

# Christine Tell MLA

## Regina Wascana Plains

# Provincial Update

January 2012



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## Thank You Wascana Plains

I want to thank everyone living in Regina Wascana Plains constituency for your support during the 2011 election campaign. It is indeed an honour to serve, once again in the Saskatchewan legislature.

Election campaigns provide an opportunity to connect and re-connect with people in a direct and personal way. I really enjoy door knocking and a part of me was sad when the campaign was over. I listened to concerns and comments expressed to me and have not forgotten. I will continue to be a strong advocate for all residents and I embrace the opportunity.

During the fall session, our government laid out the steps we will take over the next four years to continue to move Saskatchewan forward. In the speech from the Throne, we re-affirmed our commitments to responsibly manage the province's historic growth, improve the quality of life for all Saskatchewan people, and make life more affordable and to be accountable to you: the electorate.

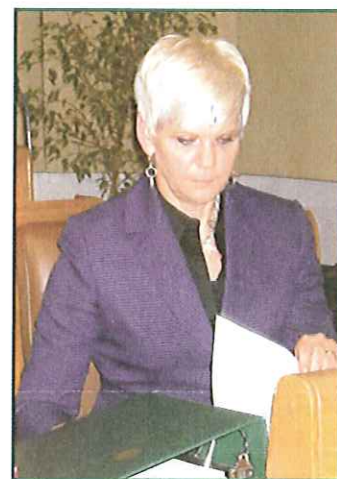
Over the course of the legislative session, our government kept several promises we made during the recent election campaign through the introduction of several pieces of important legislation.

We followed through on our promise to provide more support for people with diabetes, by moving two long-acting insulins from Exception Drug Status onto the provincial drug formulary and to expand the Children's Insulin Pump Program to cover residents up to the age of 25.



Taking the oath of office following the November 7 election

We also promised during the campaign to continue to improve the quality of life for Saskatchewan people with disabilities through further enhancements to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program. Starting in January, more than 3,000 SAID recipients who live in residential care settings will receive a \$50 per month increase to their benefits. Over the next four years benefits for those living independently will increase by \$350 per month.



At my desk in the Legislative Assembly

Legislation was introduced to make getting a university degree more accessible. Currently, only the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina can issue degrees. Under this new legislation, degree-granting status could be expanded to other post-secondary institutions in the province. With more and more of Saskatchewan's young people choosing to start careers and raise families here, it's important they be provided with every available educational opportunity.

We kept our word on an important promise we made that will help first-time home buyers and families. Effective January 1st, the First-Time Homebuyers Tax Credit comes into effect. It will provide a \$1,100 non-refundable tax credit by applying a provincial tax credit of 11 per cent to the first \$10,000 of an eligible home purchase.

Also in effect in the New Year is an expansion of the Active Families Benefit. It has been expanded to include all children under the age of 18. The Active Families Benefit provides an income tax benefit of up to \$150 per child to help with the costs of cultural, recreational and sports activities.

Please contact me anytime should the need arise. I am accessible and want to hear from you even if it's just for a cup of coffee and a chat.

Thanks again.

*Christine Tell*

# Throne Speech Keeps Saskatchewan Moving Forward

Fulfilling its election commitments, living within its means and keeping the province moving forward - those are the principles outlined by the Saskatchewan government in the first Throne Speech of its second term of office.

Premier Brad Wall said the Throne Speech outlines the government's plan to keep the commitments it made in the recent provincial election campaign. These include:

- continued economic and population growth;
- further improvements to Saskatchewan's highways;
- improving the availability and affordability of housing;
- introducing a new Saskatchewan First-Time Homebuyers Tax Credit;
- extending the Active Families Benefit to all children under 18;
- introducing a new Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship available to all new high school graduates starting in 2012;
- introducing a new Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings to help parents save for their children's education;
- increasing support for low-income seniors through the Seniors Income Plan;



