



Speech from the Throne 2022

Delivered on the Occasion of the Opening of

The Third Session of
The Twenty-Ninth Legislature
Province of Saskatchewan

Wednesday, October 26th, 2022

The Honourable Russ Mirasty
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

***GROWTH THAT WORKS
FOR EVERYONE***

MR. SPEAKER, MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, HONoured GUESTS, PEOPLE OF SASKATCHEWAN

Welcome to the opening of the Third Session of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to reflect on two recent events that shocked and saddened everyone in our province.

In the early hours of September 4th, 11 Saskatchewan residents died and many others were injured in a series of violent attacks on the James Smith Cree Nation and in the community of Weldon.

All of Saskatchewan was horrified by these attacks and mourned with the victims and their families.

Then, on September 8th, we learned of the passing of our beloved Queen Elizabeth the Second, who had reigned as Queen of Canada and the Commonwealth for more than 70 years.

Queen Elizabeth attended to her duties with her customary devotion right until her death.

In fact, the last public communication of her long and remarkable reign was issued just one day before she passed.

It was a message of heartfelt condolences to Saskatchewan and to all those who lost loved ones in the James Smith Cree Nation attacks.

Her Majesty concluded her message by saying: "I mourn with all Canadians at this tragic time."

I know all Canadians mourn the loss of the victims of those brutal attacks and support all those dealing with the consequences of this tragedy.

And we remember our gracious Queen and honour her legacy of duty and service to the people of Saskatchewan.

I would ask everyone to join me in a moment of silence.

STRONG ECONOMY

Today, we meet at time of growth and optimism in Saskatchewan.

While there is much uncertainty in the world today,
Saskatchewan has what the world needs.

Our growing province and our strong economy are well-positioned to respond to that uncertainty and deliver growth that works for everyone.

Saskatchewan grew by nearly 6,500 people in the second quarter of this year – the largest quarterly increase in population ever recorded.

Saskatchewan is on track to reach 1.2 million people before the end of 2022 – an increase of nearly 200 thousand people or 20 per cent since my government took office in 2007.

This significant growth follows several decades during which our population hovered around one million people, and is a clear indication that Saskatchewan is a welcoming province of opportunity.

Saskatchewan is projected to lead Canada in economic growth in 2022.

Over the first nine months of this year, there were 20,500 more people working in the province than in 2021.

Saskatchewan's unemployment rate is now just 4.1 per cent – the lowest in Canada.

Investment is flowing into the province, as several major projects move ahead, creating thousands of new jobs.

Activity in our resource sector is on the upswing as demand for potash, oil, uranium and other key commodities increases.

BHP is fast-tracking development of the \$12 billion Jansen potash mine, the largest single investment in the history of Saskatchewan.

All of Saskatchewan's potash companies are increasing production and have reached the Growth Plan goal of \$9 billion in potash sales this year.

Our province's oil and gas sector has come alive as production of some of the most sustainable energy in the world moves closer to pre-pandemic levels.

This fall, more than 650 employees and contractors are returning to work at the McArthur River uranium mine and Key Lake mill in northeastern Saskatchewan.

There is growing interest in Saskatchewan's significant deposits of critical minerals and rare earth elements.

A stronger resource sector means strong growth in every part of our economy.

Many other economic indicators - building permits, building construction investment, housing starts, wholesale trade and retail trade - are strong.

Families, workers and communities are benefiting from a growing economy.

AFFORDABILITY PLAN

A strong economy, stronger tax revenues and higher resource prices mean my government will balance the provincial budget this year – four years ahead of schedule.

While higher resource prices have strengthened Saskatchewan's economy and improved our province's finances, they have also increased the cost of almost everything.

Saskatchewan people own the province's resources.

Saskatchewan people should benefit when resource prices are high.

That's why my government announced a four-point affordability plan to:

- Deliver a \$500 Saskatchewan Affordability Tax Credit cheque to everyone age 18 and older;
- Continue to exempt fitness and gym memberships and other activities from the Provincial Sales Tax;
- Extend the reduction of the small business tax rate; and
- Pay down up to \$1 billion in operating debt, saving nearly \$50 million a year in interest costs.

