



FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

## Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

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# VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

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No. 54

Monday, April 29, 2024

1:30 p.m.

*PRAYERS*

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

Petitions of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan were presented and laid upon the Table by the following members: Mowat, Teed, and Ottenbreit.

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

According to order and pursuant to rule 16(7), petitions from residents of the province of Saskatchewan, requesting the following action, were read and received:

To fund In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) treatments in Saskatchewan.

(Addendum to sessional paper no. 21)

To design a home supports program for older adults in Saskatchewan.

(Addendum to sessional paper no. 113)

To immediately address the short-staffing crisis in health care.

(Addendum to sessional paper no. 153)

To immediately suspend the carbon tax across the nation of Canada and acknowledge its significant impact on affordability and inflation in Canada.

(Addendum to sessional paper no. 155)

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.

(Addendum to sessional paper no. 170)

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The order of the day being called for question nos. 10 to 21, pursuant to rule 21(6), the questions were converted and orders for return were issued. (see appendix)

On motion of the Hon. Ms. Carr:

Ordered, That this Assembly do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 2:38 p.m. until Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.

*Hon. Randy Weekes*  
*Speaker*

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### RETURNS, REPORTS, AND PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid upon the Table:

By the Hon. Ms. Harpauer:

Public Employees Group Life Insurance Fund: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 197)

Public Employees Disability Income Fund: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 198)

Saskatchewan Power Corporation Supplementary Superannuation Plan: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 199)

Saskatchewan Power Corporation Severance Pay Credits Plan: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 200)

Saskatchewan Power Corporation Designated Employee Benefit Plan: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 201)

Saskatchewan Water Corporation Retirement Allowance Plan: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 202)

SaskEnergy Retiring Allowance Plan: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 203)

By the Hon. Mr. Duncan:

Saskatchewan Government Insurance Superannuation Plan: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 204)

Saskatchewan Liquor Board Superannuation Commission: 2023 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 205)

By the Hon. Ms. Eyre:

Ministry of Justice and Attorney General: 2023 Public and Private Rights Board annual report

(Sessional paper no. 206)

By the Hon. Mr. McMorris:

Northern Municipal Trust Account: 2021 annual report

(Sessional paper no. 207)

## QUESTIONS ORDERED FOR RETURN

The following written questions were converted and orders for return were issued:

**Return no. 10 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, regarding water-related emergency response and planning, (a) list the amount of inflow into Lake Diefenbaker each year over the past 10 years and as a percent of historic inflows; (b) provide outflow data (hydro and simple releases through the spillway) through the Gardiner dam for each year over the past 10 years, and as a percentage of historic outflows; (c) the projected inflow into Lake Diefenbaker in 2024; (d) the present level of the South Saskatchewan River and where the level stands from a historical perspective (i.e. lowest in the last 10 years, 20 years, etc.); (e) according to the Alberta government, many areas in Alberta are dealing with drought conditions, particularly in the southern part of the province; there are currently 51 water shortage advisories in place in Alberta; on March 6, the flow near the mouth of the Bow River was measured to be 39.9 m<sup>3</sup>/s, the lowest March measurement in the last 24 years; provide a record of specific actions the Water Security Agency has undertaken to assure that Saskatchewan will continue to receive its 50 percent share of the water flow from Alberta; (f) in early December last year, the town of Leader declared a state of emergency with respect to its water supply given that the level of the river where the town gets its water had fallen to such a low level that its intake could no longer sustain the community's vital supply; what the province is doing to assist the community to ensure that this doesn't happen again, and what the reason was for the low water supply on the South Saskatchewan River back in December; (g) whether you are expecting to see flooding in any of the Saskatchewan water basins and, if you are, which basins; and (h) whether you are expecting water levels to be low on any of the major lakes in the province such that it will cause problems for piers, floating docks, ferries, boat moorings, etc., and, if you are, which lakes would that be.

**Return no. 11 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, the number of FTEs the Water Security Agency presently has and the number you have had in each of the past 10 years.

**Return no. 12 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, for those portions of *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2010* that the Water Security Agency is responsible, (a) the performance objectives related to the protection of water resources and habitat the WSA established and has undertaken in monitoring and reporting, and (b) provide monitoring and reporting results for the past 5 years.

**Return no. 13 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, (a) the actions and mitigation measures the WSA is taking to address elevated mercury levels in the Rafferty and Alameda reservoirs, and (b) provide water quality monitoring data for the Rafferty and Alameda reservoirs for the past 5 years.

**Return no. 14 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, in 2022-23, the Water Security Agency entered a memorandum with the Ministry of Highways to provide a full range of expertise and advice related to the Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Expansion Project with respect to planning, cost estimating, designing and rehabilitation or construction of all aspects of the project; if that memorandum is still in effect and the amount of money the WSA paid to the Ministry of Highways for the above services.

**Return no. 15 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, in 2021 the Provincial Auditor recommended that the Water Security Agency actively monitor and enforce using technology (e.g., drones, airplane flights, mapping tools) to collect information (e.g., aerial photographs) in high-risk areas specifically to identify and take action on unapproved drainage works; the auditor also noted that not taking timely enforcement action on unapproved drainage works increases the risk of landowners not achieving compliance or not changing the culture; in addition, further damage may occur to surrounding landowners and the receiving water body if compliance does not occur timely: (a) the amount of money WSA spent on monitoring and enforcement in 2022-23, (b) the amount of money that is budgeted for monitoring and enforcement in 2024-25, and (c) the number of acres that were brought into compliance in 2022-23 as a result of WSA monitoring unapproved drainage.

**Return no. 16 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, (a) the number of fulltime equivalent employees (FTEs) that were in the Agricultural Services and Economic Development Division within the Water Security Agency in 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24, and (b) the budget FTEs for 2024-25.

**Return no. 17 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, with respect to irrigation in the province, the amount water from a water rights perspective that has been allocated in total and by major regions in the province for the years 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, and current year 2024-25.

**Return no. 18 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, (a) the number of water-related legal claims or legal suites that are presently registered against either the Water Security Agency or are managed by the Water Security Agency on behalf of the province, (b) provide a list of claims, the reason for the claims, as well as who registered the claim, and (c) how significant an issue salinity claims from irrigators will be in the future for the Water Security Agency.

**Return no. 19 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, WSA recently announced that it will be charging \$1,000 to file drainage complaints, (a) the reason this fee was introduced, (b) the number of complaints you have received since implementing this fee, (c) whether the WSA has undertaken any cost analysis on different methods of handling unapproved drainage works, (d) the number of orders the WSA issued in 2022-23, (e) the number of drainage complaints that are outstanding as of today, and (f) the amount of money it costs to acquire a drainage license.

**Return no. 20 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, it is my understanding that WSA will be piloting the proposed Ag Water Stewardship Policy this year, (a) the amount that the WSA has budgeted in the current 2024-25 fiscal year to pilot the proposed Ag Water Stewardship Policy, (b) the amount that the WSA has budgeted to measure impacts to water quality and habitat loss as part of these pilots, and (c) the amount that the WSA has budgeted to restore wetlands in these pilots.

**Return no. 21 (Ms. Ritchie):**

To the Minister Responsible for Water Security Agency, (a) where in the Growth Plan it states that the proposed almost 2 million acres of new land will be gained through wetland drainage, (b) the amount that the WSA has spent over the past 5 years, either directly or indirectly, supporting farmers to drain wetlands, and (c) the amount that the WSA intends to spend in the current fiscal 2024-25 year to support wetland drainage.