



THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**VOTES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

No. 74

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

10:00 a.m.

PRAYERS

PROROGATION SPEECH

10:03 a.m.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the Throne. His Honour was then pleased to deliver the following speech:

Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislative Assembly, people of Saskatchewan.

The Speech from the Throne that opened the Third Session of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature presented my government's plan to ensure continued growth in Saskatchewan and that everyone in the province benefits from that growth.

During the Third Session of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature my government presented a balanced budget that focused on more people, more jobs, and more opportunities.

Saskatchewan's 2023-24 Budget highlights a strong economy that allowed for record investments in health, education, social services and affordability measures, including paying down operating debt. Investments such as:

- Record \$7.1 billion in overall health funding; including \$98.8 million for the Health and Human Resources Action Plan and a \$42.5 million increase to fund the largest volume of surgical procedures in the history of Saskatchewan;
- More than \$4 billion in overall education spending, including a record \$2 billion in school operating funding;
- Record investment of \$3.7 billion for capital for highways, hospitals, schools and other important projects to support a growing province;
- Funding to create Saskatchewan's new Distance Learning Corporation;
- Record \$1.4 billion for the Ministry of Social Services;
- Additional benefits funding to support people with low incomes, families and seniors;
- Increased funding for mental health and addictions services programs;
- New operational funding for second stage housing;
- Funding for increased interpersonal violence supports and services;
- Investments in new police and law enforcement initiatives;
- Record level of Municipal Revenue Sharing.

Furthermore, various pieces of legislation were implemented, including:

- *The Saskatchewan First Act*, to clearly define and defend Saskatchewan's exclusive jurisdiction over natural resources and its economic future;
- Amending the province's Constitution by amending *The Saskatchewan Act* to state that Saskatchewan continues to retain exclusive jurisdiction over its own natural resources;
- *The Saskatchewan Firearms Act*, to enhance public safety and protect the rights of legal firearms owners;
- Changes to *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act*, to provide municipalities with the authority to designate outdoor public places for consumption of alcoholic beverages and to allow golf carts on public roads;
- Legislation to increase the Saskatchewan Mineral Exploration Tax Credit from 10 per cent to 30 per cent, making exploration incentives in the province among the most competitive in Canada;
- Amending *The Medical Profession Amendment Act* to introduce a new category of health care profession to add to the workforce; and
- Passing *The Education (Parents' Bill of Rights) Amendment Act*, to ensure Saskatchewan's parents are involved in important decisions about their children's education.

Saskatchewan's economy led the country in growth in 2022 and is expected to continue leading growth into the future, according to private sector forecasts.

My government is building on this momentum to continue strengthening our province by creating opportunities and providing support to those who need it most, including:

- Increasing the Saskatchewan Income Supports by 6% on average;
- Increasing living income under SAID by 6% on average;
- Increasing the monthly personal care home benefits by 20%;
- Increasing Seniors' Income Plan benefit by 9%;
- 3% increase for community-based organizations;

- Introducing a new Action Plan for Mental Health and Addictions that will invest \$49.9 million over 5 years to create 500 new addictions treatment spaces and transition to a more accessible and responsive system of care; and
- Introducing the Provincial Approach to Homelessness strategy which invests \$40.2 million in new funding over two years to create 155 new supportive housing spaces, 120 new permanent emergency shelter spaces, and 30 new complex needs emergency shelter spaces.

When taxes, utilities, and housing costs are combined, Saskatchewan is the most affordable place to live in the country. In continued efforts to keep life affordable for Saskatchewan people, during this session, my government has:

- Increased the minimum wage to \$14 an hour, and by 19% in the last two years;
- Implemented \$10 per day child care;
- Provided every resident over 18 in Saskatchewan with a \$500 affordability cheque; and
- Released the provincial plan to protect Saskatchewan's right to affordable, reliable power production to 2035 and beyond.

Saskatchewan's population is at an all-time high of over 1.2 million and growing at its fastest pace in more than a century.

Over this session my government has continued taking significant steps to ensure Saskatchewan families and growing communities across the province are safe, including:

- Adding eight new officers to the Warrant Enforcement and Suppression Team in Prince Albert;
- Adding a new Crime Reduction Team in North Battleford;
- Increased funding for the newly-established Serious Incident Response Team;
- Creating the Warrant Intelligence Team to share information with law enforcement to assist in the apprehension and removal of prolific violent offenders from provincial social funding;
- Hiring additional Police and Crisis Team personnel within Saskatoon and Regina;
- Enhancing the Internet Child Exploitation Unit; and
- The creation of the Saskatchewan Marshals Service to work with the RCMP and other police services to enhance law enforcement throughout the province.

These significant investments and initiatives represent my government's commitment to continue building and protecting a strong, safe and prosperous Saskatchewan.

These are just some of the many highlights of the past legislative session.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my duty to discharge you from further attendance of the Third Session of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature.

In relieving you of your duties, I wish to thank all members of the Assembly for your hard work and commitment to your duties in this chamber, to this province, and to your constituents.

The Hon. Mr. Morgan, Provincial Secretary, then said:

It is the will and pleasure of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor that this Legislative Assembly be prorogued until later today, the 25th day of October, 2023 at 2:00 p.m., and this Legislative Assembly is accordingly prorogued.

10:10 a.m.

Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker
