

**Third Session - Fortieth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Fortieth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
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WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 29, 2014

*The House met at 10 a.m.*

**Mr. Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, can you canvass the House to see if we can move directly to Bill 205, The Seniors' Rights Act, sponsored by the honourable member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen)?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to proceed directly to Bill 205? *[Agreed]*

#### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

##### Bill 205—The Seniors' Rights Act

**Mr. Speaker:** We will now, for debate on second readings of public bills, call Bill 205, The Seniors' Rights Act, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Multiculturalism.

**Hon. Flor Marcelino (Minister of Multiculturalism and Literacy):** I only have two minutes, so I'd like to make use of it to express my thanks for this government's support, steadfast support, for front-line services which benefit the seniors greatly.

Two weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, I called 911 because my mother was having difficulty breathing, and it turned out that it was pneumonia and congestive heart failure. In less than 10 minutes the ambulance was there at the house, and right away, even in the ambulance, my mother was given the necessary support that would eventually save her life. The nine-day stay at the hospital was one that we are very grateful for. The care, the immediacy of

attending to her from the emergency room up to when three days later she was moved to the ward was amazing. So I would like to thank all the front-line caregivers, starting from the paramedics, the ambulance staff, the doctors, the ER doctors, the nurses, the health-care aides.

And I thought, Mr. Speaker, we—often we—there are some complaints with our health-care providers, but for most of the experiences I and many of acquaintances, friends and relatives have had with health-care providers, they're very positive. They were very caring.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable minister's time has elapsed.

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** It gives me great pleasure to rise and to put a few words on the record, and I thank my colleague from—the member for Spruce Woods for bringing this forward.

As you may have guessed, I have a vested interest in a bill like this, and I think this bill is well constructed, well crafted, and I'll move this off—for you, thank you.

And so having said that, Mr. Speaker, the question that comes up is are we ready, are we ready with our health-care system to deal with our aging population. And the fact that the baby boomers are coming home to rest at this point, it's clear that our health-care system has not ramped up at the same speed that the baby boomers have and it's going to create an issue, and it has. It has created one, but it's going to get worse and worse for the next 10 or 15 years. So how do we prepare, what should we have done, and what are we going to do at this point?

So when we look through the system, you try to find out where the roadblocks are, where the—we hit the stone wall, so to speak, in the system that's breaking down, that's not able to handle the volume of people that require the assistance.

And one of the spots that jumps right out is the personal-care spots. Personal-care homes—and I've done a bunch of research in the last six months on this—a lot of the personal-care homes have a long waiting list. Some of the care homes actually have 10, 12 people, and it's a shame when we see that

there are people waiting to get in and they know full well that someone has to die before they get admitted to a personal-care home. That's a horrible, horrible thought for the person that's sitting waiting. And if you can well imagine, then, the person that's sitting in the personal-care home is looking out and saying, oh, the only way someone else is going to get in here is if I pass on.

That isn't the type of care that we should be providing for our seniors. These are the people that have built our province to what it is today, that have allowed us to grow and blossom to our potential. And here they're sitting, one's looking at the other, saying, hurry up, move on, because I need that space. I can't look after myself. The system isn't looking after me.

It's a horrible concept, as an individual that's getting closer to that age, that you've got to be faced with this. When you're 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50 years old, you're immortal—you're immortal. Thinking about what could happen—you only think about what's going to happen in the next week, the two weeks, how you're going to have enough money to pay your income tax or make your car payment. Those are the major worries, and that you raise your children, make sure that they're getting an education, that they're better off than what you were. Those are your major concerns.

But as you get to the end of the road in life, you shouldn't have to be looking out the window and saying, boy, there's a big lineup out there. They're waiting for me to get out of the way so they can take this space. And that's basically what we're looking at now, Mr. Speaker. That's what's facing a number of people.

On the flip side, we also have, in the personal-care homes, we have some care homes that have empty beds. These empty beds, Mr. Speaker, are a result of inadequate nursing. There's no nurses to fill those—to look after the people in the personal-care homes. So we've had the capital expenditure, we've got the bed, we've got a list that are happy to be in there and no one to look after them. It's more predominant outside of the cities, in rural Manitoba; it's more prominent there than it is in the cities.

\*(10:10)

But at the same time people should be able to age in the communities that they grew up in. And when we look at what the effect is when a person

has to leave the community that they had grown up in—they know people, they have friends in these communities, they've supported those communities all their lives, and the PCH is full there and they have to move 50, 60, 70 miles away.

What has happened and what happens then when they go into these homes, less people visit, they don't know the people there, it's a lot tougher to meet people when you're 80 and 85 years old and develop a relationship because there are certain things that happen with aging and part of that is dementia in many cases.

And when I mention that dementia, I can give you an example of an individual that didn't move that far out of the community, he moved to the nearest PCH. He had a problem, he'd ask the you the same question three or four times and he didn't pay attention or couldn't recall the answer—and we've seen that in this House a lot of times where we ask questions and never get answers. But in this case this individual was getting answers but he wouldn't retain those answers. But he was happy—he was happy—he could get up in the morning, he knew it was time for breakfast, he knew when it was lunch time and was able to take care of himself.

He was moved 40 miles to a personal-care home and he died within five months. Within a month of being there he was in a wheelchair, he couldn't walk anymore. Before that he could walk three, four miles. And he just went downhill daily, daily, daily, because he wanted to die, he didn't know anybody, he had no relationship with anyone. This system is broken and we need to pay attention to that system.

The other part of that system that I think is—and we could look at the economics of it, but let's not. Let's suggest that our seniors have earned a right to age respectfully—respectably and be treated the same way that they should be treated. Instead, we're not doing that.

The home-care issue is—home care is a great plan, and what we're seeing is, lately, in the last couple of years in home care, what we're seeing is that the care has been taken out of home care.

And so, can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Emerson at 85 years old is going to be told that he has to have a bath within three and half minutes because that's what the home-care individual got time allotted. No, it should take whatever time it takes. There has to be a relationship between the home-care people, the providers and their clients.

But now we're down to you're slotted for 10 minutes for this, two minutes for that, one minute for this, and we don't do this because we can't do that.

Mr. Speaker, it all worked fine up until two years ago. And, of course, things do have to change, but at the same time, don't take care out of home care. Those seniors deserve our respect. They deserve it, it's owed to them and it's our responsibility to give it to them. Now each client is just a number, they don't have the same home-care worker on a daily basis.

And so an individual is used to Kelvin coming in to do home care, they know that he will be there at 10, he will leave at 12 and—but they do have a relationship with him, and all of a sudden he comes once a month but there's someone else comes every day but not with the same goal, doesn't have that same relationship to see that that individual client gets the small issues, the little things done.

So we've taken care out of home care; let's put that back in there. But the long-term goal is we have to revamp the whole system to deal with the seniors as we move forward. So I would urge every member in this House to support this bill going forward, and let's work co-operatively to make the changes that are necessary that the aging population will be able to age respectably.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert):** There are a couple things in the member for Emerson's (Mr. Graydon) statement that I actually agree with; we have to—we definitely have to respect seniors and we have to honour them and to take care of them.

That might be as far as I'm going to go, as far as agreement with him, because it seems that his statements don't match his actions. When they had the opportunity to vote for a budget that's adding 500 more personal-affordable home spaces, they voted against that. When they had the opportunity to vote for a budget that's putting \$200 million into two new personal-care homes in Winnipeg, they voted against that. When they had the opportunity to add more beds across Manitoba, they voted against that. The member for Emerson spoke about nurses and how he thinks that there might be a nursing shortage in some of these homes. Well, the fact is they fired 1,000 nurses; we've hired 3,500 more since being in government since 1999. And every year they stand up and they vote against these budgets that support

hiring nurses and support hiring more doctors—over 500 more doctors hired.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know in their mind that they think that they can cut \$550 million—is what the Leader of the Opposition has put on record, saying across-the-board cuts—and still be able to provide more personal-care homes and more spaces and more doctors and more nurses. It's false. It's false. It's an outright lie, that they think that they can do that.

Now, the opposition has said that they're going to solve the problems of Manitoba and—but there's no plan on how they're going to do it. It's really nice to say that they're going to add more personal-care-home spaces, they're going to hire more doctors, they're going to hire more nurses, but there's no plan on how to do it. I'd like to see them draw up the plan where it shows the finances, the actual finances, and how they're going to hire those more doctors and more nurses and create more personal-care homes with less money. When you cut a half a billion dollars out of the budget, you can't do it, Mr. Speaker.

