

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Budget opens the door for wide-scale privatization of infrastructure**

REGINA – The Government of Saskatchewan released its 2013-2014 budget today that opens the door for wide-scale privatization of infrastructure which will increase costs for Saskatchewan people and take away public accountability and control says the province’s largest public sector union.

“Saskatchewan residents should be very concerned about the privatization agenda announced today through the budget that will see our hospitals, highways, and schools privatized,” says Tom Graham, President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Saskatchewan. “Experiments with P3s have already proven to be a costly mistake, yet the government is ideologically intent to move forward with even more of these privatization schemes,” says Graham.

The announcement comes on the heels of the government’s self-described pilot project for P3s in health care known as the Amicus deal. According to a CUPE-commissioned report by economist Dr. John Loxely, the P3 long-term care facility cost Saskatchewan taxpayers approximately \$20 million more than if it had been built using traditional public sector financing. A 2007 study of Alberta’s P3 experimentation revealed that for the cost of every two schools built using a P3 model, an additional school could have been built.

SaskBuilds, the newly created Crown Corporation set up by the government to drive the development of P3 schemes, will receive an increase in funding from the budget to pursue P3s for the construction of the Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford, Regina’s southeast bypass, and a number of schools throughout the province.

“Experience with P3s across Canada and here in Saskatchewan have already proven to be not worth the risk. The Saskatchewan government should scrap their push for P3 privatization,” says Graham.

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