That's growth that works for everyone.

During this session, my government will introduce *The Income Tax (Affordability) Act* to provide for the delivery of the \$500 affordability cheques to Saskatchewan people and extend the small business tax reduction.

HEALTH CARE

A stronger economy and improving provincial finances mean my government can make key investments in important government services.

In health care, my government is taking action to reduce surgical wait times.

This fiscal year, we have set an aggressive target of 97,000 surgeries, which will be the highest number of surgeries ever performed in one year.

To meet this goal, work is underway to increase surgical capacity in Regina, Saskatoon and regional hospitals throughout the province.

While my government increases surgical volumes in public hospitals, we are also establishing new partnerships with publicly-funded private surgical providers.

Since 2010, private surgical clinics in Saskatchewan have performed more than 135,000 publicly-funded surgeries, and they will continue to support the public system.

This support will include a new facility in Regina focused on providing in-patient joint replacement surgery, expected to begin operations by the end of 2023.

The success of my government's surgical plan will depend in part on our ability to train and retain health care workers.

This is a serious challenge for every province and territory in Canada.

In September, my government released a four-point Health Human Resources Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain health care providers, and add over 1,000 health care professionals in Saskatchewan.

This session, my government will advance the initiatives laid out in this \$60 million plan.

These include:

- A recruitment mission to the Philippines this fall to promote health-care opportunities in Saskatchewan;
- The introduction of a first-in-Canada accelerated training, assessment and licensure pathway for internationally educated nurses;
- A new incentive program providing up to \$50,000 to health-care workers who accept hard-to-recruit positions, mainly in rural and remote areas;
- The creation of 100 new permanent full-time positions across the province; and
- The conversion of 150 existing part-time positions in rural and remote areas to full-time permanent positions.

The new Health Human Resources Action Plan is already showing results.

The recent recruitment of four Registered Nurses has enabled the resumption of 24-hour, seven day a week emergency services at the Biggar and District Health Centre.

In Kamsack, the hiring of six Registered Nurses this fall will result in the reopening of some hospital beds in early November, while work continues to recruit additional staff to fully restore services.

In the first week of October, the Saskatchewan Health Authority posted more than 100 new full-time, permanent job opportunities for nurses of all designations, Continuing Care Aides, Medical Radiation Technologists, Medical Laboratory Assistants, and Combined Lab and X-Ray Technicians in 49 communities across the province.

As these positions are filled, more and more services will be resumed and stabilized across urban, rural and northern Saskatchewan.

We have added 150 nurse training seats, bringing the total in the province to 944, more than double the number when my government took office.

In the past year, 107 physicians have been recruited to Saskatchewan from outside the province.

This includes 51 family physicians and 56 specialists.

Like other jurisdictions in Canada, Saskatchewan is experiencing increased demand for mental health and addictions services.

Expanding and improving those services throughout the province continues to be a priority for my government.

This fiscal year, we are investing \$470 million – more than seven per cent of the health care budget – on mental health and addictions services.

We are adding 150 new addictions treatment spaces over a three-year period.

The Rapid Access Counselling Program, delivered by Family Service Saskatchewan, has been expanded to another eight locations in the province.

The Mental Health Capacity Building in Schools Program is being expanded and we are improving access to Addictions Medicine Clinics.

We are working with partner organizations to fully implement our commitment to expand the number of detox spaces across the province.

This fiscal year, my government is investing more than \$150 million in health care infrastructure, including the planning and construction of new hospitals and new long-term care homes.

In August, the new Northwest Community Lodge opened in Meadow Lake, the 13th new or renovated long-term care home to open in Saskatchewan since 2009.

Planning continues for new long-term care homes in La Ronge and Grenfell, and replacement long-term facilities in Watson and Estevan.

Construction on a new hospital in Weyburn is expected to begin early next year, while the tendering process for the expansion and redevelopment of Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert is moving ahead.

