summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Health Care Staffing

Carla Beck: — Mr. Speaker, once again we're hearing disturbing reports from front-line health care workers in Saskatoon. We were told that earlier this week at St. Paul's Hospital there were just three nurses, three nurses left to care for 100 patients. Three.

Will the Premier stand right now and apologize to the front-line

health care workers who are at a breaking point across this province? And will he also apologize to those Saskatchewan people who are currently going without the health care that they need and they deserve?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

[10:30]

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's incumbent on me this week to reiterate the commitment that we had made to Saskatchewan people in the most recent Speech from the Throne — of which I will speak some more to later today — a commitment to ensure that people in this province are able to access health care when they need to access it, Mr. Speaker, whether that be a primary health care provider, whether that be a surgery in a reasonable amount of time.

You saw as well a commitment in that most recent Speech from the Throne that will likely hit the floor of this Assembly for a vote later today, Mr. Speaker. And I would invite the opposition to support the motion to endorse the Speech from the Throne because it is an effort and it's a commitment by this government to the Saskatchewan people to ensure that we are going to set targets; we are going to make the investments; we are going to measure the outcomes of those investments; and we're going to evaluate what is working on behalf of the people across this province when it comes to access to health care, regardless of where you live in Saskatchewan.

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

Carla Beck: — Well, Mr. Speaker, no apology. No change. More words, more plans to make a plan while patients and health care workers in this province continue to suffer.

St Paul's registered nurse Stephanie Fehr wrote this earlier this week, and I quote: "I've seen multiple staff crying today. We're at our wits' end." She went on to say that the ER [emergency room] at St Paul's Hospital isn't safe — isn't safe for staff, isn't safe for patients.

Mr. Speaker, the first step in dealing with a problem effectively is to admit that you have a problem. Will the Premier admit today that health care in Saskatchewan is in crisis under his government?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — [Inaudible] . . . that the Minister of Health has met with Stephanie Fehr earlier this week, Mr. Speaker. And I would say that when we look across Canada at our Canadian health care system, which are provincially run health care systems in each of the 10 provinces and then the three territories, there are challenges. And those challenges are around hiring people to offer the services in our health care systems and communities right across Canada, and Saskatchewan certainly is not exempt of those challenges.

But they are not exclusive to Saskatchewan, which is why you've seen this Health minister, previous Health ministers, come forward not only with the most ambitious health human resources action plan in the nation in Canada, but funding it — funding it

with over \$100 million, Mr. Speaker. Bringing forward the Sask health recruitment agency to ensure that they are overlaying and working with local recruitment agencies in communities, so that they are augmenting their efforts so that we can recruit people not just to Saskatoon and Regina to offer health care services but to any community, wherever services are offered in this province, Mr. Speaker.

More specific to Saskatoon, there is a commitment not only to the partnership with Ahtahkakoop Cree Developments on the urgent care centre there — which is coming along and being built as quickly as possible — but we're going to build another one in Saskatoon as well, another urgent care centre there, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that people have access to a primary health care provider and the health care services that they require when they require it.

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

Auditor's Recommendations on Foreign Ownership of Farm Land

Carla Beck: — Continuing to wave around a plan that saw 4,000 health care workers leave our province last year, it's no wonder why this government is failing on health care.

But they're also failing to deliver for famers across Saskatchewan. Now let's look . . . Well they're laughing, Mr. Speaker. But let's look at what the Provincial Auditor had to say in her report this week. The Sask Party government simply isn't doing enough to stop foreign entities from buying Saskatchewan farm land illegally. They've only asked for a declaration in half, half of the high-risk out-of-province transactions that she reviewed. We've been calling for action on this front, Mr. Speaker, for years.

Why is the Premier leaving the door wide open to illegal foreign ownership of Saskatchewan farm land?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I think the auditor had also indicated that she had found no instances where there was the illegal purchase of farm land here in Saskatchewan. My message to the people in this province, my message to the people in this province, is if you suspect that there is foreign ownership of farm land here in Saskatchewan, there are rules that will prevent that, Mr. Speaker, and you should reach out to the Minister of Agriculture's office or your local Ag office. There's still some there. The NDP did try to close most of them, but there still are some Ag offices throughout the province. Reach out. Report that and there will be an investigation.

This is a government, this is a party that has continually year in, year out stood up for farmers, Mr. Speaker, whether it be market access around the world, whether it be ensuring that they have the opportunity to innovate and to grow the crops that we can here. And they are producing some of the most sustainable, highest quality, most cost-effective food that you can find on earth, Mr. Speaker. And we thank them for the work that they're doing, and we have their backs when it comes to foreign farm land ownership.

As per the auditor's words that there has not, in her cases that she looked at, there has not been any cases where foreign ownership, Mr. Speaker, has actually taken place of Saskatchewan farm land.

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

Carla Beck: — The Premier might want to have another look at that report and the recommendations, Mr. Speaker. And he might want to understand that it is his responsibility to ensure that these laws are followed in this province.

Now it is my honour, Mr. Speaker, to have taken on the role as shadow minister for Ag and rural affairs. And there certainly are challenges out there facing families that this out-of-touch Sask Party government continues to ignore.

When you talk to farm families, Mr. Speaker, illegal foreign ownership is a real concern. Everyone agrees. I think we can all agree that foreign interests should not be buying Saskatchewan farm land. But the Ag minister seems to be in denial on this. Why is the Premier looking the other way and leaving the door open to those foreign interests who want to buy up Saskatchewan farm land?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the auditor had indicated that there was no identified cases where foreign ownership of farm land in Saskatchewan had occurred. She had not identified any cases where the law had been broken.

Mr. Speaker, that's probably largely due to the previous Ag minister bringing in some of the most significant consequences for . . . the most significant . . .

Speaker Goudy: — I'm just going to remind the Chamber that if you're asking a question, we want to hear from you. If you're answering a question, we want to hear from you. And if you're not asking a question or answering a question, we want to be listening. So, Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as the former Ag minister, the member from Assiniboia put in some of the most significant teeth into the laws that we have in Saskatchewan to ensure that that isn't the case. And that is what is happening here today, Mr. Speaker.

But in saying that, this is a government, representatives from across the province, that will always have our rural and ag producers' back, Mr. Speaker. And if someone suspects that there is an instance where there may be foreign ownership of farm land in this province that is in contravention to the law, I would urge them to reach out to their MLA, reach out to the Minister of Agriculture's office or their local Ag office, Mr. Speaker, and it will be investigated immediately.

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

Food Prices in the North and Actions of Former Member

Carla Beck: — Again, Mr. Speaker, the Premier should understand this is his responsibility to deal with these concerns.

There are more concerns of course. People in the North in this province are concerned about sky-high food prices and the return, Mr. Speaker, of scurvy to this province because people can't get the food that they need.

And people are concerned about the illegal actions of former Sask Party MLA Gary Grewal, whose actions saw nearly \$1 million of taxpayer money go to his two hotels.

Now the government's tried to silence us on both of these issues, but I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, we will not be silenced. We won't stop because the people of this province are counting on us to deliver for them on what matters.

Will the Premier commit to investigating food prices in the North and bringing Gary Grewal to this Chamber to answer for breaking the law?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to Mr. Grewal, I'd say that he did not run in this last election. He is no longer a member of this Assembly. And there has been, yes, a Conflict of Interest Commissioner's report and the auditor's report, Mr. Speaker.

And where this government is focused today is ensuring that people that need the services, people that may be experiencing homelessness whether it be in Regina, Saskatoon, or anywhere in Saskatchewan, that we are there to provide them with that shelter, maybe a hotel room if it's required. And the Ministry of Social Services changed their procurement practice, Mr. Speaker, and that is what we will focus on with respect to that comment.

With respect to food prices, Mr. Speaker, this is again, I think, a national conversation. If you look in some of the national papers, just today there's an article . . .

An Hon. Member: — It's always a national problem with these guys.

Hon. Scott Moe: — No, it's a significant problem, Mr. Speaker, a significant problem of inflationary costs that are impacting not just Saskatchewan people but Canadian families. The forecast is for food to increase over \$800 across Canada this next year, over \$800, up to about just under \$17,000 for a family in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

We have a challenge in this nation and a challenge where policies matter, Mr. Speaker. Policies that are being implemented across Canada matter. They're pushing up the inflationary costs that families are experiencing. They're experiencing it at the grocery store each and every time they visit. And for all intents and purposes, the study that has been put out — and I apologize for using a prop, Mr. Speaker — the study that was put out this morning in the article says it's going to be a more significant problem over the course of the next year.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Food Prices in the North and Affordability

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the

Sask Party Minister of Justice stated in the rotunda that he wouldn't answer a hypothetical on whether he'd support an investigation into soaring food prices. You know what's not hypothetical, Mr. Speaker? Twenty dollars for grapes isn't a hypothetical to the people of the North. It's their reality. Twenty-seven confirmed cases of scurvy due to food insecurity in my riding, that's not a hypothetical. That's their reality.

Will this Sask Party government support an all-party investigation into food prices in the North — yes or no?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — We'd be more than willing, Mr. Speaker, and we will be reaching out to northern leaders to ensure that we can work together as the Government of Saskatchewan and leaders in northern communities to see where there are opportunities for us to have not only properly priced food but a supply of food into their communities. And these are conversations that I've already been part of, Mr. Speaker, in places like Fond-du-Lac and La Loche and other northern communities.

Again though, Mr. Speaker, a Canadian issue, a Canadian issue of cost of living and inflation where policies are impacting what Saskatchewan and Canadian families, in particular in the North, are paying when they visit the grocery store. Mr. Speaker, I think at this point in time, we just had an election in this province where cost of living was part of that discussion.