How are you going to fix the roads, that we hear from them all the time, you know—they need some improvements here and there, they—and they voted against that budget. Where we said we have a plan, they voted against it.

It's very easy for the opposition to stand up in this House because they're not held accountable for their statements. I wish somebody would actually take them to account on their statements and show us where their—what their reckless cuts would mean. It's really easy to say that they're going to cut a half a billion dollars, but where does that come from? Does it come from the personal-care homes? Well, right now, today, they would say no; they would say that no, personal-care homes don't get touched. Yesterday, they would have said, no, roads don't get touched. The day before, they say, oh, no, health care doesn't get touched.

Well, where does it come from? Where does that \$550 million—a half a billion dollars—come from? It comes from something. It comes from something that we all know, that one of us values.

Now, today, we're talking about the seniors. Okay, I agree, we need to do more and we are doing more. Since '99 we have done so much more than they did. You know, in 1999—here's the hypocrisy of it—in 1999, they had—right before the election—they had commissioned a paper to look at eliminating the property-tax credit, eliminating it from every

Manitoban. But, you know what? When we took office, we took a different approach; we've actually increased it. It went from a paltry 235 bucks, back underneath them, when they cut it to that, to \$1,100 now for seniors. And then this year, we're adding another \$235, on our way to eliminate the school property-tax credit for seniors. Now, I don't understand how they voted against that. They keep saying that they stand up for seniors but they keep sitting down when it comes to voting for them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they sat down when we talked about—when we're talking about post—of the post office, door-to-door delivery. Where were they? Supporting their federal masters in Ottawa eliminating door-to-door service that many seniors count on.

So the hypocrisy in their statements, they—actions speak louder than words, and their actions are to sit down when it comes to standing up for Manitobans. They don't stand up for any of the things that we've done and that we are doing.

You know, they talk about—the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon) talks about baby boomers needing health care. Well, how is \$550 million in cuts going to help them have more health care? It's absolutely crazy.

That—the member for Emerson talked about that home care is a great plan. Okay, I will agree with his statement on that; home care is a great plan. But their actions speak louder than words, because when they were in government they tried to privatize the plan that he just two minutes ago said was a great plan. So they tried to privatize that. How's that going to help anybody?

\* (10:20)

And I disagree with the member for Emerson. I think home care is still a great plan, even though he was slugging it. I know many home-care workers who do fantastic work, and they all care deeply about their clients. I don't believe at all that it's got—that they're not caring about their clients and that it's gotten worse. I think that our home care is—well, it is the best in the country. It's not even that I think that. It's been said across the country; it is the best. And other jurisdictions look to us as a model of home care. And that's how we, on this side of the House, have stood up for Manitobans. We're actually doing the things that the members opposite talk about, but when it comes time to put their money where their

mouth is, or put actions, they don't do that. They sit down or they try to privatize it or they vote against it.

You know, it's just—it just talks about—like, Mr. Speaker, we talk about affordable housing units. We had 1,500 affordable social housing units built in this province by March 31st of 2014. We are adding another 500 in Budget 2014. What did the members opposite do when that came up to a vote? They sat down and voted against it. They didn't support this. So are they for seniors or aren't they? Their actions certainly don't say so.

So I would like to say that I think that, you know, you have to realize that in order to build these things and support people and support seniors, we have to put money into it. You don't get these personal-care homes, and you don't get the wonderful nurses and all of the wonderful home-care workers that we have in this province without supporting them. And you have to have the finances to do so. And the members opposite vote against it every single time. You know, we, on this side of the House, have voted for it. We are working with seniors in our communities to better their lives.

We've done—another action that we've taken that the members opposite voted against was the cancer-care drugs, free cancer-care drugs, Mr. Speaker. This is something that seniors value. It can be thousands of dollars a month in health-care costs and drug premiums when you have cancer. And instead, when we came to a vote for that, to put money into that system so that way seniors can have free health-care drugs, the members opposite actions were to vote against it.

So they talk a big game about supporting people, but when it comes to actually funding the system, they don't want to do that. Their whole mantra is about cuts. How can you fund free cancer-care drugs? How can you fund personal-care homes? How can you fund more nurses? How can you fund the home-care workers? How can you fund the system without proper funding? They don't. They vote against it every single time. It's just—it's hypocrisy at its best, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we invested—we're investing \$9 million into providing another 140 safe, affordable homes for seniors, and this builds on our commitment of 560 more that we've delivered in the last five years. And every single time, the members opposite have voted against it, every single time. We've added personal-care homes, and they voted against it.

So I guess I'm going to listen to the next member opposite get up and speak, and I'm going to—and I'm hopeful that maybe he's taken this message to heart and he's realized that maybe they'll start voting with us. Maybe they'll start voting for the funding to actually support these initiatives because you cannot tell me that you can do all of the stuff that we're doing without proper funding.

Now they'll say that they're not going to cut seniors today because that's, you know, that's today's mantra from them, that they're not going to do this. But what are they going to cut? Is it then, now, the infrastructure which they'll have a member's resolution on tomorrow or next week? Are they going to cut that? Are they going to say that that's what we need to cut from the budget? Do we need crumbling roads, crumbling bridges? Is it going to be the hospitals that we're going to cut to fund the personal-care homes for seniors?

Where are the cuts, Mr. Speaker? They talk about having—they're going to cut. Where are they? Where do these cuts come from? It's really easy to just say that they're going to find efficiencies. We have been finding efficiencies. We have been combining WRHAs. We have taken that front-line savings, put it back into the front lines for all the nurses and cancer-care drugs. We've merged municipalities and that's savings, which, once again, the members opposite voted against. They didn't think that that was a good savings initiative. It seems like it's a 'mimby'—a NIMBY, sorry, not in my backyard.

As long as the cuts don't come in their area, they're very happy, but they've put petition after petition for millions and millions of dollars in their areas. And then they speak up on this issue, and when it comes time to actually fund it, they vote against it. It's time for them to stand up and vote with us on a budget and make sure that we provide the proper funding so that way we can provide seniors with a really healthy, long, enjoyable retirement, Mr. Speaker. And with that, I thank you very much.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I do want to clear up the record a little bit for the member from St. Norbert.

First off, he's wanting to know how we're going to be able to do what we're wanting to do when we talk about cuts. Well, the first thing we're going to cut is the vote tax. We made that very clear. The other thing we're going to cut is the 1 per cent increase in the PST that they said they would not do.

Every member on that side of the House went door to door to door saying that it was ridiculous, they would never raise the PST. So there you have it, Mr. Speaker. Efficiencies, vote tax, PST, that's what it's all about, and they know on this side—that side of the House it's very, very possible for this to happen. And we'll be able to show that if given the opportunity by the public that decides who will be in here. That is a clear statement. I can also tell you that we will stand with seniors on a day-to-day basis.

Now, in my case, in my area alone, the member from St. Norbert says, well, they stand up and they ask about personal-care homes. Yes, I'll stand up for my folks. In fact, we were supposed to have a 27-person unit built in our area. It had been announced by this government. It's never happened, and yet we're great to stand up and do press releases.

In fact, when you think about the hospital in Selkirk, we're on like almost 20 number now that's been announced on the Selkirk hospital. We have some poles in the ground out there that they claim to be the start of the Selkirk hospital, which, by the way, a number of our seniors are in that hospital waiting to get placed. Some of my folks from my area are in the Selkirk hospital waiting to get placed. We had, as of just a couple of weeks ago, we had 56 people in the Lakeside riding waiting for placement in PCH.

Now, I understand that the formula they use in the regional health is very clear. It's based on the number of units available. Now, the member from Emerson talked about some of the homes not being full, and that does have a lot to do with the availability of nurses, also has to do with the availability of location, also, and doctor care, which we know.

And they claim, they just put on the record again, they hired 500 new doctors. Well, if that's the case, why do we have 20 ERs closed? It don't add up. They're actually the ones that have cut doctors, not increased doctors. They have 1,000 doctors that they fired, Mr. Speaker, 1,000 doctors. Every member on that side of the House personally went out and made this claim that they're hiring all these doctors. Well, guess not. *[interjection]* I would be a little sensitive if I was them too. When you put stuff on the record that's not accurate, you're going to have some pushback. And we know it, the public knows it, and that's why we have 20 ERs closed.