*With Warren Steinley, new MLA for Walsh Acres*

- introducing a new Seniors Personal Care Home Benefit to assist low-income seniors with the cost of residing in a personal care home;
  - adding 2,000 new childcare spaces;
  - improving support for persons with disabilities by increasing both support levels and access to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program;
  - increasing support for autism;
  - continuing to reduce surgical wait times;
  - improving access to health care services in rural communities;
  - improving services for persons with diabetes;
  - making communities safer by hiring new police officers to closely monitor repeat offenders;
  - continuing to improve Saskatchewan's provincial parks; and
  - introducing a new \$2,500 per year Community Rinks Affordability Grant.
- The Throne Speech also outlined the government's legislative priorities, which includes legislation to:
- extend notice periods for rent increases from one month to a

year for rental property owners who chose not to participate in the tenant assistance initiative established by the Saskatchewan Rental Housing Industry Association;

- strengthen the enforcement of maintenance orders;
- increase penalties for those who fail to pay fines;
- strengthen the ability of corrections officers to crack down on



*With Regina Dewdney MLA Gene Makowsky*

drug-related, gang-related and other illegal activity within our correctional institutions;

- more clearly define the powers and responsibilities of the Children's Advocate;
- introduce degree granting legislation providing more opportunities for our students while protecting the tradition of excellence associated with Saskatchewan degrees;
- streamline the business registration process across the three western provinces under the New West Partnership Trade Agreement; and
- ensure that any future provincial election campaigns do not overlap with a federal election campaign



*With Mark Docherty, MLA for Regina Coronation Park*

## Enhanced Support for People with Diabetes

Saskatchewan is following through on its commitment to provide more support for people with diabetes. Health Minister Don McMorris has announced the government is meeting its election commitment to move two long-acting insulins from Exception Drug Status listing to full formulary listing, and expand the insulin pump program to cover residents up to the age of 25.

"Diabetes is a serious disease affecting a growing number of residents in our province," McMorris said. "These two measures will realize significant cost savings for families affected

by the disease. The enhancements also help individuals with diabetes to better manage their conditions and make real progress in improving their quality of life. This is another way our government is putting patients first."

Effective immediately, two long-acting insulins, Lantus and Levemir, will be moved to open formulary, meaning patients do not need to meet any medical criteria to receive coverage. The amount a patient will pay for their insulin will be determined by their level of coverage under the Drug Plan.



*With Regina Douglas Park MLA, Russ Marchuk*

## Disability Income Program To Be Enhanced In 2012

The Government of Saskatchewan is committing to significant enhancements to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program following through on another campaign commitment.



*With Regina Northeast MLA, Kevin Doherty, at the entrance to the Legislative Assembly*

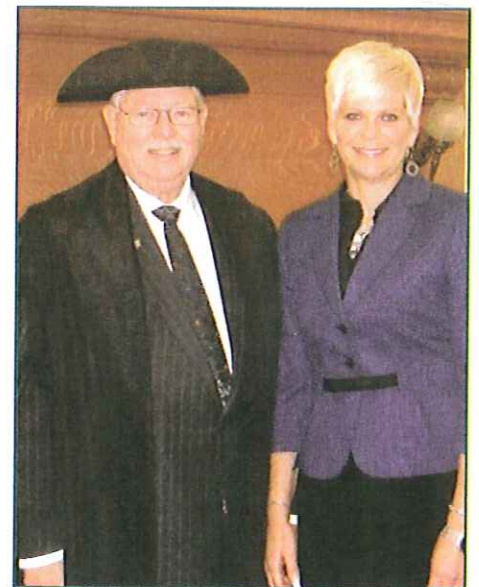
"These enhancements will increase the benefits paid through SAID, boost enrolment by up to 7,000 new individuals and further distinguish SAID from the Saskatchewan Assistance Program," Social Services Minister June Draude said. "These enhancements continue the multi-year commitment made by our government to develop the SAID program with the input and participation of the disability community."

The various enhancements will begin in January 2012 with a \$50 per month benefit increase for SAID recipients who live in residential care settings. More than 3,000 SAID recipients are expected to benefit from this increase. Also in January, the inheritance exemption under SAID will be broadened to include the proceeds of a life insurance policy, which will further distinguish SAID from the Saskatchewan Assistance Program.

Established in October 2009, SAID provides income support - separate from social assistance - to people with significant and enduring disabilities.

## Christine's Committee Assignments

The Wascana Plains MLA has been appointed to serve as Deputy Chair of Committees as well as serving as a member of the Intergovernmental and Justice Committee, the Board of Internal Economy and the Legislation and Regulations committee.