When you see what's happening nationally, Mr. Speaker, I think what we could be coming together with on the floor of this Assembly — given that the national government has been in excess of their four years, which is the norm for a government — for us to come together and call for the Prime Minister or Jagmeet Singh, who also has a role to play in this, in providing Canadians with a choice. A choice to change the policy that is inflating the costs of everything we're buying, Mr. Speaker, and a choice to change the policy and approach when it comes to working with our trading partners. And our largest trading partner is the United States of America.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have 27 confirmed cases of scurvy in 2024 due to the high cost of groceries. And what's this Sask Party government willing to do? Launch an information campaign on how to eat healthy. That's just downright insulting. People in the North don't need this government to teach them how to eat healthy. They know what a healthy, balanced diet is. The problem that the families are having is they can't afford it, Mr. Speaker.

How does an information campaign help families who don't have enough money buy healthy food and put it on their kitchen tables?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, again we will, as a Government of Saskatchewan, work with northern leaders on not just this topic but many topics that we engage with northern leaders on numerous times. And we'll work with the two

northern members as well, Mr. Speaker.

But we also need to identify and recognize that we have a national challenge in front of us where the cost of living, the inflationary pressures that we're facing as Canadians, Mr. Speaker, are impacting us at each and every grocery store and, yes, having a larger impact in those rural, remote, and northern grocery stores, whether it be in the territories. This will likely be part of the conversation that we have at the Council of Federation meetings that will begin in about a week and a half. And so we're going to work with northern leaders, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

But we're also going to work on behalf of all Saskatchewan residents, and I would say more largely all Canadian residents, on ensuring that we are not supporting policies that are increasing the cost of living for Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker. We have not seen that from the members opposite. And if you go back the last number of years, there are policies that have been implemented — and are still being supported by the national NDP government today — in this nation that are pushing up inflationary pressures on Saskatchewan and Canadian families.

And I would ask members opposite to come together with us, ask for the opportunity for Canadians to have a choice, have a choice on who is going to prepare the policies and implement the policies that I would suggest should be focused on energy and food security for all Canadians, as opposed to what they have been the last eight years since 2015, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While that Premier wants to point away from Saskatchewan, we're focused on the people here right in Saskatchewan. We were not elected to this Chamber just to sit in cozy seats, Mr. Speaker. If this Saskatchewan Party government has forgotten what a hard day's work looks like, all they need to do is ask their own constituents. People in this province are struggling with the basics. They can't put groceries on the kitchen table.

This Sask Party government blocks affordability relief for families here in this Chamber, and they block investigations into high prices at committee. They say that they've got the message, that they've changed. Why won't they get to work to bring down the cost for families in Saskatchewan?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the debate on affordability in this province is one that happened for 28 days, the entirety of the month of October. At the end of that debate, Saskatchewan people had the opportunity. They had the opportunity to pick a platform, to pick a party on who was going to represent them as their provincial government over the course of the next four years, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan have spoken.

That is why, later today, I would hope that we would all come together to support Bill No. 1, which is *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*, Mr. Speaker. This is an Act that is going to ensure that families in this province are going to pay over \$3,000 less income tax over the next four years. It is actually going to

remove an additional 55,000 people from the tax rolls, the provincial tax rolls altogether. This is in addition to the 112,000 that were removed in 2008 from a Saskatchewan Party government, Mr. Speaker. Since 2008 this is the largest income tax reduction the families that live in Saskatchewan have ever experienced.

Bill No. 2, have the opportunity to vote on, I would hope again today, and come together to ensure that Saskatchewan families are not paying — and many in northern Saskatchewan — are not paying the unnecessary, ridiculous carbon tax on how they heat their homes, Mr. Speaker.

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

Actions of Former Member and Social Services' Procurement Policies

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this Chamber as representatives of the people of this great province, we're expected to lead by example. When laws are broken people expect basic accountability. Let me remind this Chamber that before Gary Grewal was a Sask Party MLA he made \$1,309 off government contracts. While he was an MLA he made 731,000, nearly three-quarters of a million. On this side we take ending government profiteering seriously. Can the same be said for the government?

Simple question to the Sask Party government: what do they believe is a proper penalty for the actions that broke conflict-of-interest laws resulting in an MLA profiteering off taxpayer money? Or should one-term MLAs who don't run again just be permitted to sail off into the sunset with three-quarters of a million dollars in their pocket, Mr. Speaker?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government accepts the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's report. And earlier this week, the Provincial Auditor tabled her report, and out of the four recommendations that were made by the Provincial Auditor, we've completed one of those recommendations already, and we're making progress on implementing the other three.

The individual opposite should know that that member is a private citizen, and that's where it'll stay. The member also knows that our dedicated front-line staff work very, very hard and tirelessly under challenging conditions to secure appropriate accommodations in emergency situations. To suggest otherwise is an insult to their professionalism and their commitment. Mr. Speaker, it was this government that took decisive action to strengthen the ministry's procurement practices and to ensure that the process for procuring hotel rooms is based on fair value, availability, and transparency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, this is why people hate white-collar crime — the double standard, the willingness to look the other way. Because when someone is found guilty of breaking a

law, their friends in high places let them off without even a slap on the wrist, and that seems to be what's happening here, Mr. Speaker . . .

Speaker Goudy: — I'm going to caution the member. Accusations are being made towards the government that I would caution you on making.

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, we're asking this government to say what they think is a reasonable penalty for Mr. Gary Grewal who broke the law, and unfortunately they have a troubling track record of blocking accountability. So will someone, anyone over there find their feet and tell this Chamber what they think a reasonable penalty is for Mr. Gary Grewal who took \$731,000 from the public? Do they think he should pay a single cent of it back?

Speaker Goudy: — Sorry. I'm fairly new at my job, but making accusations against private citizens, and you know . . . I will speak with the Clerks afterwards, but I would really caution the type of . . . Yeah, you know, it seems very accusatory. The language just doesn't seem to be appropriate. Please change the language that you're using, really. I think there's a lot of accusations going across the way, and I would just ask the member, respond to the question, but please tone down your questions and your accusations.

I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Mr. Speaker, the issue of keeping families, children safe and secure when we do have to use hotel rooms is vitally important, and it's something that we take extremely seriously. Immediate assistance to families, children, individuals in crisis, it's our unwavering priority for their safety and their well-being, whether in times of emergency or in times of longer term support. The ministry balances the cost-effectiveness, safety, and availability when securing these hotel rooms.

We have two pilot projects that are being undertaken right now. We're working through the process with the auditor's report on three items that the auditor has flagged. We've completed one other item already.

And this is something that we are taking very seriously. We want to make sure we're doing the right thing for families, children in times when they're in crisis, Mr. Speaker. And we absolutely thank our front-line workers, our ministry staff for the incredible work that they're doing in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Social Housing Units

April ChiefCalf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have recently learned that the government is wasting \$1.2 million annually by letting social housing units sit vacant in Regina alone. Countless organizations have called this province's housing and homelessness situation a crisis. This crisis of unhoused people doesn't just impact the cities anymore. It is visible in every corner of the province and in every community. And this government's solution is to let 404 households in our

capital city sit on a waiting list while 364 vacant units are out of service, out of commission. Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable.

To the minister: how many people are on a wait-list for a social housing unit that could be housed today?

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

Hon. Terry Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to begin by reaffirming our government's commitment to accountability, transparency, and continued improvement in this area. We're taking the auditor's report very seriously and we accept all of its recommendations.

The ministry has already been actively working to address these recommendations. It's made substantial progress in the areas highlighted in the report when it comes to housing. Through the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation we've been collaborating closely with the Regina Housing Authority to implement those auditor's recommendations.

This work reflects our broader goal of ensuring that social housing is both efficient and effective in meeting the needs of Saskatchewan residents. Addressing housing challenges has been a priority of this government long before the auditor's report. Last year Saskatchewan Housing Corporation conducted a comprehensive community review in Regina, which provided a very clear picture of the housing challenges and opportunities in the city. Since then we've taken deliberate actions to tackle these issues head-on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Darcy Warrington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when something goes terribly wrong, jeopardizing the well-being of patients and staff in our health care system, it's called a critical incident. The Provincial Auditor found that these reports get filed late 90 per cent of the time, and that 94 per cent of the time, the actions that would stop these from happening again are not followed up on.

What do these numbers mean for people in our health care system? It means that more people are getting hurt, even dying in our hospitals. When will we see the Sask Party government act to get people the care they need and deserve, and stop these preventable deaths in our health care system?

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday in question period, we accept the auditor's recommendations and we're working to have all the auditor's recommendations around reporting of critical incidents implemented by the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, you know, in terms of the premise of that question from the member opposite, I can assure the members in this House, I can assure the people in Saskatchewan that this government is focused on ensuring that there are better access

both to primary care, health care services in this province, as well as surgical services in this province. That is what our government is focused on. That's what we're investing in, Mr. Speaker, and that's what the people of Saskatchewan can count on. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Lori Carr: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — And what is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Lori Carr: — Mr. Speaker, on the evening of December 4th, 2024, the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre posted on her MLA social media a video of other members, without those members' written consent. Rule 47(2)(o) states that "The multimedia guidelines prescribed by the Rules shall be observed by Members." Point 14 of the multimedia guidelines prohibits members from using video or audio from other members' speeches without their written permission.

The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre clearly breached rule 47(2)(o) by posting a video of several members in a committee Chamber without their consent. The postings of the video were made on both Instagram and X. I would ask that you find the point of order well taken and determine the best course to bring the member in compliance with the rules. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Government House Leader . . . or Opposition House Leader.