So our seniors are waiting for placement, and I can tell you—*[interjection]* Well, the member from

St. Norbert wants to get up and correct the record. Let him get up on a point of order and do so. Let's see the documentation. Tell us where those—all those doctors are that are supposed to be keeping our ERs open. No, the member is just dead wrong. Can't accept responsibility, that's his problem. The public knows better.

Now, of those homes where people are waiting for placement, we know very well, and they talk about how could you save money. Well, guess what? When you have a home for seniors, it's a whole lot cheaper—a whole lot cheaper—to look after that person that needs care in a personal-care home than in a hospital room. We know those costs. It's about \$1,500 a day as opposed to about \$350 a day. Think about the efficiencies. I can give you some numbers. Here we go. As of February 2014, as many as 1,305 Manitoba seniors are waiting for placement in a PCH; 461 are occupying acute-care or hospital beds while waiting. Well, do the math on that, work it up; would that not represent some form of savings? One would think it would. I mean, is that the way we calculate math on that side of the House, that there's no savings, no efficiencies? I think not.

\* (10:30)

I think we have an opportunity to right what is wrong and look after our seniors for the reasons that many of us on this side of the House have stated. We are very clear on our position in regards to what needs to be happening and we talk about what seniors are expecting.

Now, I know in my area we have a number of people—being from rural Manitoba—that get to the point where they're no longer able to live at home. So because of this—the structure, the way it's set up, is that they are now taking from their—taken from their community.

So what is happening, so now they get comfortable—and my dear grandmother was one of those folks that had to be taken out of her community and put in Selkirk. Well, we waited and we waited and waited and waited some more, and so she started doctoring there, feeling comfortable there, as most seniors do; you start building relationships, whether it be with your doctors or the nurses or just in general—general life things that we do, we feel comfortable in our surroundings.

So the point came where there was finally an opening in our home area of Teulon where her family was and the rest of her folks. She didn't want

to come back; she felt very comfortable where she was in Selkirk because that's where she felt safe. And that's what it's also about, is where the seniors feel safe.

So because of these 27 units that was proposed and announced by this government—has never happened—never happened—so we still got 56 people in my area alone that are waiting for placement. What they're going to end up doing is, again, being taken from their area.

And in my area a number of the older folks, especially farm women, never got their licence—never got their licence—so if the husband is the one that's been taken to a PCH outside the area, they have to rely on family to either come pick them up, take them to see the significant other in this case, which is creating hardship on a lot of families. And, again, you talk about efficiencies; all kinds of efficiency in order for that to happen.

Now, yesterday and the day before we had talked a bit about First Nations and those that are waiting for placement in those areas as well. And we know very clearly the number of homes and places that are available for the seniors in First Nations communities are underbedded as well—they're underbedded as well. And we'd be happy to have that discussion, we know that that's a population of—just like in the rest of Manitoba, that's an aging population that are looking for homes, that are looking for comfort where they can stay in their community and be looked after. This is really important to them. They don't want to be removed.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've seen what happened with the flood of 2011 where 1,800 people are still out of their homes, which we feel is totally unacceptable. And I want to thank the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Robinson) for his briefing yesterday. And I can feel his concern there as well.

We know very much, Mr. Speaker, that when you're taken from your native land and not be able to get back into that native land and be with the people and the area that you feel comfortable with, whether it be First Nation folks, whether it be folks from Teulon or La Salle or Emerson or Morden or Russell, wherever that may be—Churchill—we all know that that's a risk that's not worth taking, many, many times. And we know that because of the stress, that brings on other issues, other health issues that may not have been there before but it will certainly be there now.

And we know because of the great nurse work that happens in these personal-care homes, medication is a large part of that, and making sure that they get the right medication at the right time because you know how important that is. And my dear old granny, she was a very stubborn woman and she refused to take her medication. So because the staff had that relationship, they were able to figure out a way to get the medication into her food, look after her, and she lived a great life and she did eventually come back to our area even though she wasn't as comfortable as she probably would have liked to have been.

But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we need to look after our seniors. We, on this side of the House, feel this legislation is what we need, and we're prepared to support it, and we'd like the government to support it, and I know that there's a very slim to nil chance.

But with that, we look forward to hearing what other members have to say on this piece of legislation.

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** Thank you for the applause.

It's always a great pleasure on my part to speak to some kind of a proposal to protect me and, at my age, everything that comes along on a daily basis is a blessing. When I wake up and I'm still breathing, I thank the Lord for allowing me that—another day. And it's always an idea that brings forward the rights of seniors and the privileges that we're supposed to have.

The current situation in our society today is that most seniors have problems with technology. Technology is something that really escapes some of them. As far as I could remember, a mouse before was supposed to be that teeny, weeny little rat, but not anymore. A mouse is something that you direct that kind of an arrow so that you could click on the computer screen. And there used to be typewriters that you could—that you needed an eraser for and carbon paper. Not anymore.

So seniors have been blessed with some of the organizations that deal with their needs. The Creative Retirement organization, headed by a good friend—he's been with them for the last 25 years—is one such organization, and it brings to mind what they do. They have this newsletter that deals with senior issues, and it also brings out some of the schedules that they have to—they could go for exercise. And the

most telling of all the services that they provide is computer training, and my friend, Kenneth Green, is in the forefront.

But this bill—although it seeks purportedly to establish a bill of rights for seniors, we're already providing those privileges that usually come with being a senior citizen—is an anachronism almost. It's already being provided by our society. Governments have been very appreciative of the contributions of the seniors to our society.

And what comes to mind, when we discuss or when we talk about seniors, is my dad. He died at age 88. Before he died, he was always very upset when my kids would cut him off or fill up his—the ideas in his sentence. He says, why are you doing that to me? Meaning, why are you finishing my sentence? Are you that impatient? Are you that in a hurry that you do not have that millisecond to allow me to finish my idea in a sentence?

\* (10:40)

And one of the things that happened to him was three years before he died, he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. It's one of the worst things that could happen to a human being. And Alzheimer's is so prevalent among those who are 60 and above that there are those who have been diagnosed as having the vascular dementia, and I fear that one of these days I might have that type of a disease because it is one of those that strikes you without warning. And my father, when I was visiting him at the nursing home, he would usually say and ask me, who are you? And, you know, it's so hurting that when your own father does not even know who you are anymore.

So for three years I lived with that thought, that if my father suffered through the loss of that memory, I might also have it in the future. And this bill comes a little bit short on that side. It is not fun anymore when you're 80 or 85 if you don't have the mobility. I am at that age now where I'm thankful that I could still take a shower by myself without help from my wife. I am very thankful that I could still cook my own meals and prepare my own sandwiches and pour my own wine. And such gratitude is a result of an appreciation of the nice things that we have in this country, in this province, that we have a system wherein we don't have to worry about hospitalization. We have a system that provides enough—some say not sufficient, but enough to live with.

The Canada Pension Plan that I currently receive is being clawed back, and the old age security that I was supposed to receive, that I thought I'll be entitled to, is also being clawed back. I'm not entitled to the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Manitoba government is currently spearheading the expansion of the Canada Pension Plan, together with other governments, and the most difficult thing for a senior is to maintain the thread of idea that he is talking about, and when there's an interruption from the member from Midland, it is one of those disconcerting interferences. I'm not raising that as a point of order because I do the same thing to him.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** It is my pleasure to be able to rise this morning and put a few words on the record with respect to this bill that's been brought forward by the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen).

And just earlier in this conversation in the debate this morning, the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) said, you know, this is really an unnecessary bill, he says, because as a government we're already providing these services to seniors. But, Mr. Speaker, what has been clear from the evidence brought forward by my colleagues this morning is that nothing could be farther from the truth, that, in fact, so many seniors throughout Manitoba continue to struggle and struggle unnecessarily.

They struggle in terms of getting access to the health-care services they need. They struggle financially because of a government that has made it far more difficult for them to thrive on a fixed income as costs continue to escalate and spiral upward. They suffer because of a home-care system that was once very strong that—but has undergone such serious changes so that the president of MGEU is citing concerns expressed by members. And, indeed, as MLAs, we continue to hear from seniors throughout the province about what they see as the—as deficiencies in the home-care system.

So it's very important that we take the time this morning to debate Bill 205, and I welcome the members of the government to support this very necessary piece of legislation.

I want to spend just a minute or two to talk about a couple by the name of Dave and Susan Peters—Susanna Peters, actually, is how she goes by. I may have shared this story in the Legislature before, but I

was—I met Dave and Susanna because I delivered a certificate to their door on the occasion of their 75th wedding anniversary, and it's—it was just an amazing—as a new MLA, it was certainly the first certificate I ever signed to congratulate someone on a 75th wedding anniversary. I couldn't believe it, I actually had my assistant fact check that at least two or three times because I didn't think it could be possible.