Construction has started on a new Urgent Care Centre in Regina.

This centre will provide care for patients with less serious injuries or conditions, helping to reduce wait times in emergency rooms.

My government recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation on a collaborative approach to the Saskatoon Urgent Care Centre.

Revenues from our strong and growing economy will continue to be invested in more surgeries, more health care professionals, better mental health and addictions services, new health facilities and many other key health care priorities.

That's growth that works for everyone.

EDUCATION

Inflation has also put pressure on school division budgets.

In July, my government responded by providing \$20 million to school divisions to assist with rising fuel and insurance costs.

This one-time investment brought the operating budget for the province's K to 12 school divisions to more than \$2 billion for the first time in Saskatchewan's history.

My government is following through on its commitment to provide more support in classrooms by creating another 200 Educational Assistant positions.

Progress continues to be made on an ambitious education capital plan.

Of the 15 new schools announced in the last few years, three are now under construction, in Regina, Carrot River and Blaine Lake.

Twelve new schools are in the procurement and design phase.

Fifteen major school maintenance projects have recently been completed.

Earlier this month, my government announced it will move towards a centralized online learning model.

This new model will improve learning opportunities for all Saskatchewan students by allowing students to enroll in all courses offered in our province, regardless of where they live.

My government recognizes the importance of ensuring all students in Saskatchewan have a safe and welcoming learning environment.

In support of this goal, we have strengthened regulations and oversight for Independent Schools.

My government will continue to examine the oversight of all schools across the province to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.

Many Indigenous people in Saskatchewan want their children to have the opportunity to learn in their traditional language.

In August, my government committed up to \$255,000 to the First Nations University of Canada to deliver the Dene Teacher Education Program.

This program will help meet demand for qualified Dene speaking teachers in La Loche and the Clearwater River Dene Nation.

My government will commit \$50,000 a year to establish a new scholarship for students studying Indigenous languages.

The new scholarship will support up to 25 students in their studies.

This fiscal year, my government is providing more than \$680 million in operating and capital grants to post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan.

This funding includes \$31 million for capital projects and preventative maintenance and renewal.

My government remains committed to supporting Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Saskatoon Campus Renewal Project.

Preliminary work on the project has begun, with the support of \$4 million in capital design funding from the province.

Pending the results of the geotechnical study, the anticipated location of the new campus will be in the vicinity of the University of Saskatchewan and Innovation Saskatchewan, thereby creating a unique innovation corridor.

AGRICULTURE

Saskatchewan's farmers and ranchers are the very best in the world at what they do.

They succeed not only because of their skill and knowledge, but also because of their determination and resilience.

That resilience was put to the test during last year's severe drought.

This year, the rains came in most areas of the province, resulting in a better crop.

Higher yields and strong commodity prices are welcome news for Saskatchewan producers and for countries around the world that

depend on a steady supply of high quality, sustainably produced food grown in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan's strong, growing agricultural sector is attracting a massive influx of investment capital.

In July, Cargill broke ground on a \$350 million canola crushing plant at the Global Transportation Hub just west of Regina.

Federated Cooperatives Limited and AGT Foods are planning to construct a \$2 billion Integrated Agriculture Complex in the Regina area.

This joint venture will include a \$360 million canola crushing facility, which will supply feedstock to a new 15,000 barrel per day renewable diesel plant.

Viterra is moving forward with a new canola crushing plant in Regina that will create 1,000 construction jobs and 100 permanent jobs.

AGT Foods has announced it will construct a new oat processing facility in Aberdeen.

In Saskatoon, Great Western Brewing is investing almost \$40 million to expand production at its downtown brewery.

All the barley used by the company is grown in Saskatchewan.

My government continues to support the province's agricultural producers in many ways.

The AgriStability compensation rate has increased from 70 to 80 per cent.

We have signed the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, along with the federal government and all provinces and territories.

This new, five-year agreement takes effect April 1st, 2023.

The agreement will provide increased support in five areas:

- Growth and competitiveness;
- Climate change and environment;
- Science, research and innovation;
- Market development and trade; and
- Resiliency and public trust.