Nicole Sarauer: — Some day soon, Mr. Speaker, thank you. Mr. Speaker, to be completely honest I'm not sure if this is the appropriate timing for that point of order or the appropriate way that point of order should have been brought forward. But I would ask that you, as has been indicated, consult with the Clerks and determine whether or not that was an appropriate point of order at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way. And then if so, we're happy to act on your determination, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Since the next time we'll be sitting will be Monday, I would want to address that today. So before we leave the city, I think we could make some time after the House is adjourned. But I would like to confer and have some discussions on that matter.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 6 — *The Safe Public Spaces (Street Weapons) Act*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

[11:00]

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 6, *The Safe Public Spaces (Street Weapons) Act* be now introduced and read for the first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice

that Bill No. 6, *The Safe Public Spaces (Street Weapons) Act* be now introduced and read 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 Justice.

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

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 7 — *The Court of Appeal (Residency) Amendment Act, 2024/Loi modificative de 2024 sur la Cour d'appel (résidence)*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 7, *The Court of Appeal (Residency) Amendment Act, 2024* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 7, *The Court of Appeal (Residency) 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. All right.

I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

**Request for Witness regarding
Social Services' Procurement Policies**

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to orders of the day, I would seek leave to move a motion under rule 61.

Speaker Goudy: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has requested leave to move, without notice, a motion of urgent and pressing necessity under rule 61. Is leave granted . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh. All right. Would the member briefly describe her request.

Meara Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an important motion I hope we can all be united on to get the answers people expect on the Sunrise Motel. There's been lots of talk of the commissioner's report, the auditor's report. Those two reports do address many facets of this issue, but there are many unanswered questions — how the rates were allowed to be inflated, for example; how it is that the government continued to engage in these contracts well after the commissioner directed Mr. Grewal that this was offside of the Act, for example.

So if leave is granted, I would propose the following motion:

That the Assembly calls Mr. Gary Grewal to appear before the Committee of the Whole Assembly as a witness to answer questions about the Ministry of Social Services hotel policies and the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's opinion of October 21st, 2024.

Speaker Goudy: — All right. Again, the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre has requested leave to move without notice a motion of urgent and pressing necessity under rule 61. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — No. All right. Leave has not been granted. Next item of business.

And now I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Call for Investigation into Food Prices in the North

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to orders of the day, I seek leave to move a motion under rule 61.

Speaker Goudy: — May the member briefly state the purpose of the motion and read the text of the motion.

Jordan McPhail: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an important motion that I hope we can all be united on to launch an investigation into the high prices people are paying in northern Saskatchewan — as a father of two growing girls, I know what it costs to put food on the table as do many northern families — and to come up with solutions on how we can help.

If leave is granted, I would propose the following motion:

That the Assembly instructs the Standing Committee on Human Services to conduct an investigation into the rising price of food in northern Saskatchewan and the impact of high food prices on the health of northerners; and further,

That the committee provide recommendations on policies to improve food insecurity and health in northern Saskatchewan.

Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — So the member for Cumberland has requested leave to move without notice a motion of urgent and pressing necessity under rule 61. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — Leave has not been granted. Next item of business.

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 Leader of the Opposition.

Carla Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour to rise today in my place and to enter into the debate on the Speech from the Throne. And I enter into this debate with a sense of hope for what's to come. I stand here with a deep love for this beautiful province we are all lucky enough to call home. And I also stand here with a renewed sense of purpose, alongside what has proven already to be an incredible team, a team that is ready to deliver change for Saskatchewan people, change that Saskatchewan people have told us that they're looking for.

And, Mr. Speaker, before I enter into further remarks, I want to say congratulations to you on your election into this role. I want to also extend that to the Deputy Speaker, the member for Lumsden-Morse. And I heard both of your comments in accepting this honour about how you want to fulfill your role. And I want to say that I respect both of you and I trust that you will bring those ideals to this role, this very important role in our democracy that you now play. And I want to thank you for that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the third time that I have had the honour of being here to respond to a Throne Speech following a provincial election, although it's the first time standing in this particular space and in this role as the Leader of the Official Opposition. And it is truly an honour, an honour to join into debate with my fellow colleagues — all 26 of them, Mr. Speaker, standing shoulder to shoulder. And I want to say this to all members in this Assembly, and especially the new members who outnumber the returning members in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker: never forget what a privilege it is to stand and to be able to enter into debate in this legislature.

Now I've had the opportunity to listen or read most of the responses to the Throne Speech, all of those from the members on this side, and I am incredibly, incredibly proud. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a moment, a time of new beginnings in our province. This is also a time, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan people are looking for change, something that I have heard in the responses from many members in this Assembly. I've heard that from the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, we knew going into this last election that Saskatchewan people were looking for change. We heard it time and time again on the doorsteps. And, Mr. Speaker, we also knew that we had work to do to show the people of this province that we represented that change, the positive change that Saskatchewan people told us that they were looking for. And I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we knew going into this election that we were not the odds-on favourite to be able to form government in this province.

But we believed. We believed in this team. We believed that Saskatchewan people not only wanted better, but better was possible. And we believed that Saskatchewan people know the realities, the opportunities, the challenges that they and their families face better than anyone else in this province, and that in order to do what is so obviously broken, we believed that we needed to work with Saskatchewan people and communities — those on the front line — to build the solutions that we know are needed in this province. We believed all of that, Mr. Speaker, and we still do.

We also believed — I think we knew — that we were going to have to work our butts off in order to be in a position to form government. And I'll tell you what this team did and the team all around us. They worked incredibly hard to see the very real changes that you see in this thirtieth legislature in Saskatchewan.

Now over the past few years but especially over the past number of months, I've had the privilege of travelling to every corner of this beautiful province. Mr. Speaker, what a province it is. And while I have always counted myself incredibly lucky to live in this province, to have grown up here, I stand here today filled with an even deeper sense of admiration and respect for the good and hard-working people that we are lucky enough in this legislature to represent, the people who trusted us with their stories, their hopes and their challenges and their ideas to make sure that this province lives up to the potential and the opportunity that we see in every corner of this province, potential that should benefit every person in this province.

People know the proud history of this province, a province that has punched far above its weight on front after front throughout our history, and people who are, Mr. Speaker, not content to watch this province fall to last place on front after front on the things that matter. It's those stories that continue to fuel us and to motivate us to take on the work that Saskatchewan people have sent us here to do. And I'm going to take those stories with me, but I'm going to tell one. Some of my colleagues have heard me tell this story before.

It was a night on the doorsteps out in Regina University when I saw a minivan drive by and flip a U-ey right in front of us. Mr. Speaker, you know, when you're out on the doorsteps you don't always know the response that you're going to get. I wasn't sure, when this man jumped out and started walking right towards me, what was going to come out of his mouth. When I saw him come closer, I saw that he had tears in his eyes, Mr. Speaker.

This is a man that told me that his wife was a teacher. She was absolutely exhausted even though this was in the first few weeks of school, and they couldn't stand to see the decisions that were being made by the current government, making life harder for people that they knew and loved. And I remember him looking

me in the eyes — and I've held this with me this whole time — and he said to me, just keep going.

Mr. Speaker, this is a team that will just keep going. I promise. The election is behind us but the work we've been sent here to do has just begun. And I promised we'd hit the ground running and man, has this team hit the ground running. This province was built on that get-it-done, don't-bother-with-those-who-say-it-can't-be-done attitude. Solution focused, common sense, risk-taking, innovative — those are the characteristics that will see this team through as they have always seen this province through, even when the odds aren't on our side.

That's how we have built this proud history of punching far above our weight on front after front, Mr. Speaker. It's how we became leaders. It's how we developed an internationally renowned agriculture sector. Again, world leaders.

Now whether we're talking about crop or livestock genetics, innovative and sustainable farming practices, or innovation on the ag tech front, Saskatchewan is known for being early adopters and overachievers. And we all benefit, no matter where you live, from the hard work and the innovation that this province is known for the world over.

Of course that's been front and centre, Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of weeks, with Agribition and APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] here in town. And it has been my incredible honour to stand alongside my deputy shadow minister for Ag and rural life, the member for Mount Royal, to continue to meet with and work with those who have a proud history in this crucial sector — our producers, our farmers, and our ranchers.

[11:15]

And, Mr. Speaker, I value their willingness to talk about the opportunities and challenges that they face. Mr. Speaker, there are also frustrations. It should not surprise anyone here. It should not surprise anyone that Saskatchewan people, particularly farmers and ranchers, don't like being taken for granted or left out of important decisions that affect them and their communities and their livelihoods. We hear this a lot — too many decisions that are being made in small rooms here in Regina or small rooms in Ottawa, even south of the border, that impact them greatly without them having their proper say.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people want a seat at the table. And they don't want to be taken for granted. They want a government that listens and delivers on the things that matter most to them, a government that keeps the door open and keeps showing up even when the going gets tough or the feedback isn't quite what they want to hear, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it doesn't take a lot of courage to show up when things are going your way, when you know that you're going to get a warm reception. Character, true character is revealed when the going gets tough.

Now I'll make the commitment again today that this is a team that will keep showing up, even when it's hard. This is a team that will continue to earn trust with Saskatchewan people, keep bringing up those hard issues and drawing attention to what needs

fixing in this province, Mr. Speaker. And unfortunately that list is long. This is a team that will show people in this province that this is indeed a government-in-waiting.

So, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people told us that they were looking for change. They also told us that we had more work to do. We accept that. We accept the role that we've been given, and we will do what we've been asked to do proudly, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to focus on what is most important to Saskatchewan peoples. Mr. Speaker, this government says that they expect that things need to change, and that's the part of the message that they've received too during this election. We'll be here to hold them to account.

Mr. Speaker, on the doorsteps, day after day, this is a team that heard from people heartbreaking stories about the cost of living in this province. They heard from people that they were struggling to pay their bills, people that have never struggled before. Hard-working people, making terrible decisions about whether to pay rent, whether to put food on the table, seniors struggling with whether they could pay for their medication, or whether they were going to pay rent or buy groceries, Mr. Speaker. This shouldn't happen in a province as wealthy as this province. They want good-paying jobs. They want to see opportunity in all communities, Mr. Speaker, not just a few.