So I went to deliver this certificate and, sure enough, here were Dave and Susanna living on their own in one of the apartment towers in Winkler, and I got to the door and he invited me in for coffee. He was alert, he was with it, he was active, he was 95 years old—or it could've been 96. And I sat in his living room and I said, you know, Mr. Peters, how can you possibly be married for 75 years? And he shrugged his shoulders and he says, well, it's easy, you get married when you're 20 years old and you just stay together for that long.

It was a great exchange we had. But what became clear in our context of conversation, I said, well, where's Mrs. Peters today? And he expressed concern, he says, you know, she's just been admitted to hospital. She was in Boundary Trails hospital. And if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, at his age, at 96 years old, he was driving daily to go see his wife five miles down the road at the Boundary Trails health-care centre. Well, that was a cause for concern. But weeks later—I stayed in contact with Mr. Peters, and weeks later I got a call from him and he said, can you help? Can you help, because my wife has been panelled and she's awaiting placement at a personal-care home in Winkler. But, as is too often the case, there was no space available at the local personal-care home and instead she went to the Morris personal-care home.

Now, the drive time for Mr. Peters to see his wife of 75 years was going to be 50 kilometres one way, 100 kilometres return trip for a 96-year-old gentleman. And if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, the heroic efforts that the family took. His sons, who I imagine were retired themselves if their father was 96 years old, who were living in St. James, took it upon themselves to make sure that dad and mom could have daily visitation. They would leave St. James on an alternating basis, they would take turns, drive to Winkler, pick up father, drive to Morris, see mother, return to Winkler to take dad home, and then back through Morris to see mom one more time and back to St. James, which is a trip that might be one, two, three, three to four hundred kilometres round

trip, and they did that on a daily or semi-regular basis.

\* (10:50)

Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of situation to which my colleagues and I are referring when we talk about the unsustainable conditions that seniors are made to live in, and, indeed, as a colleague shared even this morning, the new statistics show that even right now in the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, 76 people waiting in hospital for placement, 280 people waiting in community. Already today, one of my colleagues has shared how much more expensive it is for a senior to wait in hospital than it is to be actually placed at a personal-care home.

But we owe our seniors. We owe these people, who have given a life to a community, who have grown up there and gone to school there. They've gotten married there. They've raised their families there. They've contributed to the community. They've contributed to their churches. They've contributed to their non-profit organizations. They've given back, all their lives, and now, in the moment when they need the system to respond to their need, this NDP government is content to hang out a sign and say, sorry, no vacancy. And, as colleague after colleague has said today, that is inappropriate. It is not enough. We owe them a higher standard. We owe them so much more, and it is exactly a bill like this that then galvanizes the commitment of government to do more, to provide more. It provides a framework to say government must do more for these hard-working seniors.

Mr. Speaker, I could give you example after example but already my colleagues have done a good job of showing how it is when we do place seniors who have no connection to a remote community in that remote community. By no fault of those local doctors or local nurses, that individual simply does not thrive. They are in familiar-unfamiliar setting. Oftentimes, if they are beginning, as the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino) said, to experience issues like Alzheimer's or early onset confusion and those kind of things, then that strange surrounding is detrimental to their well-being, and, all too often, we hear reports that mom or dad was doing very well and they got transferred.

And, all of a sudden, the family comes back to see their mom or their dad and they're now on a psychotropic drug-treatment plan. The doctors or nurses say they weren't thriving. They had to be

contained. They had to be restrained. That is a one-way street.

But, indeed, in the short time that I have remaining today, let me say that the pressures on home care and the pressures on personal-care-home placement are not the only pressures that seniors in this province under this NDP government face because, indeed, the problems they face with respect to economic viability are huge. This is a government that raised taxes two years ago when they widened the RST with no concern for how that would affect seniors on a fixed income. Expanding tax to haircuts, expanding tax to home insurance policies and life insurance policies, and a whole host of other services that seniors must have, and by doing so, of course, they generated a cool \$280 million per year for the government, and a year later they broke a fundamental—the fundamental pledge of their election platform and they raised the PST to 8 per cent.

But, in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, what about MPI rates? What about fuel taxes that are up? What about the land transfer tax that remains stubbornly high? What about the fact that this government now makes—and I looked back at the budget papers yesterday because in the context of debate, the Minister for Finance has said we should be looking at the budget papers—I assure you, I always am—but yesterday I found a new figure, a figure that showed that this government in just five years now makes a billion dollars more on income taxes than they did just five years ago. Those are all costs coming out of the pockets of Manitobans. This government is sitting on record revenues. They're sitting on record federal transfer payments. They are governing in a time of record low interest rates that are perpetuated, and yet they do nothing to lessen the burden financially on seniors in this province. They do nothing to release them from the inflationary effect of—on their taxes.

So, Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, this bill must pass, and I call upon my colleagues on both sides of the House to support this Bill 205. Thank you.

**Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to put a few—thank you—glad to put a few words on record. I just have to say that I've always been a person that looked at the glass half full and still half empty.

What I hear this morning from the opposition is a lot of 'googley-gock' that I can't figure out. Some of the figures that they're talking about, it's almost as if

some of their members didn't take their medication this morning because of the distortion of some of the facts. You know, they're saying we, you know, fired doctors, they're saying that we don't care about seniors. Seniors are the cornerstone of our province, Mr. Speaker, and I have to say that we have looked after the seniors very well. Can we do more? Of course we can.

One of the opposition members saying that they wanted a—or they needed a 27-unit seniors house. Well, coming from Flin Flon, we need the same thing. But I—our party looks at all the province and all the needs of the province, so we're looking at that.

I think seniors—when we think of seniors, we think of them contributing to the building of this province. I was just reading about a senior here in Winnipeg, Jim Daly, who is a coach for something like 60 years; 87 years old and still contributing. And I think of the coaches that I had when I was playing hockey, some of the seniors that would come and coach and volunteer their time and I think, you know, I—and when I get into my prime I would like to continue coaching because I coach basketball and soccer and I think everybody—it's an honour to contribute back to society.

But getting back to the opposition, I wonder where we'd be if they ever did get to power. Where—what would happen to the home care? They wanted to privatize it. And why, you know, what would the cost be if you privatized it? Well, you know, go to Alberta, see what seniors have to pay to retire in Alberta. We've got seniors in Flin Flon that moved from Alberta because they know they'd be looked after better in Manitoba. We have one of the best health care and seniors care probably in Canada and we should be recognized for that.

We should also stand up and realize that the seniors being the cornerstone of our economy, it's always changing. I think the numbers are going to increase 42 per cent—43 per cent in 14 to 20 years. This is going to change the complexion of society. So we got to make sure that we know that the needs and care of seniors is definitely going to go up.

It is important to ensure that seniors have financial security in their age and have the dignity; we got to make sure of that and I think we are. Budget 214 makes it this year's senior school property tax rebate of up to \$235, on top of the \$1,100. We introduced tax savings on pensions by allowing spouses to split their income; a comprehensive modernization of pension legislation,

allowing seniors to unlock 50 per cent of their pension funds; we're working with other provinces on a modest, phased-in and fully funded expansion of the Canada Pension Plan; we introduced the Primary Caregiver Tax Credit. All these are moves that we are making, okay, to help out our seniors. And many caregivers are seniors and a large promotion of care residents are seniors over the age of 65; we're looking after that.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition wants \$550 million in reckless cuts across the board. That will be a negative impact on the ability of Manitoba older adults to live fulfilling, healthy and socially engaged lives.

So this is what we're trying to compare here, what we would do, what they would do. I think I'd rather be a senior living in our time than living in their time. *[interjection]* Thank you, thank you.

I think what we're doing is we're showing with the money that we're spending in infrastructure, in job creation, in education—

\* (11:00)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Pettersen) will have five minutes remaining.

## RESOLUTIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 11 a.m., it's time for private members' resolutions.

## House Business

**Mr. Speaker:** And before we get to that, the honourable Government House Leader, on House business?

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):** Yes, on House business, Mr. Speaker.

Pursuant to rule 31(8), I'm announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next sitting Tuesday will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Burrows (Ms. Wight). The title of the resolution is Inclusion in Schools.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been announced that, pursuant to rule 31(8), that the private member's resolution to be considered next—the next sitting Tuesday will be the one brought forward by the honourable member for Burrows, and the title of the resolution is Inclusion in Schools.