Saskatchewan is a world leader when it comes to making agriculture more sustainable.

In 2020, Saskatchewan sequestered nearly 13 million tonnes of carbon in its agricultural soils, the equivalent of taking 2.78 million cars off the road for a year.

Today, 95 per cent of Saskatchewan land is cultivated using zero or minimum till practices – the highest percentage among the prairie provinces.

My government will continue to ensure our producers have every opportunity to reach maximum production in a sustainable manner.

To further support producers, my government has strengthened the province's crop insurance program.

The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation now provides the most comprehensive coverage in the history of the province.

This year, average coverage for producers will reach a record level of \$405 per acre, a 48 per cent increase from 2021.

Across Canada, there is a shortage of veterinarians, particularly in rural areas.

In the last few years, we have taken important steps to enhance the availability of veterinary services in rural Saskatchewan.

We have increased the number of veterinary technologist training seats at Saskatchewan Polytechnic by eight, to 32 a year.

The rural veterinarian and veterinary technologist loan forgiveness program is being expanded, and in the coming year, we will increase the number of training seats at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine by five, from 20 to 25 a year.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Saskatchewan is one of the world's top exporters, with close to 70 per cent of what we produce shipped to international customers.

Our province's continued growth and prosperity depends on what we produce and sell to the rest of the world.

Eight international trade offices now support Saskatchewan's export industries.

These offices – in Mexico, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, India, Singapore, China, Vietnam and Japan – help connect Saskatchewan businesses with customers while working to attract new investment to the province.

In the coming months, my government will open a new trade office in Germany, a manufacturing powerhouse with the fourth-largest economy in the world.

Throughout our history, Saskatchewan has welcomed newcomers to our province.

Saskatchewan has always been a place of safety and opportunity for people escaping war, oppression and poverty.

It was in this spirit of generosity and compassion that Saskatchewan residents opened their arms and their hearts to those fleeing the violence and chaos in Ukraine.

To date, Saskatchewan has welcomed nearly 2,000 displaced Ukrainians, and we are committed to welcoming more.

Thank you to everyone in Saskatchewan who has provided comfort and assistance to the newcomers.

Settlement agencies, a diverse group of community organizations, the faith community, businesses, schools and post-secondary institutions have all stepped forward to help.

We are particularly grateful to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress of Saskatchewan for working with the province to coordinate services and supports.

Saskatchewan will continue to be a welcoming destination of hope and opportunity for people from all over the world who are seeking a better life.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A strong and growing province needs safe, modern and reliable infrastructure.

Since 2008, my government has invested \$40 billion in infrastructure, including nearly \$4.3 billion during the last three years alone.

In the next four years, another \$12 billion will be invested.

My government is repairing, upgrading and building a transportation network that keeps Saskatchewan people safe while travelling and connects our province, its products and its people to the world.

Three years ago, my government set a Growth Plan goal to improve 10,000 kilometres of highways by 2030.

We are on track to meet that objective.

More than 3,500 kilometres of highway have been improved in the last three years.

Nearly 60 sets of passing lanes have been added and safety improvements have been made at numerous highway intersections throughout the province.

While there is always more work to do, Saskatchewan highways are safer today because of these investments.

Last month, the Ministry of Highways, in partnership with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, installed signs on Highway 11 marking the boundary between Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territory.

Saskatchewan is the first province in Canada to officially mark treaty boundaries along a major highway.

With innovation accelerating, and with more learning and work being done online, it is more important than ever that Saskatchewan people have access to advanced internet services.

To meet this challenge, my government has directed SaskTel to double its investment in the Rural Fibre Initiative.

SaskTel is investing \$200 million in the program, which will bring fibre-optic internet service to more than 110,000 residents and businesses in 131 rural communities by March 2025.

Once completed, SaskTel's infiNET network will reach approximately 80 per cent of homes in Saskatchewan.

A growing province requires reliable electrical service.

Today, many countries in Europe and elsewhere are facing energy shortages caused by failure to ensure reliable baseload power generation.