*With Mr. Speaker, Dan D'Autremont*

# Congratulatory Messages

The Lieutenant Governor's Office coordinates congratulatory message requests for Saskatchewan. The table below indicates which birthdays and anniversaries qualify for congratulatory messages from various officials, as well as the type of verification required (if any).

**Please note that two months notice is required for greetings.** While we are pleased to accept requests with less than the required notice, we cannot guarantee that the messages will be provided by the celebration date.

	Wedding Anniversaries	Birthdays
<b>Her Majesty the Queen</b>	<b>60th-69th</b> -at five-year intervals <b>70th and over</b> -every year <i>Requirements: copy of marriage certificate, or letter from Minister of religion</i>	<b>100th-105th</b> -one message between 100th and 105th <b>106th and over</b> -every year <i>Requirements: copy of birth certificate, or letter from Minister of religion, or Old Age Security number</i>
<b>The Governor General</b>	<b>50th and over</b> -at five-year intervals <b>70th and over</b> -every year	<b>90th and over</b> -at five-year intervals
<b>The Lieutenant Governor</b>	<b>50th and over</b> -at five-year intervals <b>65th and over</b> -every year	<b>80th-99th</b> -at five-year intervals <b>100th and over</b> -every year
<b>The Prime Minister</b>	<b>25th and over</b> -at five-year intervals	<b>65th and over</b> -at five-year intervals
<b>The Premier</b>	<b>25th and over</b> -at five-year intervals <b>50th and over</b> -every year	<b>50th and over</b> -at five-year intervals <b>100th and over</b> -every year
<b>The Leader of the Opposition</b>	<b>All requests</b>	<b>All requests</b>
<b>Third Party</b>	-no Third Party Office at present	-no Third Party Office at present
<b>The Mayor of Regina</b>	<b>50th and over</b> -at five-year intervals (for current and former Regina residents)	<b>All requests</b> (for current and former Regina residents)

Please complete the online message request form accurately and completely, indicating Mr. and/or Mrs., Miss or Ms. If completing for an anniversary, please provide both given names of the celebrants

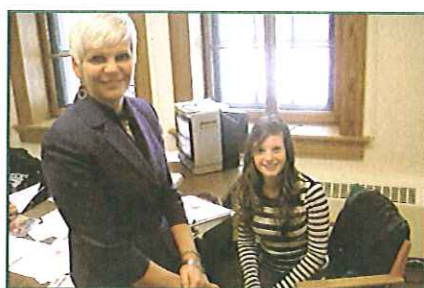
Please note: Saskatchewan Members of Parliament and Saskatchewan Senators requesting Congratulatory Message

information are also informed by our office.

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Checking a message for a constituent with Bonnie Krajewski-Riel, Director of Correspondence for Premier Wall



With Becky Mason, constituency assistant to Regina Douglas Park MLA, Russ Marchuk

# 2011-2012 Mid-Year Financial Report

- The Mid-Year Report anticipates a pre-transfer surplus of \$25 million and a balance in the Growth and Financial Security Fund of \$694 million at year end.
- The government remains on track to balance the provincial budget, despite increased flooding expenses and an uncertain global economy.
- Flooding costs are estimated to be in excess of \$240 million, offset by approximately \$109 million in federal contributions.
- Overall expenses are expected to be up \$246.8 million to \$10.926 billion, while revenues are expected to be up by \$156.8 million to \$10.951 billion, leaving a \$25 million surplus.
- Royalties are expected to exceed earlier estimates by \$207 million as a result of higher prices and volumes.
- Compared to other provinces, we will post strong economic growth again this year.
- We are leading the nation in the growth of retail sales, wholesale trade, housing starts, building permits, and business confidence.



Entering the Legislative Assembly

## Highway 1 Designated "Saskatchewan's Highway of Heros"

Highway 1 between Moose Jaw and Regina has been named "Saskatchewan's Highway of Heroes" as a permanent tribute to Canadian Forces personnel from Saskatchewan who have lost their lives in service to our country.

Premier Brad Wall made this announcement on November 9, alongside representatives from the Canadian military and family members of Saskatchewan's fallen, where he unveiled a new sign to mark the highway's new designation.