**Res. 14—Rail Safety in Manitoba**

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, private member's resolution. The resolution under debate this morning is entitled Rail Safety in Manitoba, sponsored by the honourable member for St. Norbert.

**Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert):** I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Pettersen), that

WHEREAS the provincial government is a strong supporter of rail industry in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS a safe and prosperous rail industry benefits all Manitobans by creating good jobs and strengthening the local economy; and

WHEREAS strong rail safety measures are vital to protecting both the communities that railways pass through and the goods shipped by rail; and

WHEREAS rail derailments in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec; Gainford, Alberta; and Plaster Rock, New Brunswick are compelling reminders of the potential risks in transporting dangerous goods along railways; and

WHEREAS there is a growing consensus among the provinces that there must be—that more must be done to improve rail safety, especially with regarding to the shipping of hazardous goods; and

WHEREAS current federal legislation governing railways lacks the transparency and safety measures necessary to keep Manitoba communities safe.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the federal government to introduce stronger regulations governing rail safety, including better to—better monitoring of rail convoy transportations of hazardous materials to provide real time data on the location and contents of trains; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge Canadian rail companies to work in co-operation with communities the trains pass through and improve safeguards to prevent accidents in the future.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable member for St. Norbert, seconded by the honourable member for Flin Flon,

WHEREAS the provincial government—

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense? Dispense.

Is it the pleasure of the House to consider the resolution as printed on today's Order Paper? *[Agreed]*

*WHEREAS the Provincial Government is a strong supporter of the rail industry in Manitoba; and*

*WHEREAS a safe and prosperous rail industry benefits all Manitobans by creating good jobs and strengthening the local economy; and*

*WHEREAS strong rail safety measures are vital to protecting both the communities that railways pass through and the goods shipped by rail; and*

*WHEREAS rail derailments in Lac Mégantic, Quebec, Gainford, Alberta and Plaster Rock, New Brunswick are compelling reminders of the potential risks in transporting dangerous goods along railways; and*

*WHEREAS there is a growing consensus among the provinces that more must be done to improve rail safety, especially with regard to the shipping of hazardous goods; and*

*WHEREAS current federal legislation governing railways lacks the transparency and safety measures necessary to keep Manitoba communities safe.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call on the Federal Government to introduce stronger regulations governing rail safety, including better monitoring of rail convoys transporting hazardous materials to provide real time data on the location and content of trains; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge Canadian rail companies to work in cooperation with communities the trains pass through and improve safeguards to prevent accidents in the future.*

**Mr. Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, there are serious concerns about the rail speed limit close to the homes in St. Norbert and around the need to—for enhanced emergency response, and we have to better rail safety in the future.

A few weeks ago there was a derailment right in my constituency and, luckily, it happened in an area where there wasn't a lot of homes; it happened, actually, just a few hundred metres short of a couple of my constituents' homes, and it really shows the need for enhanced rail safety. Now, in this derailment there is—the speed zone is 25 miles an hour, around 40 kilometres an hour—and the train

came off the tracks. Five cars ended up leaving the tracks, and if you look at the footage from it, it was very lucky that the oil tanker that was two cars behind the five in front of it that jumped the tracks, it didn't come off the tracks. So we ended up with a situation that was—it was bad, but it could have been a lot worse for the residents in the area.

The residents in the area have come to me and they've asked for me to do what I can, and that's why I'm here today, to push forward even more safety. They were very concerned that they did not get a phone call, a knock on the door, any response from houses that are a mere few hundred metres away from this derailment, that it even happened. Some of them were actually watching the news and then they realized that that train derailment was right outside their door, and they looked outside and they were very afraid because nobody notified them that a train had derailed there.

Now, what had—what would have happened in a response situation if it would have been an oil tanker and there would have been a fire? You know, they should have been at least notified, and the fact that the oil tanker was very close to the derailment—it was only two cars from being one of the ones to jump the track—speaks volumes that they should have been notified and told. I mean, who knows what could have been in the other cars, nobody knew right away. It turned out that it was some plastic pellets in one of the tanker cars that was actually not harmful to the environment nor explosive.

But I have to say that we got lucky on this one. I mean, you look at what happened at Lac-Mégantic when the trains jumped the track there, 47 people were killed. And, you know, you look at my constituency, the rail line basically is actually the defining line between my constituency and the member for Fort Richmond—or Fort Garry. Her constituency and mine are divided by that rail line and there's houses that back—each one of those—each of our areas have houses that back the tracks.

And last week I was sad to hear a constituent came into my office and she's selling her house along the tracks. She lives in Richmond West and she's got a young family, a couple of kids, and she told me after this derailment she can't sleep anymore. She's very afraid. Every time she hears a train coming or, you know, coming down the tracks, she's just nervous that it's going to derail and end up in her house or explosion like the one that happened in Lac-Mégantic had happened. So she's actually selling

the house and she's going to be moving out of the area, which makes me really sad that somebody has to do that based on a lack of inspection and a lack of regulation.

And, you know what, I applaud the federal government for the moves that they've taken. They've taken some steps. Recently, we saw them take some steps into some rail safety, but I urge them to go further, Mr. Speaker. You know, we can—we should have the—municipalities should have the ability to know exactly what's on every train. I know that when this one derailed, the emergency response was quick by the fire department. They got out there. But they did not know what was on that train, and that's a huge issue. Firefighters have been pushing across this country to know what are on these trains, and I think that that is only fair when we're coming through residential communities, that the firefighters would be informed of what's on these trains and they would know how to respond to them.

We've seen the inspections be decreased through some of the cuts that the federal government is going through with their cuts. The inspectors now have more railcars, more oil tankers to inspect. It's impossible for them to get to every one of these tankers and every one of these cars in—even in a year, it's going to take them years, plural, to get to all of the inspections. And in that time, we know that the millions of miles these cars put on, there can be problems with those cars that arise. And the inspector's not going to be able to see them all. So I encourage the federal government to step up inspection rather than cutting it and having these inspectors, you know, have to do more of a workload where they, just physically, it's impossible to inspect all of the cars that they're being given on their workload. And they can work with the rail company. I mean, the rail company should have some skin in the game.

They're putting this—these cars—heavier, longer trains than ever before being allowed to come through communities, which cause massive backups, you know, when the trains are going through the communities. The rail line dictates, based on what they think the rail can—capacity is and the line itself, whether it's straight or curved, they dictate their own speed limits. I think that this is something we need to work with, with municipalities. You know, the member for St. Boniface in the city council, he raised this big concern that he thinks that the, you know, some of the municipalities should be able to dictate the speed limit, because in all reality, I mean,

sometimes these speed limits are a little too fast. I think that the big issue is, too, that we're going to have to shorten some of these trains. When they're carrying dangerous goods, they shouldn't be allowed to have as many dangerous-goods cars or be as long.

And, you know, there's a way to do this and still have a great rail industry. We can reroute the trains. They can come around the city a different way instead of going right through residential areas. They can also shorten the rail, the train itself. They could parcel off the train when they're coming through residential areas so there's not as much danger of a giant explosion like we saw in Lac-Mégantic. If the cars were spaced better and there was less of them on the rail line, you know, the disaster could be averted to some, you know, aspect of it.

But I mean, I really think that we all have to work together on this one, and like I said, I applaud the federal government for some of their recent stuff. I think that it's great. I think that we need to take it one step further. I think that the three-year phase-out of some of these railcars is not aggressive enough. I mean, we see the United States, they've actually done the phase-out a lot faster. And we're seeing a product now that's shipped that is much more explosive than in the past. Things have changed, and I think that the rail companies need to realize that, and they need to work with the municipalities and with provincial governments to realize that the product is different than it was. We're do—like I said, longer trains than ever before.

So we really need to work with our own municipalities and, I think, with first responders. The fire department needs to know what's inside every one of those tanker cars when they're coming through our area. There should be no reason that any of that stuff is not being told to the fire department so they can know how to respond properly. The area where this train derailed actually doesn't have fire hydrant service. It's just outside of where the city has fire hydrants, so those first responders had to come, the fire trucks had to come, and had that train been an explosive train or on fire, they would have had to use tankers to bring in water to the situation which would have further made the situation even further dangerous and worse because those people wouldn't have had their homes being near a fire without any water available to it.