That will not happen here.

My government is taking an all-of-the-above approach to power generation.

We are expanding renewable energy at a rapid pace.

SaskPower currently has 680 megawatts of wind and solar generation with an additional 330 megawatts in development.

Two major wind power facilities came online this year – the 200-megawatt Golden South Wind Project near Assiniboia and the 175-megawatt Blue Hills Wind Project near Herbert.

Earlier this month, SaskPower announced plans for development of a further 400 megawatts of wind generation and 300 megawatts of solar generation in south-central Saskatchewan by 2026.

This initiative is part of SaskPower's larger strategy of adding 3,000 megawatts of wind and solar power to our supply mix and achieving 50 per cent renewable generation by 2035.

SaskPower has also agreed to purchase electricity from two solar projects involving First Nations.

The George Gordon First Nation and Star Blanket Cree Nation are partners in a 10-megawatt solar facility now operating near Weyburn.

The Cowessess First Nation owns the majority stake in a 10-megawatt solar facility south of Regina, which is expected to begin operations this fall.

SaskPower also continues to expand natural gas power generating capacity.

The Great Plains Power Station, a 360-megawatt facility under construction near Moose Jaw, is more than half complete and will begin generating electricity next year.

More than \$110 million in local work was awarded during the construction of the power station, including \$21 million to Indigenous companies.

When Great Plains fires up, SaskPower will have 11 natural gas generating facilities.

The expansion of cleaner burning natural gas power generation has helped SaskPower meet its environmental goals.

The company is on track to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030.

SaskPower is continuing to plan for the potential development and deployment of small modular nuclear reactors.

Last month, the company identified the Estevan and Elbow areas as potential sites for a small modular reactor.

Significant public consultation and engagement will take place before a final decision is made on whether to construct a small modular reactor by 2029.

SASKATCHEWAN FIRST

At a time of chaos and uncertainty throughout the world, Saskatchewan has what the world needs – food, fuel and fertilizer.

With geopolitical tensions and instability causing shortages of these valuable commodities in many parts of the world, the potential for our province is greater than it has ever been.

But at the same time, the roadblocks imposed by our own federal government are also greater than they have ever been.

Time and again, Ottawa has done an end run around Saskatchewan's constitutional jurisdiction over natural resources under the guise of environmental regulation.

Earlier this year, Alberta Chief Justice Catherine Fraser put it well in a decision striking down the federal government's *Impact Assessment Act*.

Chief Justice Fraser said: "Through this legislative scheme, Parliament has taken a wrecking ball to the constitutional rights of the citizens of Alberta and Saskatchewan and other provinces to have their natural resources developed for their benefit."

This cannot continue.

It's time for Saskatchewan to draw the line and defend that line.

After several years of hard-fought battles in the first quarter century of our province, Saskatchewan's exclusive jurisdiction over natural resources was enshrined in the Canadian Constitution in 1930

Under the Constitution, Saskatchewan has:

- The exclusive jurisdiction over property and civil rights;
- The exclusive jurisdiction over the exploration, development, conservation, and management of all non-renewable resources and forestry resources; and

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- The exclusive jurisdiction over all matters of a local nature.

It is incumbent upon my government to now defend that jurisdiction and ensure Saskatchewan continues to enjoy growth that works for everyone.

In this session, my government will take the following steps to protect and defend Saskatchewan's economy, jobs and future from constitutional overreach by the federal government.

First, my government will introduce *The Saskatchewan First Act* to clearly define that Saskatchewan – and Saskatchewan alone – has the exclusive jurisdiction over its natural resources and economic future.

This legislation will draw the jurisdictional line and defend that line based on the existing constitutional division of powers.

To be clear, this is not about abrogating or ignoring the Constitution.

In fact, quite the contrary.

It is the federal government that has been intruding on Saskatchewan's jurisdiction under the Constitution.

The Saskatchewan First Act will clarify and defend Saskatchewan's constitutional right to control our natural resources and our economic future.