So let's talk about the record, Mr. Speaker, because this government doesn't always seem to understand or believe that Saskatchewan people are struggling. But here are some reasons why. Over the past six years, this government has failed on many fronts. Between 2018 and '23 this is a province that has seen the least economic growth in Canada, the second-last performance when it comes to job growth, Mr. Speaker, and seven sectors, seven full sectors of the economy have actually shrunk during that same time. So it shouldn't come as a surprise to members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that people out there are struggling.

Mr. Speaker, we have been putting forth measures to provide some relief that Saskatchewan people told us that they need, and we believe them. They can't wait until 2026. People are making decisions right now, struggling with putting food on the table, putting gifts under the tree this Christmas.

Now this government voted against our motion to cut the gas tax. The reality is they didn't need a motion. This is something they could have and should have done any time over the last two years when we've been bringing it up in this Assembly, something that other provinces have benefited from, governments of all stripes, but this government has chosen to say no.

Mr. Speaker, we've also put forth motions around cutting their PST [provincial sales tax] that they placed on grocery items, on kids' clothing, but again we saw a no. We saw a no. And just here again on the floor of this Assembly we saw this government say no to even launching an investigation into why people in this province have scurvy in 2024, Mr. Speaker. Scurvy was something we learned about in history class, about sailors in times and eras past, Mr. Speaker. People in this province are living with scurvy, but this government doesn't even want to have an investigation to see why, Mr. Speaker. People deserve better.

Another front, Mr. Speaker, on health care — speaking of people

deserving better in the birthplace of medicare I might add — we have the longest surgical wait times in the country, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to hips and knees. We have ERs in this province over 300 per cent capacity. And we heard more concerns brought forward this week from nurses in Saskatoon. People travelling out of the province to get the care that they need, paying out of pocket to get it, or people being faced with horrible, horrible decisions, Mr. Speaker. People dying on wait lists before they even get the health care that they need.

We've already heard people coming to their Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Lynn Robertson, who couldn't get a PICC [peripherally inserted central catheter] line, who bears the scars; Fred Sandeski, someone left with a heartbreaking, heartbreaking choice, he and his wife of over 40 years, Mr. Speaker. People in this province shouldn't have to come to the floor of their legislature to beg for the health care that Saskatchewan people deserve. Today we saw the Premier not even acknowledge a problem.

We heard about change. We heard that there was an appetite for change on that other side. Today we saw that same plan that saw 4,000 health care workers leave our province last year, Mr. Speaker, held up as the solve. It's not good enough. This team and the people of this province demand better.

Mr. Speaker, another place where Saskatchewan people deserve better is when it comes to education: lowest per-pupil funding in the country. And yes, I said "per-pupil," Mr. Speaker, because that is important. We have fallen to last place. Our kids deserve better. Those working in our schools deserve better. Mr. Speaker, this is an investment in our future. This should be something we can all agree on.

We should agree that six-year-olds, six-year-olds in this province like Lindsay Klassen's six-year-old Wyatt should not be sent home from school because we simply don't have the supports that are needed. Mr. Speaker, that is not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to bring those concerns forward because that's what Saskatchewan people have asked us to do. We will take on this role with honour, with a vigour and the intelligence and the empathy that we have heard from each of these members on this side of the House.

As I said we understand Saskatchewan people have told us that we have more work to do. This isn't the end. This is just the beginning. My message to Saskatchewan people is this: we will continue to come to you. We will accept every invitation to come out to your farm, to your local town hall, the rink, the coffee shop, to talk about what's important to you, your community, and your families. We'll show up even when it's hard, Mr. Speaker, and we'll bring your concerns, your solutions, forward into this Legislative Assembly. We will show up. We will earn your trust, the trust that you have placed in us, and we will show you that this is a government-in-waiting.

We've seen what's possible from the incredible people in this room and those right across this province. And one of the best things that I heard from people on the doorstep, Mr. Speaker, during this election was that people were filled with hope that things can change, that they can be better, Mr. Speaker. And that hope feels good. Some might even say it beats fear. I think I agree

with that, Mr. Speaker.

We've served notice. We will continue to serve notice that this team will fiercely defend what is wrong in this . . . fiercely defend what Saskatchewan people have sent us here to do and hold this government to account.

And we've talked a lot about change — and I am closing, I promise, Mr. Speaker — and change is needed. Change is needed in this Assembly. And we've talked a lot about a different tone, not being disagreeable just for the sake of being disagreeable. Mr. Speaker, I think we can agree on those things. But where there is disagreement, where things need to be said, this team will not be silent. We will continue.

There will be relationships and friendships even, or near friendships, that exist between members across the aisle. And I encourage all members to get to know each other, learn about each other, because I think we really do have a stronger democracy when that happens. But that coziness, Mr. Speaker — I think the member from Cumberland mentioned something about the comfiness of these chairs — that cannot and will not keep us silent on the things that matter because that is not our job. It keeps us from the level of rigour that this democracy, that the challenges that face Saskatchewan people, demands. And we won't do that. There will be no kid gloves, no kid gloves when it comes to the challenges that face Saskatchewan people because they demand better and they deserve better, Mr. Speaker. So buckle up.

I know I've already expressed this to the Premier. This is a team that will not be silent on the things that matter. We will continue to show up and stand up for Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, there's one closing thing that I want to say before I cede the floor. As I said, I listened to all of the speeches by members on this side, and they were all truly remarkable, but I want to single out one speech. The member from Walsh Acres moved the amendment to the motion, Mr. Speaker, and I won't say a lot about it other than it was a master class in courage and integrity and what grace in really unbelievable circumstances, undefendable circumstances, Mr. Speaker, looks like. And I want to thank him for that.

[11:30]

As I said, I've been here for three responses to the Throne after an election. I've heard a lot of words. Mr. Speaker, I've seen words that have not been put into action time and time again. I've seen us fall further and further behind.

We've heard that this government understands that Saskatchewan people want change. That will not be determined by the words that they say. It will be determined by actions. It will be determined ultimately by whether or not Saskatchewan people have what they need in this province.

And I will admit to being cynical because I've heard it time and time again from members opposite. Echoing the words of my colleague from Walsh Acres, I say this to the Premier and to the government, prove us wrong. I do hope you prove us wrong because Saskatchewan people deserve better, Mr. Speaker.

For those reasons I will be voting in favour of the amendment put forward by my colleague, and I will be voting against the motion put forward by the members opposite. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Scott Moe: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much, and it's a real honour for me to enter into this debate and this reply to the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, a number of opportunities that I've had since 2011 when I was first elected to enter into this debate, but most honoured to do it after the most recent election, the 2024 election in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Let me start off by thanking the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, whomever they are, have a significant role in the Westminster system of democracy, Mr. Speaker. And I just say thank you to the Leader of the Opposition for the work that she does, for her family that support her in doing that work on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. This place doesn't function very well without an effective opposition, and this particular Leader of the Opposition, I would say, is most effective. And so I thank her and I thank her family for her work personally.

Mr. Speaker, different-looking Assembly after the last election, and so I take the opportunity to start with thanking all of the candidates — whether they won or lost, Mr. Speaker — all the candidates for putting their name on a ballot, putting their name in front of their friends, their family, their community, people they may not know but had went out and met during the election. That takes a certain degree of courage, as those that are sitting on the floor of this Assembly would realize. Takes a certain degree of courage to put your name on the ballot and go out, put a banner behind you whatever party affiliation that might be or none, Mr. Speaker, and go out and start knocking on people's doors and saying, here, I want to represent you on the floor of the provincial legislature.

And so let me say thank you to each of the individuals that did put their name on a ballot, did run in the most recent provincial election. And through them I say thank you to the volunteers that worked alongside you as well which are, you know, many hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands really at times that are likely working in constituencies — all parties included — across the province.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to all of those on various appointments in this Assembly, whether it be cabinet, critic, Mr. Speaker. But most particularly I'd just say congratulations to you and the Deputy Speaker, Mr. Speaker, on your appointments. And may I say thank you to each of you for your service, not just in representing the constituencies and the communities that you do, but thank you for your service in putting your name forward to referee this place. And we're doing our level best to make your job as easy and simple and straightforward as it could possibly be. You don't quite have your feet up on the desk yet, Mr. Speaker, but we aspire to get you to that point.

Mr. Speaker, friends and family. You know, I had been given some advice when I was first elected in 2011. It was this: remember who your friends are when you're elected because those are who your friends are going to be when you are not elected, Mr. Speaker. While that is true, I think there is also the

opportunity for us — and I've seen it happen with many of my colleagues — to form some great friendships while we're doing the work on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan down here, Mr. Speaker.

And so I would just like to acknowledge all of the friendships that we all have back in the communities that we represent, many of them lifelong friendships, but also acknowledge the friendships that have been formed across the aisle from time to time as well, Mr. Speaker, that have been formed down here in the work that we collectively do on behalf of Saskatchewan people.

Although you wouldn't know it on the floor of this Assembly, we can be thankful for the differences, the political differences and the policy differences that we have in this province and maybe even in this nation, Mr. Speaker, that pale in comparison to what we see happening in other areas of the world. And there was a member statement on just some of those atrocities earlier today, Mr. Speaker. And so we can be very thankful for one, the democracy that we have; two, for the people that put their names on the ballots to serve on the floor of this Assembly provincially, Mr. Speaker. And we can also be thankful that the points of disagreement that we have pale in comparison to what we see in other areas of the world, Mr. Speaker, and I would say that we collectively work together and maybe at times even agree on more than we give ourselves credit for, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you know, I better say thank you to my family. Kids are grown and gone, doing well, and we're very, very proud of both of them and their respective careers and all they're doing, Mr. Speaker, and love them very much. My wife is happy to see me on Friday evenings when I get home and I think maybe just slightly happier on Sunday evenings when I'm leaving again, Mr. Speaker. I say it often, nobody serves on the floor of this Assembly alone. You only serve with the love and support of the entirety of your family. And I certainly am thankful for mine for yet another election and another year, Mr. Speaker.