\* (11:10)

Now, I know that our Minister of Transportation has been a lead on this. He's—you know, he's been

urging the federal government to step up the rail inspections and step up on giving more information on what these railcars have. I also know that we have—that Manitoba's taken a lead on saying that it's not acceptable to ship oil out through Churchill. That track is not meant for these heavy railcars, and what that's going to happen is we're going to see a disaster of epic proportions, not only environmentally but we're going to ruin a community. That rail line has seen over 10 derailments a year—63 derailments, I think, is the figure in the last 10 years that they've had on that rail line.

Now, when a grain car flips over, you know, the birds and the wildlife up there, they get to have a nice little treat. They get to eat some of it. They right that car on the track and then they send it off again. But when an oil tanker flips over on a track in an environment like that where it's remote and where all the ecosystem is so fragile, what we're going to see is a destroyed ecosystem and a big disaster, Mr. Speaker. I mean, we cannot allow this to happen in Manitoba, and I think that our government is onside with urging the federal government to make sure that if they're going to ship oil that we be looking at a massive improvement to those lines. And there is no improvement on those lines so far. It's been very minimal investment, so we shouldn't be allowing that.

And through residential areas like mine, I think we have to change the way we do shipping. And I think that when it comes to shipping dangerous goods there is a way to ship them around the city. And it would take some investment—investment by the companies themselves and the federal government, and I'm sure that the provincial government would be willing to work with them on this. But we can push the trains—the dangerous goods trains around the city and not right through residential neighbourhoods, right beside homes and schools. We—one of the schools in my area is within blast distance of the tracks. If the Lac-Mégantic train would have derailed there, it would have taken out Arthur A. Leach school, which is in my area, and many of the homes around and it would have been a disaster of epic proportions. We're talking hundreds of students in the school.

So I think that it's only fair that we get the train companies to work with us and the federal government to work with us and to increase the safety of rails in our area, and decrease the risk of these trains and the possibility of a giant disaster like with Lac-Mégantic.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West):** I'm pleased to rise to speak on this resolution today, and I read the resolution intently and I listened to the previous speaker and I'm a little mystified because perhaps he doesn't understand that what he's asking the government to do, they did over a year ago. So if we want to celebrate, maybe, the federal government's response to his request, it could have been done a year ago if he'd had some research done then. The governments and the rail—the federal government, the rail line, put all that in place, and it happens now. But perhaps he's not aware of that.

Also, he was surprised, I think, that his emergency responders didn't tell his community, well, we have this—these things that we've had—gosh, I don't know how many decades we've had these safety marks and dangerous goods advisories for the transportation of dangerous goods in Canada and around the world. It's a UN compliance and the marks are on the trains, Mr. Speaker, and so that first responders can look at these placards; they are trained in the recognition of these placards and in the UN numbers so they know exactly what is in that particular railcar. They know exactly what's on that particular truck trailer, they know exactly what is in that container before they decide how they're going to attack a particular emergency. And that is very important that emergency responders are trained and are well aware of the dangers that they're going into, that they don't, of course, run into these situations, and we know they don't. They have a plan—they have the emergency response assistance plan in place for all these communities, and they follow that plan.

So, we know that the rail lines are—the rail companies are very important to Canada and Manitoba. A great amount of employment, over 30,000–34,000 people nationwide, a big part of how Canada was built, and the previous speaker doesn't like it when there's houses alongside the track. Well, if you want to do a policy—change a policy that the Province has an impact on, don't allow houses to be constructed beside rail lines. There would be the policy. But, you know, we want to instead attack the federal government.

But, nonetheless, I'm—you know, we read through this resolution and seems to be—since it's something that the government's—federal government has already done and the rail lines are complying with, something that you can move along if you wish. It's a year late. And, obviously, just after

this resolution was tabled, we saw the federal government react to another situation, and they talked about removing the railcars that are—that they've questioned whether they're safe or not. They have a plan in place with the rail lines and how that's going to be done and, you know, they're moving along with that, so interesting resolution. Not quite sure what he's asking the federal government to do, since, as I've said, it's already been done.

Now, if he wants to go a step further, and there was an implication in his remarks that the emergency responders should receive a list of every manifest for every train that's going through their community before it comes through. Well, then, we also have to do that for semi-trailers that move through our communities. We also have to do it for airplanes that fly over our communities because you never know. That plane may crash, perhaps, in your community. And you also then have to do it for ships that are travel—if you're adjacent to rivers. So all of these things are interesting.

And I think back to my time in industry and, Mr. Speaker, all of our warehouses are federally regulated, provincially regulated. We have, you know, environmental safeguards in place we have filed with the provincial government. They know what's in there. They have a copy of their emergency response assistant plan for every facility, and it has maps and outlines of what's—not only what is on our footprint of properties around Manitoba, but also what is stored in our particular warehouse and a sample of those products. And we meet with our emergency responders regularly to go through our plan and make sure that they understand what's going to be there, should there be an emergency.

And, initially, when we started to do this, we had a request from one fire department that said, well, we want to have an updated inventory list every time your inventory changes. And I looked at them and I said, do you really know what you're asking for? Yes, we want to know exactly what's on your property at any particular moment in time. I said, well—at that time, email was not common; fax machines were—and I said, you're going to be getting hundreds, perhaps thousands of pages from us every day. Said, what do you mean? Well, every time we sell a product, our inventory list changes. That means I will be sending you a new inventory list. What are you going to do with those thousands of pages? Hmm. What are we going to do with those thousands of pages? That means that those thousands of pages usually go in a file, go in the garbage, stack up, or

you hire a new bureaucracy to look at them. And then, you know—then who knows what's going to happen?

So we decided with the first emergency responders that training and knowledge and awareness was more important than dead paper, and they all agreed with that and we worked with them regularly so that they know how we handle dangerous products in our facilities, they know how they're transported, and they are all aware of the transportation of dangerous goods and all the placards and what they mean. And we give them samples of—an idea of what we're looking at in our particular warehouses on our sites, when the rail line comes in, how we use derailleurs on both sides of that rail track so that there are no emergencies that could happen, that we're prepared for them. And that's the important part is the education and the preparation.

So, you know, this resolution, as I've said, talks about things that have already been done. So, okay, yes, we can ask the federal government to do things they've already done. That's—maybe makes sense to the member from St. Norbert. That's okay. I've—I guess we can be a year behind what the federal government wants to do and what they've already implemented and what they've discussed with the rail lines. And I know, talking to people in rail industry, this is not something that's a surprise to them. These are things that they are proactively engaged with the emergency responders and the communities to make sure that not only their product that they move is safe. It's not like a rail company goes out and wants to have a major incident. They work as hard as they can and as safely as they can to make sure that communities are safe, that they're transferring all these products through and that their crews are safe, and that they're all aware of what's on the train, you know, that the first responders that they deal with are trained in how to deal with particular hazards.

\* (11:20)

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I know that we have a number of those first responders in rural communities that actually work for us because most of those fire departments are part-time. They'll work for us during the day. We train them in the handling of dangerous goods. They get more training as a first responder in their community, and they know what's going on in their communities. So everybody's engaged and I think that's an important part.

We see that the federal government is engaged in this. Obviously, the public wants attention paid to

this, and we've seen that happen from the federal government's response. So I'm not sure which direction in particular this particular member wants to see this go.

There are things that the Province could do, but I'm not sure that you really want to think about moving the rail lines. Perhaps the provincial government would have a new policy that they're going to move all rail lines out of all communities. Strange things happen when you do that, Mr. Speaker. Communities pop up along those rail lines. So it is a difficult thing. I've been in communities in United States where I've seen the main line going down one side of the state capital and the other line coming back on the other side, and those are things that that's how that community developed. Is it the best way right now? Well, no, but that's what we have and that's what we have to deal with, and we have to put responsibilities and plans in place in order to deal with any potential emergencies.

To say that you should remove it altogether, well, where you going to move it to? Let's move it to a farm south of town. Run it through that arable land. Is that better? I'm not sure—*[interjection]* Not in La Salle, some people said. So we work with what we have, Mr. Speaker, and I am encouraged that the federal government has reacted promptly to this and the rail lines have been accommodating. They're working with people and trying to make sure that they operate as safely as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation):** I'd first of all like to put on the record my thanks to the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) for putting this resolution forward. This is a classic situation, Mr. Speaker, of how an MLA that's rooted in his or her community takes an incident, takes concerns at the constituency level and brings it to the Manitoba Legislature. And just a couple of weeks after a significant derailment in St. Norbert, I want to put on the record not only is the member for St. Norbert standing up for his constituents, but every single member on this side of the House is with him because we value not only his concerns but we value the importance of rail safety in this country.