Second, my government will amend the province's Constitution to state – in no uncertain terms – that Saskatchewan continues to retain exclusive jurisdiction over its own natural resources.

This will be done by amending *The Saskatchewan Act*, similar to how Quebec recently unilaterally amended the Constitution to declare that Quebec is a nation and its official language is French.

Third, my government will sign the Saskatchewan—Canada Immigration Accord.

The Accord will then be sent to the federal government for its ratification.

This Accord would give Saskatchewan similar authority over immigration to that which has long been guaranteed to the Province of Quebec.

The growth we are experiencing as a province means we require more autonomy and flexibility over immigration to meet our economic needs and address gaps in the labour market.

During this session, my government will further enhance provincial autonomy by introducing legislation enabling the province to collect its own corporate income tax, as is currently done in Alberta and Quebec.

A SAFER SASKATCHEWAN

My government has taken significant steps to ensure our families and communities are safe.

We have created a Provincial Protective Services branch to increase the ability of provincial law enforcement agencies to respond to public safety incidents.

We have formed the Saskatchewan Trafficking Response Team to address the issues of illegal weapons, drugs and human trafficking.

We put into place the Warrant Enforcement and Suppression Team, which focuses on high-risk offenders with outstanding warrants.

We have added Crime Reduction Teams in La Ronge and Meadow Lake, bringing the total number of Crime Reduction Teams operating in the province to nine.

Significant progress has been made.

But the recent shocking and tragic events at James Smith Cree Nation and the Village of Weldon underscore that more needs to be done to protect Saskatchewan people.

This session, my government will establish the Saskatchewan Marshals Service, which will work with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to enhance law enforcement across Saskatchewan.

The Saskatchewan Marshals Service will also provide emergency and specialized support to other law enforcement organizations when requested.

The province's Warrant Enforcement and Suppression Team has been successful during its first six months of operation.

However, there are still too many criminals with outstanding warrants at large in our province.

In the months ahead, my government will add eight more officers to the Warrant Enforcement and Suppression Team in Prince Albert and will add one more Crime Reduction Team in North Battleford.

The recent tragedies in our province have also exposed weaknesses in the warrant enforcement process that must be addressed immediately.

My government will work with the Correctional Service of Canada to improve information sharing and enhance enforcement activities.

There are understandable public safety concerns in Saskatchewan's First Nations communities.

My government is now consulting on ways to develop responsive, community-based policing models that meet the needs of First Nations communities.

This includes discussions with the Prince Albert Grand Council and the federal government on how a self-administered First Nations police service could be created.

Many Saskatchewan residents see the federal government as too lenient on violent offenders who commit gun crimes and too focused on punishing law-abiding gun owners.

This session, my government will take significant action to crack down on the illegal and violent use of firearms in the commission of crimes to ensure families feel safe in their communities.

We will do this while also defending the rights of lawful and responsible firearms owners.

In order to increase access to justice and the timely prosecution of those who commit crimes, my government will fully re-open and restore services in the provincial courthouse in Lloydminster and the Weyburn Court of King's Bench.

ECONOMIC RECONCILIATION

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued a call to action to build stronger economies in Indigenous communities.

My government welcomed this call and noted there is much progress on which to build in Saskatchewan.

Today, the province is home to a thriving Indigenous business sector with hundreds of successful companies operating in an array of industries.

My government is supporting economic development in Saskatchewan's Indigenous communities.

As part of this effort, we have created the Saskatchewan Indigenous Investment Finance Corporation.

The corporation will offer up to \$75 million in loan guarantees to support Indigenous equity ownership in mining, oil and gas, forestry and value-added agriculture projects.

This year, my government gathered feedback on the First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework, the government's policy on duty to consult with Indigenous communities.

These discussions will help inform revisions of the policy and ensure everyone in the province benefits from a growing economy.

In the coming months, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority will launch its online gaming platform, a project undertaken in coordination with SaskGaming and the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

My government believes there are better ways to address climate change than the punitive taxes and ineffective regulations imposed by the federal government.

