



# From a Provincial Point of View

March 25, 2011

## 2010-1011 BUDGET ADDRESS BY MINISTER KEN KRAWETZ – “THE SASKATCHEWAN ADVANTAGE”

### ***My sincere thanks to everyone who attended the Budget Day speech.***

On March 23, Minister of Finance, Ken Krawetz delivered a budget that is good for families, good for business and good for the future of our province.

“The Saskatchewan Advantage” 2011-2012 budget is balanced, lowers taxes for families, homeowners, farmers and businesses, reduces the provincial debt and improves government services.

Because of this budget, Saskatchewan families with dependent children will earn more tax-free income than anywhere else in Canada.

- Basic and spousal exemption amounts increase by \$1,000 and the exemption amount for dependent children increases by \$500 for each dependent child.
- These changes will save a family of four earning \$50,000 this year almost \$2500 in income taxes.
- 114,000 people will no longer pay provincial income tax.
- Small business tax rate will be cut by more than half, from 4.5 per cent to 2 per cent.
- Education property taxes on farmland, residential and commercial property are being reduced by a further \$55.6 million.
- Since 2007, the amount you pay in education property tax has been reduced by \$103 million, the largest-ever property tax cut in Saskatchewan history.

Lower taxes make life more affordable, put more money back in the economy and create jobs. “The Saskatchewan Advantage” budget is also fiscally prudent. It is our government’s fourth consecutive balanced budget.

- The budget reduces the provincial debt by \$325 million, to \$3.81 billion.

The last time Saskatchewan’s debt was this low was in 1988. Debt reduction means lower interest costs and more money to pay for infrastructure and important government services such as health care and education.

I am very pleased that our government’s commitment to putting patients first is also reflected in 2011-2012 budget.

- The total health budget has been increased by \$260 million, to a total of \$4.46 billion, which includes more funding for physician recruitment and training, an increase of \$250 million for health regions and \$5 million toward establishing a helicopter air medical service in Saskatchewan.

Since 2007, action has been taken which has resulted in lower surgical wait times, more than 800 new nurses and an increased number of training seats for physicians. Construction on the province's first-ever Children's Hospital is now underway. Funding has been made available for the replacement of 13 long-term care centres in rural Saskatchewan.

A growing economy puts more demand on roads and highways.

- In order to meet this demand, the 2011-2012 budget contains a further investment of \$556.2 million into highways.

That brings total transportation spending since 2007 to \$2.2 billion, keeping and exceeding our promise to invest \$1.8 billion during our first term. In just four years, 6,170 kilometres of provincial highways have been improved, including 1,485 of repaving and 770 kilometres of kilometres of rural highway upgrades.

Saskatoon will appreciate the benefits from the investments in communities and infrastructure:

- \$216.8 million in municipal revenue sharing – a \$49.4 million increase from last year. This completes our commitment to a long-term, stable funding formula based on the Provincial Sales Tax.
- \$129 million to repair and rebuild bridges and roads.
- \$134.1 million for municipal infrastructure, with \$70.3 million allocated to federal-provincial infrastructure projects.

Better education for children and post-secondary students remains a priority:

- We are investing in our students, holding tuition increases to three per cent.
- Establishing a Saskatchewan Scholarship Fund
- \$36.4 million increase for school operating expenses.
- \$2 million for immigration services and English as an additional language training.
- \$6.1 million in planning dollars for nine new school capital projects which will include two new schools right here in our constituency!

With Saskatchewan's economy expected to lead the nation this year, we will continue to build on that momentum and ensure all Saskatchewan people share in the benefits.

I hope you will all take the time to go to [www.finance.gov.sk.ca](http://www.finance.gov.sk.ca) and review the entire budget. I look forward to your comments.



Lower taxes, a better quality of life, a balanced budget and reduced debt!!

That's the Saskatchewan Advantage.

Media scrum following the budget speech

## **BUDGET FULFILLS REVENUE SHARING PROMISE TO COMMUNITIES**

Saskatchewan municipalities will receive record revenue sharing of \$216.8 million in 2011-12, a 29.5 per cent increase from the previous year.

My colleague, Municipal Affairs Minister Darryl Hickie is able to deliver on a municipal revenue sharing formula that grows the economy. Work will continue with Saskatchewan communities to keep our province moving forward and build on the Saskatchewan Advantage.

The commitment to increase revenue sharing to the equivalent of one full point of Provincial Sales Tax, follows two consecutive years of revenue sharing at a record \$167.4 million, and represents a 70 per cent (\$89.5 million) increase over total revenue sharing in 2007-08.

This year's municipal revenue sharing is the highest amount of operational funding shared with municipalities by the provincial government in the history of Saskatchewan.

Urban revenue sharing, for all cities, towns, villages and resort villages, will rise to \$138.7 million, revenue sharing for rural municipalities, which includes organized hamlets will rise to \$62.9 million and revenue sharing for northern municipalities will rise to \$15.2 million - a 29.5 per cent increase for all municipal categories.

Saskatchewan's largest city, Saskatoon, sees municipal revenue sharing increase to \$37.8 million in 2011-12 from \$29.2 million the previous year. Regina, the provincial capital, has municipal revenue sharing that will grow to \$33.5 million in 2011-12, up from \$25.9 million the previous year.

Capital funding of \$134 million for infrastructure projects will flow to municipalities, through a variety of federal-provincial programs. Included in that total is \$57.2 million in federal flow-through money from the Gas Tax Program, which will help more municipal infrastructure projects move forward.

This infrastructure funding includes \$5.5 million provided to cover the cost of municipalities' borrowing through the Saskatchewan Infrastructure Growth Initiative (SIGI) an increase of \$3.2 million over last year. This program provides assistance to growing communities for commercial and residential lot development.