I want to make a couple of comments on what's happening globally before we get into what's happening here in the province. Tough time for incumbent governments, Mr. Speaker. In fact if you look globally, over 80 per cent of incumbent governments are getting the heave-ho; they're getting the boot.

We saw, you know, a number of months ago in Greece — Greece of all places — elected a fairly right-wing government, Mr. Speaker. We saw a right-wing government nearly elected in France in May this summer as they actually had a vote of non-confidence happen here just this past week. Mr. Speaker, we saw the UK [United Kingdom] election change governments. The conservative government is out, the labour government is in with a significant switch, Mr. Speaker. And most recently just in the last 10 days or so have saw the same happened in Iceland, Mr. Speaker. Of course the USA [United States of America], much closer to us, a shift in the administration there. The incumbent is out as well.

And we've seen that provincially across Canada as well. Manitoba had shifted. BC [British Columbia] very nearly shifted. There's a very, very close minority administration there. And New Brunswick shifted, Mr. Speaker. We saw my friend Tim Houston was able to hang on quite competently. I think he had

half a per cent more than what we had in the provincial election and quite a significantly different outcome actually in the seats that the Nova Scotia conservative party had received. And I offer my congratulations to my friend Tim.

And even here, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that as we found our way through the provincial election campaign here, we ran on a campaign that was largely focused on affordability for Saskatchewan families and affordability for Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Speaker. And we have every intent of enacting all of those commitments that we made, and some of them in *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*, hopefully today. But enacting all of those policies, Mr. Speaker, because we made a commitment to Saskatchewan people and we were elected on that commitment to Saskatchewan people to enact just those policies, Mr. Speaker.

And we're going to use the strength of our economy to enact those policies, Mr. Speaker. And so during the month of October we spoke a lot about the strength of the Saskatchewan economy, you know, a strong economy means a brighter future. What we learned, and what I learned, throughout that campaign, Mr. Speaker, and you see this reflected in this Speech from the Throne that was introduced on the floor of this Assembly about a week ago, is that we need to clarify, quantify, and lay out what a brighter future looks like for Saskatchewan people.

For Saskatchewan people a brighter future looks like being able to access a primary health care provider when they need it. A brighter future for a Saskatchewan family is when one of your family members requires a surgery, you're able to access that surgery in a timely amount of time.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that a brighter future in Saskatchewan means that when you and your family go out for a walk after supper, regardless of where you live, you're safe. You're safe in your community, wherever you live in this province.

And a brighter future means we continue to preserve the opportunity that we have as people that live in this province to live in the most affordable jurisdiction in the most affordable province across the nation.

And we're going to use the strength of the Saskatchewan economy, nation-leading strength, to deliver just that. None of this is easy or by accident, I would say, Mr. Speaker. There is a lot going on. I talked a little bit about what's going on internationally. I talked, you know, a little bit about the changes that we see in the potential tariffs that will come on in January with our largest trading partner, the US [United States]. And those are significant for Saskatchewan. And I would say, in our case, in this province we export and have diversified our exports, this province of a million and a quarter people — a million and a quarter people — that's a significant change too, Mr. Speaker.

This province exports to over 160 countries around the world and increasingly are increasing the value of those exports to those said countries. But 55 per cent of our exports still go to the US. Contrast that with our imports, Mr. Speaker. We like those big red tractors and those big green combines and the Kenworth trucks and the Peterbilt trucks that are built in the US. And 80 per cent of our imports actually come from the US. And so we're heavily reliant on the United States of America in our trading

volume and trading value back and forth.

And so when there's a change in administration and talk about 25 per cent tariffs, we're paying attention because that is going to add to the inflationary costs that Saskatchewan families . . . and it's going to add to some of the challenges that we're seeing already today in the industries that are creating wealth for Saskatchewan families.

And so I just opened up the newspaper today, and I'm not an avid newspaper reader, but I did open up the newspaper today. And there is a number of articles here that are actually relevant, Mr. Speaker, to Canadian policy. And I would say that there are a number of reasons behind the inflationary costs that Saskatchewan and Canadian families are experiencing, but many of them are in the policy that we're developing in this nation, which I would say in many cases is policy that's just off base a little bit, Mr. Speaker. Off base a little bit. And I'll get to that.

We talked about this in question period. There's an article in here where it says the price of groceries is going to go up an additional \$801 this next year. That's a significant increase in what we're paying when we visit the grocery store. One \$250 GST [goods and services tax] tax credit cheque is not going to help, Mr. Speaker.

It's a significant inflationary pressure that we are all experiencing, and I would say . . . And I'll get to the policies that are having an impact on that in a moment.

Here's another policy that just . . . There's an article on it as well, and I think speaks to maybe the . . . I don't know if silliness is the right word, but certainly not focusing on energy security and food security and manufacturing security from a continental or a North American perspective in developing this policy. The title of this article in the *Pipeline Online* is "Manual madness: Kenworth can only sell 10% of new trucks with manual transmissions to satisfy . . . [the federal government's] climate change concerns."

Kenworth is only going to sell 10 out of every 100 trucks that they have on the lot to satisfy the regulations that are being put in by our federal government to use manual transmissions as opposed to automatic transmissions. And apparently it's not just an issue that's facing Kenworth, but it is facing the broader industry. A number of models will soon no longer be available as they do not have the required replacement transmissions in place.

And so they're actually going to cancel the construction of trucks which are . . . It's going to further hamper our ability to get food — as it's brought by truck — out to maybe the Loblaws at the Global Transportation Hub and then dispersed to grocery stores across Saskatchewan or to Federated Co-operative's distribution hub, Mr. Speaker. We need trucks and we need people in them that are driving those trucks, Mr. Speaker.

[11:45]

And that's just an example of a policy that is adding to the costs. It's going to add to the very costs of what we as individuals in this province and Canadians are experiencing at the grocery store. And there's many more and I'll get to those in a minute.

And I'll get . . . I have a solution. I always bring solutions, Mr. Speaker.

And there's another article in the newspaper here that I actually thought was fairly alarming. I didn't come here just to talk about the newspaper, but I read it today so I kind of wanted to bring a few of these up. And this comes from a, you know, an individual that I think that has a lot to add to the conversation around monetary policy, has a lot to add to the conversation around, you know, the policy development that we're making and the impacts on inflation and the impacts on our general economy, and that's Stephen Poloz.

So I believe this is in the *National Post* as well. But he goes on to say here that, "I would say we're in a recession. I wouldn't even call it a technical one."

A technical one, a technical recession is a superficial definition that you have when you have two quarters of negative growth in a row. We haven't had that. The reason is because we've been swamped with new immigrants. They will buy the basics in life that boosts our consumption enough to stay above that marginal level.

We are now in our sixth consecutive quarter — this is Canada-wide — our sixth consecutive quarter of falling GDP [gross domestic product] per capita in our nation. Sixth consecutive quarter. That's a year and a half of falling GDP per capita.

Canadian consumers have suffered a 30 per cent increase in the cost of living. This is before the \$800 increase that we're going to experience, and we're all going to experience that one the same. Well actually we may not across the nation, Mr. Speaker, depending on your income. But we're going to . . . we've already experienced a 30 per cent cost-of-living increase as Canadians, largely due to policy development.

This is before the \$800 food increase that I had mentioned earlier. It's also before whatever impact a 25 per cent tariff from the US, the USA may have on our general economy and on the price of groceries when we arrive at the grocery store. And the projection is, is that's going to hit our GDP by about 2.6 per cent, about 1.6 per cent south of the border.

The GST break and the \$250 cheques, they'll help Canadians in the short term but do little to improve long-term economic growth. There are so many other ways to . . . Here's the policy discussion that we need to be having as Canadians. There are so many other ways to boost the economy that would provide a longer lasting effect.

So giving away these things is kind of like giving somebody a fish instead of giving them a fishing rod, Mr. Speaker. And you would be very familiar with that particular parable, Mr. Speaker. We need to work with Canadians and Saskatchewan residents on accessing fishing rods, not handing out fish, Mr. Speaker, as per Mr. Poloz's comments.

The declining GDP per capita is actually a concern for us in Saskatchewan and, I would say, for us across Canada, and not as much a concern for the US, as the US and Canada have throughout time, since the early '90s, been very, very close with the increases in the gross domestic product growth per capita

since the early '90s. That's started to spread — with Canada levelling off and even decreasing in a number of years and the US continuing to climb — in about 2015.

And so I ask you, what do you think happened in 2015 that caused that spread? And I'll ask you today, as we find our way through — and I was there the last time — through the formation and the agreement of USMCA [United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement], the agreement with our largest trading partner, Mr. Speaker. And we see a new administration coming, threatening already 25 per cent tariffs, already concerned about a trade deficit and how we are going to work our way through that conversation.

We see policies that have come into play that have had an impact on Canadians at the grocery store, at the fuel station. Policies that have come into play that are having an impact on how we actually produce the food and the fuel security for not just us, and not just even the continent of North America, but for 160 countries around the world. And again we must always remember that we produce the highest quality, cost-competitive, most ethical and sustainable food, fuel, and fertilizer that you can find on this world, Mr. Speaker. And we should be making more of it available.

So certainly the policies that have had an impact, have had an impact, Mr. Speaker, and are having an impact I would say not only on the Canadian economy and that decreasing GDP per capita, but having an impact on us here in this province as well. Despite Mr. Poloz's mention of that Canada is already in a recession, Saskatchewan is not participating in that.