This year, we committed additional resources to support work undertaken through our Prairie Resilience climate change strategy.

To help lower global greenhouse gas emissions and to recognize the sustainability of Saskatchewan commodities sold around the world, my government will create a made-in Saskatchewan program to generate voluntary carbon offset credits to producers and companies whose commodities have lower greenhouse gas emissions than global averages.

These offset credits can then be used by Saskatchewan producers and companies as part of their own efforts to voluntarily reduce emissions or can be traded to others for similar purposes.

SUPPORTING OUR MOST VULNERABLE

A growing Saskatchewan economy has allowed my government to invest in programs and services that benefit our most vulnerable residents.

This year, my government increased the maximum monthly benefit provided through the province's Seniors Income Plan by \$30 per month.

Another \$30 per month increase is planned for the coming fiscal year.

Approximately 14,500 low-income seniors are receiving more than \$34 million through the Seniors Income Program.

My government is investing to address homelessness in Saskatchewan.

This year, the Saskatoon Tribal Council received \$350,000 to support its Sawêyihotân Project, which assists people who are homeless to access supports and find long-term, stable housing.

We are partnering with the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the City of Saskatoon in the establishment of an Emergency Wellness Centre.

This is a one-year pilot project that will provide integrated services and supports on an around-the-clock basis.

In Regina, my government continues to work with Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services on their pilot project to provide support and services to meet the needs of those experiencing homelessness.

In recent years, we have made progress in Saskatchewan removing barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities.

But there is more work to be done.

This fall, my government will introduce *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*.

This historic legislation will identify and remove accessibility barriers across the province.

TOURISM, PARKS AND CULTURE

Next month, Saskatchewan will host the 109th Grey Cup game, to be held for the first time at the new Mosaic Stadium in Regina.

Visitors from across Canada will be treated to Saskatchewan hospitality, and Saskatchewan will have the opportunity to showcase Canada's best football stadium and our strong and growing province.

The Grey Cup Game and Festival is expected to generate over \$35 million in economic activity and the equivalent of nearly 500 new jobs.

This fiscal year, my government substantially increased support for the Creative Saskatchewan Feature Film and Television Production Grant Program, from \$2 million to \$10 million.

That decision is already paying dividends.

The initial \$10 million budget is already fully subscribed by 13 film and television productions, including a major television project that will begin production at the John Hopkins Regina Soundstage this fall.

This project will involve the hiring of 100 crew members from Saskatchewan and 18 Saskatchewan performers, and the construction of a state-of-the-art LED wall, which will then be available for future productions at the soundstage.

My government will provide an additional \$7.5 million to Creative Saskatchewan to support several more film and television productions this year.

This investment is expected to generate more than \$32 million in economic activity and create more than 140 jobs.

During this session, my government will re-introduce legislation to allow municipalities to designate areas for safe consumption of alcohol in parks.

This will be part of a larger Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority reform package which will include exiting the retail market and expanding opportunities for independent retailers.

CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

During this session, my government will make changes to the provincial constituency boundaries, following the recommendations of the Constituency Boundaries Commission.

The new boundaries will take effect in the next general election and will ensure that all Saskatchewan residents continue to enjoy fair representation in this Assembly.

CONCLUSION

Today, there are many reasons to be optimistic about Saskatchewan's future.

People are coming to our province from around the world, looking for opportunity and a better life.

Our economy is expanding rapidly, powered by our world-class resource sector, our manufacturers and processors, our growing technology sector, and the best workforce in Canada.

In a world plunged into uncertainty, Saskatchewan is a reliable, indispensable supplier of food, fuel and fertilizer to millions of people around the globe.

My government is charting a course that ensures our economy continues to grow and that everyone in Saskatchewan benefits from that growth.

More people, more jobs and more investment in important government services.

That's growth that works for everyone.

I now leave you to the business of the session, knowing that you will favourably discharge your duties and responsibilities.

May divine providence continue to bless our province and guide this Assembly in all its deliberations.

God bless Saskatchewan.

God bless Canada.

God save the King.