A new aspect of the initiative is the SIGI Recreation Pilot Program which will provide municipalities with interest rate subsidies for up to five years on \$12.5 million of municipal borrowing to help develop recreational infrastructure to meet the needs of growing communities and surrounding areas.

Applications for the new pilot program will be accepted beginning April 1, 2011, with a deadline of May 31, 2011.

The budget also provides \$3.2 million for transit assistance for the disabled, a 10 per cent increase from the previous year. Grants in lieu of taxes total \$11.8 million and \$9.6 million is provided to the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency.

Overall, the budget includes \$374 million in 2011-12 for municipal financial assistance, including flow-through dollars from the federal government.

## **CHAMBER ON BUSINESS LUNCHEON**

Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance spoke at the Chamber Business luncheon today at the Radisson Hotel. It was a pleasure to join many Saskatoon business leaders as Minister Krawetz outlined Budget Highlights.

## **BUILDING EXPANSION AT THE SASKATOON COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH**

I had the privilege of attending an exciting announcement made by Justice Minister and Attorney General Don Morgan this morning. The Government of Saskatchewan is providing \$13.8 million to expand the Saskatoon Court of Queen's Bench Court House. This is part of the government's commitment to the safety of Saskatchewan communities, while improving the efficiency of courthouses. Also in attendance was the Minister of Government Services, Laura Ross and Saskatoon Northwest MLA, Gord Wyant.

The new space created by this renovation will allow the Family Law Division to be moved under the same roof with the rest of the Court of Queen's Bench services. Currently, the Family Law Division is located two blocks away in the First Nations Bank building.

"This project, along with recent court construction and renovation projects in other communities, is positive on many levels," Justice Minister and Attorney General Don Morgan said. "In addition to providing long-term solutions to improve courthouse efficiency, this move will also help to ensure the safety of judges, court staff, witnesses and the public."

"Our court is extremely pleased that the Government of Saskatchewan has approved an expansion to the Saskatoon Queen's Bench Court House to accommodate Family Law proceedings," Court of Queen's Bench Chief Justice Robert D. Laing said. "The old premises have outlived their usefulness, and Wednesday's announcement made it a very good day for Family Law justice in Saskatoon."

Funding for this project was announced in Wednesday's provincial budget, with construction expected to begin later this year.

## **THOUGHT OF THE WEEK**

"Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there; they cause change. They motivate and inspire others to go in the right direction and they, along with everyone else, sacrifice to get there."

John Kotter

## **JUST THE HEADLINES – [www.gov.sk.ca/news](http://www.gov.sk.ca/news)**

Mar. 25, 2011 - [BUILDING EXPANSION AT THE SASKATOON COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH](#)

Mar. 25, 2011 - [SHELTER ALLOWANCES TO INCREASE APRIL 1](#)

Mar. 24, 2011 - [EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE NUMBERS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [THE SASKATCHEWAN ADVANTAGE: LOWER TAXES, IMPROVED SERVICES, LESS DEBT](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [GOVERNMENT INCREASES BEER DISCOUNT TO OFF-SALE RETAILERS](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [RENEWABLE DIESEL PROGRAM LAUNCHED](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [SASKATCHEWAN FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS KEY PARTICIPANTS IN 2011-2012 BUDGET](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [GOVERNMENT EXCEEDS HIGHWAYS COMMITMENT - \\$2.2 BILLION OVER FOUR YEARS](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [BUDGET FULFILLS REVENUE SHARING PROMISE TO COMMUNITIES](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [BUDGET REDUCES PROPERTY TAX, INCREASES INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [BUDGET LIMITS TUITION COSTS, IMPROVES POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [BUDGET CONTINUES FOCUS ON HOUSING, INCOME ASSISTANCE AND DISABILITY SERVICES](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [GOVERNMENT INVESTS \\$34 MILLION IN SASKATCHEWAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENDA](#)  
Mar. 23, 2011 - [PATIENT-CENTERED CARE TOP PRIORITY FOR HEALTH BUDGET](#)  
Mar. 22, 2011 - [JANUARY RETAIL SALES HIGHEST IN CANADA](#)  
Mar. 21, 2011 - [PROVINCE WITHDRAWS FROM FRESHWATER FISH MARKETING AGREEMENT](#)  
Mar. 21, 2011 - [SASKATCHEWAN COMPLETES FIRST COMPREHENSIVE TRADE MISSION TO INDIA AND BANGLADESH](#)

### **DID YOU KNOW???**

- The week of March 20-26 is proclaimed Social Work Week in Saskatchewan.
- Saskatchewan's unemployment rate (seasonally-adjusted) now stands at 6.1 per cent, the third lowest rate in Canada well below the national rate of 8.0 per cent.
- Saskatchewan's population tops 1,050,000 for the first time.

### **KEEP IN TOUCH**

I appreciate the many opportunities to make a positive difference in my constituency. Your phone calls, letters and emails make a big difference in keeping me informed on the issues that matter to you. If you would like to recognize anyone or have your event mentioned in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to call me.



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***“From a Provincial Point of View”*** is a weekly message from Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs. Your opinions are important and your letters, emails and phone calls on any issues relating to the provincial government are welcomed. Contact Ken by calling (306) 651-7100, emailing [ken.cheveldayoff.mla@sasktel.net](mailto:ken.cheveldayoff.mla@sasktel.net) or writing Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs, 1106A Central Avenue, Saskatoon, SK S7N 2H1. **To subscribe or be removed from this newsletter, please send an email message.** This newsletter is produced with the assistance of the Saskatchewan Party Caucus Office.