Most recently . . . I'll give you but one example. I'll give you but one example. Most recently we saw a significant US-owned agricultural company, Cargill, is looking at operating more efficiently in their global footprint; a 5 per cent reduction I think is the target. What we see happening here in Saskatchewan is a government that is very focused on attracting investment and has worked closely with the leadership at Cargill North America so that they're actually looking to hire people this year, and into the years ahead, right here in Regina at the half-a-billion-dollar canola crush facility that's located out at the Global Transportation Hub. They are also adding a cogeneration facility at their facility in Clavet, Mr. Speaker, and looking for people to run that as well.

And it's just one example — and there's many — one example of how Saskatchewan is actually bucking the trend, bucking the winds, whether it be incumbent governments or whether it be not participating in a Canadian recession, Mr. Speaker, because of what we do. And I think Saskatchewan people can be so very proud of what we do and how we do it. How we produce those products and provide that food and energy security for so many people around the world.

You contrast that with what is coming from our federal government, what is coming from our federal government, Mr. Speaker. And I spoke briefly of, you know, the challenge that Kenworth is facing. And we buy Kenworth trucks and we buy Peterbilt trucks and we buy International trucks. And you know, a guy'll even buy a Mack truck from time to time from Redhead Equipment, Mr. Speaker. Those policies are having an impact on the cost of the food that's getting to our grocery stores and the cost of everything that we most certainly purchase. And they're

building on top of other policies that have been brought forward by a federal government — a Liberal government, yes, but the last four plus years and running now have been supported by the NDP.

And I would say that it's now time for a choice. It's time for Canadians to have a choice on who's going to represent them in dealing with president-elect Trump on what is our trade relationship going to look like moving forward? Who's going to represent Canadians when it comes to the decision this spring about increasing the carbon tax? Increasing the carbon tax on the gas and the fuel and the diesel that is going to be running through fewer trucks now, and so they're going to be charging more into not only northern Saskatchewan but to each of our grocery stores. Who is going to be making the decisions around how we are finding our way to ensure that, yes, we have the electricity into the future? And we're reducing our emissions profile on how we generate that electricity, but we're going to keep our electricity affordable and reliable.

Canadians deserve a choice, Mr. Speaker, on who is going to be developing these policies into the future. And I would say that choice needs to be sooner rather than later. Four years is about the norm for a government. When everybody goes to the polls, I think largely if you asked them, how long is this government that's going to be elected going to serve, most of them would say four years. Legally, yes, you can go a little longer. Morally, I'm not sure you can.

Mr. Speaker, four years is about the expectation that Saskatchewan and Canadians have. We've hit that at the national level. I think we're hitting our limit when it comes to the inflationary costs that are, not solely, but largely the cause of policies that have been coming from our federal government. And it's time for Saskatchewan residents to participate with the rest of Canada on a choice, like we did in this province just recently, Mr. Speaker, like we did in this province just recently.

And so I want to talk a little bit about what is happening right here in Saskatchewan and maybe some of the lead-in to the title of the Speech from the Throne, which was "A New Beginning." And we do view this as a new beginning. A new beginning for our government, for the Saskatchewan government. That might seem like an odd statement after 17 years of being in government, but we certainly heard from Saskatchewan people that, yes, they wanted us to deliver on the affordability platform that we had put before . . . [inaudible] . . . that ensured that it had . . . it supported seniors, Mr. Speaker. It supported those that are living with disabilities. It supported women's health. Mr. Speaker, it supported families across this province. It supported students with an increase to the graduate retention program. Mr. Speaker, they wanted us to deliver on that.

But we had additional advice throughout that campaign, additional advice as to what a brighter future looks like for Saskatchewan families. And I think we've quantified that and clarified that in this Speech from the Throne. And so the new beginning — and I told this story on election night, Mr. Speaker — is about how we approach what Saskatchewan people are instructing us to do.

In 2007 when we were elected, this province had the longest surgical wait times in the nation of Canada. We had a

government, a new government that was elected by the people of Saskatchewan, that set a target. They followed that target with an investment, an investment, and investing in a plan to lower those surgical wait times, and by 2014 we had the shortest surgical wait times in the nation of Canada. Now through various pandemics and others we've seen wait times surge across the nation, Mr. Speaker, and we're back to in or around those 2014 . . . that 2014 area of a wait time here in Saskatchewan.

And we need to do better. And we are going to do better, and we committed to do better in the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, in 2007 about 75,000 surgeries were being performed annually. We're at about 95,000. Our commitment is to go to 450,000, Mr. Speaker, as we find our way, find our way through the next four years, so over 100,000 surgeries each and every year. Mr. Speaker, we're going to use the strongest economy in the nation of Canada to invest in that on behalf of Saskatchewan people.

And that economy, Mr. Speaker, is quite something. I shared the story about Cargill, but you can substitute in BHP, NexGen, Foran Mining. You can substitute in so many other ag companies that are now adding value to the products that we are producing here. We are no longer really exporting agricultural products. We are exporting ingredients, and increasingly so each and every year, in protein fractionation that's happening. It's an exciting time.

And if you look at what the Saskatchewan economy is and the health of the Saskatchewan economy, and I said earlier, when it comes to the gross domestic product — and we've been slipping on a per capita basis across Canada — Saskatchewan has the second-highest gross domestic product per person. In fact I think we are in the area of . . . I've got a chart here that I wanted to put in. We're high. Second highest in the nation. Seventy . . .

And when it comes to what we export to those 163 countries, we are the highest in the nation, Mr. Speaker. We export more product per person than any other area of Canada, and I think that's something we can be very proud of. And that product isn't just product that are wants. It's providing food security and it's providing energy security for, again, not just people in North America but people around the world in 163 countries that we export to.

The quantum or the value I find interesting. We're an export-based province. You're either working in an industry that's exporting things or you're servicing people that are working in that industry that are exporting things. That's what drives the economy and wealth in our communities, in our province, and I would say even in our households.

In 2007 our net value of the exports that went out of Saskatchewan was \$17 billion. In 2017, Mr. Speaker, that number had climbed to \$31 billion, and the last two years running I think it's \$49 billion in change. So we're in around \$50 billion in exports. That is the value of dollars that are circulating in our province, in our communities, and in our families. That's the increase in value that is circulating in our families here in Saskatchewan. And that is what is creating the jobs that are attracting the people and, most importantly, providing our children the opportunity to stay here.

And that's the strength of a nation. That's an example of nation-leading strength in an economy, and that's what we're going to use to invest in that brighter future for Saskatchewan people. That brighter future from a health care perspective is going to be able to access that surgery in a reasonable amount of time, and we're going to shrink that surgical wait-list, Mr. Speaker. That brighter future also means that people will be able to have access to a primary health care provider.

And there's numerous different medical disciplines now that can provide that service, Mr. Speaker. I myself see a nurse practitioner, Mr. Speaker. But we're going to ensure that every Saskatchewan person does have access to a primary health care provider when they need it. Today that number's at about 84 per cent, and we need to ensure that that is available, Mr. Speaker.

And you saw not only a commitment to that but a commitment to building out on the successful model here in Regina on the urgent care centre, adding another one in our capital city of Regina, adding another one in addition to the one that we have a partnership with — Ahtahkakoop Cree Developments in Saskatoon — adding another one in our province's largest city, adding one in Prince Albert, adding an urgent care centre in Moose Jaw as well as in the community of North Battleford. And that is going to ensure and help Saskatchewan people to have access to the health care that they need ultimately when they need it.

[12:00]

Mr. Speaker, we're going to use the nation-leading strength of our economy to invest in safer communities. And I've spoken about this. In fact I spoke about it in the rotunda the evening we had the debate here. That is really a two-part plan. One is to provide the supports, supports whether it be for homelessness or the root causes, Mr. Speaker, which all too often in today's day and age — and our world has changed — in today's day and age, Mr. Speaker, are mental health and addictions.

And that's why you have seen a very definitive and definite commitment by this government to ensure that we are building the steps for people. And then one of those significant steps is access to a recovery, the recovery services and a recovery bed and a recovery journey in this province for those that unfortunately have slipped into a life of addictions.

And there were some fair comments and questions on how quickly that is happening, Mr. Speaker. But I'd assure the people of Saskatchewan, on the floor of this Assembly and wherever they might be, that this government is going to do its level best to ensure that we find our way to those 500 spaces. And if we need more, we're going to have to have that conversation about going beyond those 500 spaces.

And I say that unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, because if we are going to have safer communities, we need to address the drugs that are coming into our communities, whether that be through border security, whether that be through law enforcement. But we also need to give those that have succumbed to addictions, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity for that recovery journey. And we need to present it to them at every opportunity.

Here's a story that I maybe didn't expect, and it has to do with

some of the steps in the pathway on that recovery journey, Mr. Speaker. And some of the early steps I think are maybe the most difficult, making that decision to access recovery. And there's a conversation happening in Canada on compassionate care and all of that, Mr. Speaker, that hasn't likely made it to Saskatchewan, but you do see it happening in other areas of Canada and North America.

What we did do was invest in some complex-needs shelters in Saskatoon and Regina. Again, tested the waters I would say, a pilot project to work with our local municipal enforcement detachments, on is there a place for someone that may, unfortunately with a mental health or an addictions challenge, be threatening harm on themselves or someone around them. Keep our communities safe, Mr. Speaker, but also keep our family members safe that may be in those communities.

As we found our way through that conversation — and thankful to the municipalities and the police chiefs for the advice that they provided us — there's a few ways to leave that facility after 24 hours. One would be to have a family member come get you. Two would be to be transported back to the police station and be released as per if you were arrested, I suppose. The third way is to be referred to some type of community addictions services.