And I want to say that, you know, I can't say I'm surprised by the cynical tone of the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer). What I do suggest, Mr. Speaker, is the member for Brandon West might want to take some of the advice that was printed in

the Brandon Sun and do his homework because the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) clearly does not understand what has been happening in terms of rail safety in this country. And the rather cynical comments he put on the record I think do a disservice to the fact that we had a wake-up call in this country last year. It was called Lac-Mégantic.

Lac-Mégantic involved 47 fatalities, 47 people that died because the inadequacy of rail safety in this country, and I can say as Minister of Transportation there's not a single minister of transportation across this country, whether it's the federal minister or provincial-territorial ministers, that didn't take this seriously. And our government was very clear, our Premier (Mr. Selinger), that this had to be a priority for all of us as Canadians.

I co-chaired the federal-provincial-territorial ministers' meeting in Winnipeg last fall with the federal minister, and I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that we put forward a clear vision that never again can we have that kind of scenario develop in this country and that we needed clear and evident changes to rail safety to ensure it wouldn't happen again.

And I do want to credit the federal minister, Mr. Speaker. There has been some significant progress, particularly with the phasing out and eventual banning of the DOT-101 cars, the cars that have been in place for moving crude oil. That's a significant move. Some of the requirements to have first responders, to have a plan, emergency plan, that is a significant move.

I want to advise the member for Brandon West that what this resolution calls for is what the FCM has called for, municipalities have called for across the province, not after-the-fact information or just labelling on the cars, but using our ability with technology to have real-time tracking so that our first responders know what is in those railcars if there is a derailment.

And I want to point out, in the derailment in St. Norbert there were not problems with hazardous materials. But I want to stress that we're dealing with increased movement of hazardous materials, not just crude oil but all types of hazardous materials, but particularly in terms of crude oil. The increase in the shipment of crude oil by rail has been exponential—exponential—and we have got to have a much better way of dealing with that. So I think the member for Brandon West should, perhaps, take the lead of the

member from St. Norbert, because to my mind this is an issue affects all of us.

And I want to address the issue in terms of rail line rail location. I was very surprised by the member's comments. Mr. Speaker, no one is talking about the wholesale relocation of rail lines in each and every situation. But if you want to look at some of the advantages of rail line relocation, let's look at what's happened at The Forks. We've turned The Forks into a—from a rail yard into one of the top areas in terms of tourism in this province, and there are many opportunities here in the city of Winnipeg to actually turn what are now currently rail yards and work with the railroads and turn them into residential, commercial development, green space. So I was surprised by that very dismissive approach.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, what is most important here is that when you talk about safety, you don't just talk the talk; you walk the walk. And day after the Day of Mourning yesterday, I think it's quite significant that the first real debate on anything involving safety, that the members opposite are taking a rather cynical approach. Well, I want to say it shouldn't surprise anyone. Because, you know, I was struck yesterday on the Day of Mourning that some members of the opposition decided to walk in the walk. The Day of Mourning walk, the leaders' walk, even the Leader of the Opposition walked in the walk. But you know what? If you really care about safety, you walk the walk when it comes to this Legislature. They voted against the workplace safety and health bill last session led by the Leader of the Opposition. You can talk all you want, you can put the t-shirt on and you can walk, but it's this side of the House that walks the walk when it comes to workplace safety and health and rail safety.

And I want to remind members opposite that we've also spoke, you know, here in Manitoba in terms of the situation in the Port of Churchill, and I know the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) referenced that. And, again, I know the member for Brandon West, from questions in Estimates, perhaps doesn't agree with that, doesn't agree with our approach. I just want to remind members opposite that when we're talking about Lac-Mégantic, it was shipping back an oil field through a federally regulated short line. And what is Port of Churchill? It is a federally regulated short line.

I want to put on the record, Mr. Speaker, we've been there for the Port of Churchill. We have invested \$21 million of provincial funding as

part of the \$68-million agreement—more than the federal government. They're—they invested about \$19 million, more than, actually, OmniTRAX. And we've been working with the port no thanks to the Conservatives. Let's put on the record that the biggest threat to the Port of Churchill has been their taking away the single desk for the Wheat Board. We are now into year three of the incentive which runs out at the end of the five years. And they may want to talk to their former colleague, Merv Tweed, the president of OmniTRAX Canada, who will explain to members opposite that that puts a very significant pressure on the Port of Churchill.

We've been there, Mr. Speaker. We've been supporting the Port of Churchill. We'll continue to support the Port of Churchill. But we indicated when OmniTRAX last year wanted to have a trial shipment of crude oil through the Port of Churchill that there were serious concerns about not only the track—I mean, the track has been improved significantly—but the environment and what kind of impact that would have. At a time when Arctic shipping is opening up, if there was any kind of spill on one the most fragile ecosystems in the world, what would that do, not only to the ecosystem—does anybody remember the Exxon Valdez?—but what it would do the Port of Churchill itself, to the community of Churchill?

\* (11:30)

So I want to say to members opposite, that kind of cynical dismissal of these type of issues I think is out of step with where Manitobans are, Mr. Speaker. And I do know, you know, that they're big fans of the federal Conservative Party, you know. There actually are some Canadians that do believe that the federal Conservatives are the best party for the environment; I think it was about 4 per cent in the most recent poll. I think polls showed that 6 per cent of Canadians think that Elvis is still alive, so you can kind of put the number of people that see the Conservatives as being trustworthy on the environment as being negligible. It's a statistical blip.

But, you know what, it's a same here in this province because we know their position in terms of the environment; they denied climate change, Mr. Speaker. They denied it. Their leader denied that it existed.

But what's particularly unfortunate in this case is when they have an opportunity and a resolution that even, you know, in about the 10-minute speech that the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer), there was maybe 30 seconds where he said

something positive about the resolution. Here was an opportunity for members opposite to actually take a stand on something that's as important—rail safety—stand with the FCM and stand with municipalities, stand with the leadership that we have taken as a province and actually say that we need to do more in terms of rail safety. It doesn't away from anything that the federal minister said. I've been clear on the public record, not just here, that the federal minister has been listening and there have been some significant improvements.

But on this side of the House, significant improvement is not good enough. Until we have state-of-the-art rail safety and still people in communities like St. Norbert don't have to worry about derailments literally in their backyard, Mr. Speaker—we're talking hundreds of feet away from homes, from schools—I think what we should be doing is the following: first of all, congratulating the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) for speaking on behalf on his constituents; and second of all, voting for this resolution, putting aside the cynicism of members opposite and saying we, as Manitobans, want improved rail safety. That's what this resolution is all about. Let's support it.

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** Mr. Speaker, the resolution Rail Safety in Manitoba—it's unfortunate the member from St. Norbert didn't check with the federal government, because a lot of these recommendations have already happened.

And just in mention to the Lac-Mégantic fire and horrible loss of life, it is something that no community should ever have to face and indeed we certainly are cognizant of the fact that that was a huge disaster within their community and remains a huge disaster within their community, as they struggle to rebuild and—from that incident.

And so, stemming from those, there was a list of recommendations that came forward and that are actually being put in place, including the enhanced safety standards for tank cars used to transport flammable liquids. There is route planning now for an analysis of dangerous goods being moved. Emergency response plans are in place for—and this is not—this is something that the railways have been working on; of course, after Lac-Mégantic the signal came that this needed to happen much quicker and much more pronounced than what it was before, prior to that. There'll be a three-year phase-out of the DOT-111 cars so that—and it's, as my understanding, contrary to what the member from St. Norbert said,

actually Canada is moving ahead faster than the US on that. And so it's—these are recommendation, this is actions that are happening out of this.

And, but, Mr. Speaker, I also—while we're talking about rails and rail safety, it would—I would be remiss if I did not put a plug in for my own constituency, the boundary trail rail company. It's a short-line railway running from Morden to just west of Manitou, and the member from Agassiz would—I'm sure will agree with me that it is excellent management that's running that. Mr. Travis Long is the general manager of this company. They are primarily transporting grain and, in spite of the extensive agricultural wisdom of the NDP party, they have survived after the Canadian Wheat Board lost its monopoly. The CWB is actually doing business with the boundary trail rail now in that it's a private company, and they continue to look for new products to move. I know they're actually into some car storage right now, which is—pays a monthly or daily fee for storing cars, and that's a way that they have been able to expand their own market in this business.