I didn't know what the percentage breakdown would be of that, Mr. Speaker, but I believe it's in excess of 95 per cent are saying, I want to go and I want to self-refer to some addictions services that's available in my community. Mr. Speaker, that's individuals with their hand up. And this is a government that is going to do everything we can to build that capacity, to provide those opportunities for those individuals. That's number one, is supporting our community members that may have found themselves living a life of addictions. And we're going to do that, Mr. Speaker.

And it won't be without questions along the way, and they're fair questions. I would take advice along the way as well, Mr. Speaker. But we are going to do everything that we can to use the nation-leading strength of the Saskatchewan economy to invest in those that are most vulnerable in our communities by providing them a recovery journey, Mr. Speaker, by providing them a recovery journey.

Second to that, Mr. Speaker, is enforcement, if we can agree on this. For those that unfortunately have entered and are living their life with addictions, the streets is the most vulnerable place for them to be. We need the best place for them to be, and a place that they choose to be — a provincially funded recovery bed, Mr. Speaker, so that they can start their journey, whether that be through making that choice at a complex-needs shelter or whatever that might be, Mr. Speaker. And so we are increasing the number of officers in our communities.

Since 2011 I think we're up about 180 RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officers, committed to roughly about another 180, Mr. Speaker, in the years ahead. Over 100 municipal officers, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you that that's been well received in the cities, the seven cities in this province, Mr. Speaker, that use municipal police forces.

And we're going to augment all of that with the marshals service, Mr. Speaker. The marshals service will be there to support our

RCMP officers, to support our municipal police officers by, for example, showing up when there is a significant incident, 20 or 30 members deep. Can you imagine having as a police force of . . . A rural police force might be 10 or 12 members and you have a significant issue, Mr. Speaker. And we've seen some not too far from where we live in recent years unfortunately. But having the ability to bring in, in a few hours' notice, 20, 30, or maybe even 40 police officers, Mr. Speaker, the calming effect and the safety that that provides to a community.

And so we're going to take an all-of-the-above approach when it comes to ensuring that our communities are safe, but it's going to start with recovery — recovery opportunities and steps off our streets, out of homelessness, Mr. Speaker, and to a better life for everyone, I would say. For everyone.

Education. A lot of discussion on education. Again we heard this on the doors, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure the members opposite heard a little bit about education on the doors as well. We need to focus in on our K to 3 [kindergarten to grade 3] outcomes. And we need to invest in the targets that we will work with our front-line education, not only providers but parents and school divisions, to ensure that we are having the outcomes that are acceptable to Saskatchewan residents when our students, who are our children and grandchildren, find their way through and out of grade 3.

I think everyone can agree that if we can continue to increase and have good outcomes at that grade 3 level, grades 4 through 12 and I would say the rest of your life really becomes much more possible to aspire to, you know, greater, greater things, Mr. Speaker.

And so you are going to see, and Saskatchewan people have told us that we need to invest in education and specifically invest and measure in the outcomes, in particular in that K to 3 space. And that's why you saw the commitment, not in the campaign but in the Speech from the Throne, to expand our specialized support classrooms by 200, Mr. Speaker. That is going to be focusing in that K to 3 space, ensuring those that maybe need a little bit more support, help, or maybe a speech and language pathologist or need some other supports, Mr. Speaker, are receiving that support but are still able to participate to the level that they're able in the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, last but not least, last but not least is our affordability platform. My seatmate in here has been speaking about it an awful lot here at question period the last number of days, Mr. Speaker, and this was really the core of the election platform that we had. The cost of living. And I talk a little bit about what's having an impact on that nationally and internationally, but we also have some things that we can control locally, Mr. Speaker. And there was two affordability platforms that were put forward in the most recent election. There's been questions as to, you know, why won't we enact them both. Well, Mr. Speaker, not everyone can win, whether it's politics or a hockey game, Mr. Speaker.

We are enacting the commitments that we made to Saskatchewan people, significant commitments that are permanent, Mr. Speaker. They certainly aren't temporary. And they will benefit all Saskatchewan people, whether you're a senior, whether you're a student, whether you're starting out new in your career

here in this province. We want you to stay here in Saskatchewan, whether you are living a life with disabilities, whether you're living a life with diabetes, Mr. Speaker. These are affordability measures that are going to have an impact literally on everyone that lives here in the province of Saskatchewan, starting with the largest income tax reduction since 2008, Mr. Speaker. And again we're going to have the opportunity to vote on that in a few minutes.

Mr. Speaker, continuing with the removal of carbon tax from how we heat our homes, and again I spoke to that policy earlier. We're doubling the active families benefit, Mr. Speaker. The graduate retention program, which I think has been a tremendously effective program for our youth, providing them with that extra incentive to stay right here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I've spoken on the floor of this Assembly of some of the opportunities or lack thereof. When I graduated high school some many years ago, Mr. Speaker, many years ago, there was certain inscriptions that were spray painted on the back of "welcome to Saskatchewan" signs, Mr. Speaker.

This is all building on the fact that today Saskatchewan is often ranked as the most affordable province in the nation of Canada to live. That's an important factor for us to remember, Mr. Speaker, and never take for granted, us as a government, to never take for granted, to ensure that we are always striving so that is the case because we are experiencing the cost-of-living pressures like other Canadians, Mr. Speaker. But it's also incumbent on us to understand how we are able to say that.

But one of the reasons we're able to say that is in the low income tax rates that we have, the incentives that we have for students, Mr. Speaker, the seniors' income plan, for example, that has increased a number of times. But one of the more significant ways that we're able to say that, Mr. Speaker, is due to having the second-lowest bundle of Crown utilities, of how we actually heat our home, drive our cars, Mr. Speaker, and use the power and gas that we do. We have one of the second-lowest cost bundles of utilities in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker. That's not only good for us that live here, but it's also good for us that are attempting to attract industries to move here, make the investment, and employ people, like Cargill outside of Regina here, which is why I would say that we're not participating in that larger workforce reduction that we see some of these companies doing.

And so Bill No. 1 is going to be on the floor of the Assembly, and we invite all to support it. Bill No. 2, also going to be on the floor of the Assembly today. Both going to create an opportunity for more affordability for Saskatchewan residents.

Mr. Speaker, all in all, what you see in the Speech from the Throne is truly a new beginning for us as a government. It's a new beginning for, I'd say in many ways for us as a province. But for us as a government, it's an opportunity for us to look at the policies and where we are through a slightly different lens, Mr. Speaker, maybe a similar lens that we did in 2007, where we might be changing some things but really investing in the core services that are important to Saskatchewan people.

And maybe some things that in hindsight I wish would have been in our campaign, like making a commitment for Saskatchewan people to have access to a primary health care provider and

timely surgery. Mr. Speaker, those are things Saskatchewan people expect and those are things that we are going to set targets around, we are going to measure. We're going to make the investment and we're going to measure the outcomes of that investment. And we will evaluate what is working, Mr. Speaker, and we'll double down on what is working. And what isn't working, we're going to set aside.

And we're also going to look at the, you know, the core operations of government, Mr. Speaker, because yes, we're going to use the strongest economy in the nation of Canada to make these investments, Mr. Speaker, but we are going to focus on what matters and what we heard from Saskatchewan families throughout this campaign.

And so it is going to be that access to health care providers, access to surgery. It is going to be those K to 3 outcomes in our education system, Mr. Speaker. And it certainly is going to be continuing to invest in safer communities. Whether that's providing the supports or whether that's providing the enforcement and the laws to ensure that those in our community that are up to no good and looking to be a danger to themselves or others, Mr. Speaker, they just simply aren't going to have that opportunity moving forward. We have a challenge, Mr. Speaker. We have a Canadian challenge and we most certainly are up to the task in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this is a time for a new beginning. This legislature looks very different today than it did prior to dissolution. Mr. Speaker, I'd say the people of Saskatchewan have spoken. They have elected a government, admittedly a different government, different-looking government, Mr. Speaker, but it is a government that most certainly is not only going to deliver on continuing to strengthen the Saskatchewan economy so that we can build that brighter future, but we are also going to deliver on the change, deliver the change that they asked for when it comes to health care, when it comes to education, and when it comes to keeping our communities safe. And I think that was very evident in this most recent Speech from the Throne.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the amendments. However I will be supporting the motion put forward by the member from Kindersley-Biggar and seconded by the member from Saskatchewan Rivers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[12:15]

Speaker Goudy: — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment moved by the member for Regina Walsh Acres and seconded by the member for Saskatoon Fairview:

That the motion be amended by adding:

And, that the Assembly does not support the agenda outlined in the Speech from the Throne because it fails to include adequate measures to urgently address the challenges Saskatchewan people face regarding health care, education, and the cost of living; and further,

That the Assembly has lost confidence in the government.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — Those in favour of the amendment please say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

Speaker Goudy: — And those opposed to the amendment please say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — I think the nos have it. I recognize two people. Call in the members, please.

[The division bells rang from 12:16 until 12:17.]

Speaker Goudy: — All those in favour of the amendment, please stand.

[Yeas — 22]

Beck	Ritchie	Burki
Nippi-Albright	Wotherspoon	Teed
Young, A.	Clarke	McPhail
Breckner	Sarauer	Conway
Blakley	Grewal	ChiefCalf
Jorgenson	Brar	Gordon
Warrington	Pratchler	Housser
Roy		

Speaker Goudy: — All those opposed to the amendment please stand.

[Nays — 33]

Moe	Harrison, D.	Kaeding
Marit	Cockrill	Reiter
Hindley	Harrison, J.	Jenson
Young, C.	Cheveldayoff	Keisig
Thorsteinson	Martens	Hilbert
Steele	Schmalz	Ross
McLeod, T.	Carr	Wilson
Weedmark	Beaudry	McLeod, B.
Crassweller	Kropf	Weger
Patterson	Bromm	Rowden
Chan	Gartner	Kasun

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 22; those opposed, 33.

Speaker Goudy: — I declare the amendment lost. The question before the Assembly is the main motion moved by the member from Kindersley-Biggar and seconded by the member for Saskatchewan Rivers:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, His Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

Speaker Goudy: — And those opposed to the motion please say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Speaker Goudy: — I think the ayes have it. A recorded division has been requested. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:21 until 12:22.]

Speaker Goudy: — All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 33]

Moe	Harrison, D.	Kaeding
Marit	Cockrill	Reiter
Hindley	Harrison, J.	Jenson
Young, C.	Cheveldayoff	Keisig
Thorsteinson	Martens	Hilbert
Steele	Schmalz	Ross
McLeod, T.	Carr	Wilson
Weedmark	Beaudry	McLeod, B.
Crassweller	Kropf	Weger
Patterson	Bromm	Rowden
Chan	Gartner	Kasun

Speaker Goudy: — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 22]

Beck	Ritchie	Burki
Nippi-Albright	Wotherspoon	Teed
Young, A.	Clarke	McPhail
Breckner	Sarauer	Conway
Blakley	Grewal	ChiefCalf
Jorgenson	Brar	Gordon
Warrington	Pratchler	Housser
Roy		

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 33; those opposed, 22.

Speaker Goudy: — I declare the motion carried. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

TABLING OF SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to submit supplementary estimates accompanied by a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

Speaker Goudy: — Please rise for the message from the Lieutenant Governor. The message is as follows:

The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates no. 1 of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2025, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Honourable Russell B. Mirasty, Lieutenant Governor, province of Saskatchewan.

Why is the Minister of Finance on his feet?

Hon. Jim Reiter: — To ask for leave to move a motion, Mr. Speaker, for committal of estimates to a policy field committee.

Speaker Goudy: — The Minister of Finance has asked leave to move a motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

MOTIONS

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That notwithstanding rule 148(1), supplementary estimates no. 1 shall be committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Speaker Goudy: — The minister has moved:

That notwithstanding rule 148(1), supplementary estimates no. 1 shall be committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

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.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1 — *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to move second reading of Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*, 2024. This important legislation will enhance Saskatchewan's status as the most affordable place in Canada to live, work, raise a family, and start a business by implementing 13 affordability commitments that we recently made to the people of Saskatchewan.

The Saskatchewan Affordability Act implements broad-based tax reforms that will reduce income taxes for every resident, family, and small business in the province. It also includes additional targeted taxation reforms that will support seniors, families with children, new post-secondary graduates, persons with disabilities, caregivers, first-time homebuyers, and people undertaking home renovation projects.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is currently one of the most affordable jurisdictions in Canada. However our people are not immune to the cost-of-living pressures that are facing all Canadians. Our government recognizes these pressures and is introducing *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* to make life more affordable for everyone in our province. All of the tax reforms contained in this Act are permanent enhancements to the province's income tax system.

We are introducing the largest personal income tax reduction in Saskatchewan since 2008 by raising the personal exemption, the spousal exemption, child exemption, and the senior supplement by \$500 a year in each of the next four years. This is in addition to full indexation which offsets the impact of inflation. A family of four earning \$100,000 will save more than \$3,400 over the next four years, while two seniors with a combined income of \$75,000 will save more than \$3,100. Upon full implementation an additional 54,000 people in our province will no longer be paying provincial income tax.

[12:30]

Mr. Speaker, we are also increasing the Saskatchewan low-income tax credit by 20 per cent over the next four years, in addition to indexation, which will benefit more than 300,000 households in our province. The active families benefit and the income threshold to qualify for that benefit will both double in an effort to make children's sport, arts, cultural, and recreational activities more affordable for more families.

We are also making home ownership more affordable by increasing the Saskatchewan first-time homebuyers tax credit by 50 per cent for those setting down roots in their communities. That's in addition to reinstating the home renovation tax credit. Homeowners can save up to \$420 per year in home renovation expenses, while seniors undertaking home renovations will be able to save up to \$525.

Our government knows the importance of retaining post-secondary graduates to stay in Saskatchewan, so we are increasing the graduate retention program by 20 per cent. This will ensure more young people stay and work in Saskatchewan.

For those looking to grow a small business, we will ensure our province remains one of the best places to do that by keeping the

small-business tax rate at 1 per cent. More than 35,000 small businesses in Saskatchewan will benefit from this change, saving more than \$50 million in corporate income tax annually.

Mr. Speaker, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* will benefit persons with disabilities and their caregivers. The disability tax credit and the disability tax credit supplement for children under 18 will both increase by 25 per cent. The caregiver tax credit will also increase by 25 per cent, which will provide additional support for families that care for adult children or parents with physical or mental impairments.

Mr. Speaker, the measures in this Act are in addition to the \$2 billion in affordability measures already included in each and every budget. With these and the new measures included in *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*, we're proud that Saskatchewan will remain the most affordable place in Canada to live, work, raise a family, and start a business.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*, 2024.

Speaker Goudy: — It's been moved by the minister that Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

Speaker Goudy: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the minister that Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — I designate that Bill No. 1 be committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills and the said bill be considered later this day.

Speaker Goudy: — This bill stands committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills.

Bill No. 2 — *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and at the conclusion of my comments, I will be moving second reading of Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*.

In the fall of 2023, in direct response to the federal government's decision to exempt home heating oil from the carbon tax, this Legislative Assembly passed *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax*

Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023. The 2023 Act's amendments resulted in, number one, designating the Crown as the sole registered distributor of marketable natural gas and non-marketable natural gas in Saskatchewan in place of the corporation, with all powers, rights, authorities, responsibilities, and obligations for the purposes of part 1 of the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, which is the federal legislation that governs the carbon tax.

Number two, requiring carbon tax payments to the federal government to be made from the General Revenue Fund at the sole discretion of the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

And three, allowing for the minister to issue directives regarding the distribution and delivery of marketable and non-marketable natural gas related to the corporation's role as a service provider to the Crown.

To ensure that these amendments remain in effect, the bill before us will repeal sections of *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2023*, which would have resulted in the automatic repeal of the amendments that Act made to *The SaskEnergy Act*. The overall intent of the proposed bill is to ensure that unelected officials continue to be protected against being implicated in any potential legal ramifications which may have arisen from the ongoing efforts of this government to make home heating more affordable through the removal of the carbon tax from residential SaskEnergy bills.

The proposed amendments prevent the repeal of, and make permanent, earlier amendments which clearly state that the Crown and the minister have the sole authority to pay or withhold payment of any charge, tax, or levy required by part 1 of the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*.

This bill will also repeal the ability to repeal the amendments made in the 2023 bill by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. This will ensure that any repeal of these legislative amendments can only be done by way of subsequent legislation passed in this Assembly.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move second reading of *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*. I so move.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

Speaker Goudy: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the minister that Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Committee of the Whole on Bills and that said bill be considered later this day.

Speaker Goudy: — This bill stands committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills.

Deputy Clerk: — Committee of the Whole on Bills.

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

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 1 — *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*

Chair B. McLeod — The first item of business before the committee is Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Chair B. McLeod — Carried.

[Clauses 1 to 21 inclusive agreed to.]

Chair B. McLeod: — His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*.

I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — I move that the committee report the bill without amendment.

Chair B. McLeod: — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Chair B. McLeod: — Carried.

Bill No. 2 — *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*

Chair B. McLeod: — The last item of business before the committee is Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

[Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to.]

Chair B. McLeod: — His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*.

I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

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

Chair B. McLeod: — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024* without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Chair B. McLeod: — Carried. I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

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

Chair B. McLeod: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Chair B. McLeod: — And that's carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Chair of Committees.

Blaine McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* without amendment.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to move third reading for Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* immediately.

[12:45]

Speaker Goudy: — The minister has requested leave to move third reading on Bill No. 1 immediately. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Leave has been granted. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 1 — *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act*

Hon. Jim Reiter: — I move that Bill No. 1 be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved that Bill No. 1, *The Saskatchewan Affordability Act* be now read the third time and passed under its title. 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.

Deputy Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Jim Reiter: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting. I recognize the Chair of Committees.

Blaine McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024* without amendment.

Speaker Goudy: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to move third reading for Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024* immediately.

Speaker Goudy: — The minister has requested leave to move third reading of Bill No. 2 immediately. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Leave has been granted. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

Bill No. 2 — *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024*

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 2 be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved that Bill No. 2, *The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act, 2024* be now read the third time and passed under its title. 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.

Deputy Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

Speaker Goudy: — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

Hon. Jeremy Harrison: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Goudy: — Next sitting. Good job, everyone.

All right. Now with regards to the point of order raised earlier today, I confirm our practice for raising points of order. So there was a little confusion on when a point of order . . . Our practice

is that members regularly raise points of order immediately after question period. The key is that a point of order must be raised promptly and can be raised at any time by any member except during oral question period and recorded division. So that was your concern.

But I did watch the post and it clearly contravenes our rules. And therefore I find that the point of order is well taken, and I ask that the member from Regina Elphinstone apologize, remove the post that is in contravention to our multimedia guidelines.

Meara Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize and you'll be happy to know that the post is already off X. Thank you.

Speaker Goudy: — Thank you. So adjournment . . . There we go. I recognize the government leader of the House.

Hon. Tim McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

Speaker Goudy: — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt this motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Speaker Goudy: — Carried. I will see you all back here Monday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:49.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe
Premier
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
Minister of Advanced Education

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Health

Hon. Daryl Harrison
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Crown Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Corporation
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Hon. Travis Keisig
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Minister of Finance
Minister of Immigration and Career Training
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Alana Ross
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Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
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Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority
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Hon. Eric Schmalz
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First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the
Provincial Capital Commission

Hon. Colleen Young
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