But boundary trail rail is a Manitoba success story started by a group of grain producers in south-central Manitoba, and they've actually—the last time I talked to Travis is that they were bringing in grain from quite a distance around because—as producer cars were available for them earlier in the shipping season that we saw a lot of truck transport moving grain in so they could load it on the cars, and they developed some good markets both in Thunder Bay and in the US for both wheat and oats and some Canola. And, in fact, this company even now has their own—purchased their own locomotive, and a number of the shareholders have done their safety training in operating the locomotives, and it's quite extensive training, and so this is a real benefit to the community. They've—there's three grain-handling facilities located—been built and located along this rail line and quite an investment on each of these, and so this speaks to the entrepreneurship of Manitobans and Manitoba grain farmers and in the ability to sell their product.

So rail safety plays a role in all rail lines. It's not just the two major national railways that are hauling the long trains, but everywhere safety plays a role. And certainly we want to mention that on the tracks, on the line to Churchill they are doing a very good job at developing markets for the Churchill, and, again, in spite of the extensive agricultural knowledge of the NDP caucus, Churchill had one of

its largest grain handles last year from—and primarily due to another Manitoba institution. Richardson Pioneer shipped a large amount of the grain out of the Port of Churchill. So we're looking forward to more markets there and more products.

I know that they are looking at shipping oil out of Churchill. The provincial government has taken a stand on that and unfortunately they seem to be not willing to work with the federal government on this, and that's again speaks to their in—just inability to work with other levels of government, and so there's many, many things that are happening within the rail industry that continue to build enhanced safety measures. And, Mr. Speaker, this—there are many new safety measures also probably in large part to the Lac-Mégantic, although there have been other derailments; there always have been derailments.

Back in the—I believe it was about the mid-1990s, there was a derailment just east of Oakville, Manitoba, that did have some dangerous goods on it, and so that's, you know, some 20 years ago, derailments are not a new thing. I remember that very clearly because there was people that were evacuated out of the town of Oakville. I was—at the time, I was doing some business with a farm from just outside of Oakville and they had to move some cattle out because of the evacuation, and those cattle came to our place during that. Now, fortunately, in Oakville's case, there was no loss of life and no serious injuries to anyone, but the—there was a plan in place at that time to handle a derailment of dangerous goods because that is on the CN main line.

\* (11:40)

And so we've come a long ways in 20 years in understanding the inherent dangers of moving dangerous goods, but that is not restricted to rail. There's dangerous goods being moved on the roads every day in transport trucks. You know, there's dangerous goods within aircraft also. So we have to look at all these different modes of transportation and make sure that we're aware of what the products are that are being moved and that we do have the appropriate safety measures in place.

So, in regards to this resolution, just a bit of a—kind of a day late on this because many of the points made in this resolution have already been taken—been done, been carried through, and many more are still being looked at. This is not something where you can just put a mark down and say, well, okay, we've done all that we need to do now. This is an ongoing

issue and that as dangerous goods evolve, and as transportation evolves, we'll always have to keep looking at the regulations and make sure that the appropriate safety measures are in place.

So, with that, I commend the federal government for taking action following the Lac-Mégantic disaster and that we look forward to continuing to keep up the work on—in enhancing safety and moving dangerous goods and moving all goods, no matter whether it's by rail, truck or air. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank for allowing me a few words to say on behalf of this bill. I'd like to thank the Transportation Minister for going over a few facts and, of course, the member from St. Norbert for introducing this.

And I have a lot of similarities to the minister of St. Norbert. It's not my height or my long hair, but I grew up beside the railway in Flin Flon, and the train would go maybe 40 or 50 feet from our outdoor rink. And over the years there's never been an accident even though they shipped oil, steel, gas or just ore from the mine. But we were always lucky.

But I think what has happened at 'lac mendantic' is that we realized that 47 people died—47 people died and didn't even probably get up to hear the noise. They were just vaporized. And could it have been prevented? Yes, I think so. I think we have to have stronger regulations.

Our rail system is based on 150 years of history. All our major towns, of course, the railway went right through the middle of them. I mean, you look at Moose Jaw, Regina, Winnipeg, any town that's along there. This is something that we have to look at. And maybe it's time to look at maybe changing a few routes. Maybe it's time to look that we can take dangerous goods and maybe move around. Maybe it's time to look at just the whole transportation system.

And I think what this bill does is recognizes that—or this resolution is important because what it does is it lets communities voice their opinion on the seriousness of what could happen in their community. And I know in Flin Flon nothing's really happened over the years. But I'm sure in Quebec, they could've said the same thing. Nothing's happened.

But times have changed. We're shipping goods that are a lot more volatile. We're shipping goods—I

think oil has increased something like four times the amount of oil that is being shipped by rail. So, I mean, if you go by accidents, well, then, you have four times the chance of another rail disaster.

So we have to strengthen our laws and that in regards to that. We have to make sure that the rail system is safe so that we don't have another incident that happened in Quebec.

I know the Province is currently engaged in the federal review of railway insurance accident compensation regimes. I know in Quebec the railway didn't have enough money to cover the damage that obliterated the town. I think insurance has to be looked at now so that if there is an accident that public funds are not put out to—for the cleanup. Transport Canada has issued directives aimed at improving rail safety. There are now additional operating procedures so there—you know, you can't leave unattended trains on tracks, staffing trains carrying dangerous goods. I mean, we're trying to be more open and transparent, and I think that's a good thing.

I think Manitoba's position is we welcome the action from the federal government on increasing oversight of rail safety. That is important. Currently, rules and regulations made by the federal government doesn't allow provinces and municipalities to exert this interest. So everybody should be brought to the table. Let's talk about the fears of this. This means that the railways have been fairly free to take operational business decisions without appropriate balancing of social costs. I mean, right off the bat OmniTRAX wanted to ship oil to Churchill not looking at the environmental impact it would have if there was a derailment. I think we have to look at that. I want to see oil shipped through Churchill. I want to see Churchill being viable and be the port that it should be, but we have to look in on the environment first and foremost because if there is an accident up there we know that the damage that would be in the north would be a lot more that would be in the south because of the fragile environment. We know that.

And so we have to make sure that the railway that goes from The Pas to the Churchill is one of the better rail lines. We have to make sure that we have in place emergency stations so that if there is a derailment we can act quickly. So these are things that we have to look at. Let's not just get on our horse and start shipping oil without having reviews and concerns of the communities along the way.

Railways have allowed the use of longer, heavier trains and have increased the number of crude oil cars per train. Let's look at that. Maybe that's not a good thing. You know, in—the member from St. Norbert, he was saying that the cars that went off were not dangerous goods, but the one car just before the one that went off was oil. So you know what? We should be looking at that. We should rearrange the cars so that maybe it'd be less chance of the dangerous goods derailing.

On the other side of the House we support the establishment of a formal process for a community and provincial say in the federal government of regulations. Manitoba has long advocated for a legislative and program approach to better balance the issue of railway operations. This government supports amending the recent federal requirements on railway. So this is all that we're trying to work for, and I think the member from St. Norbert has eloquently put that. You know what? It wasn't it—or it wasn't—or it isn't an issue until something happens. And that opened the eyes not only of the member from St. Norbert, but it opened the eyes of his neighbours that were along the tracks that said, you know what? This could've been a lot more dangerous than it was. And so we have to recognize that.

This is all important and—like, I have to say, we have to recognize that we have to work together. CN, CP, we have to work together on this because the shipping of things have—*[interjection]*—oil and that has to go.

But, anyway, I like to just say on behalf of the voice of the North, I just wanted to put that on record. Thank you.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** On the resolution brought forward by the member from St. Norbert, it's interesting that, as we know, next week will be transport safety week from May the 28th 'til *[interjection]*—April 28th to May 4th. And whenever we look at what's happening at the federal level—and I know we on this side of the House take great pride in ensuring that we do everything we can to work with our federal counterparts. In fact, what they're proposing is \$9.2 million for improvements at over 600 railway crossings across the country. And we know that a number of those derailments that was—been talked about by members opposite and, of course, we know how serious that is and we want to make sure that whatever we have to do to work in order to make sure that those actually do, in fact, take part.

\* (11:50)

And we know that there's possibly 4,000 that are employed by the rail industry. In fact, I know a number of them—my friends that live in my area, my community, that commute back and forth to either CN or CP, how much pride they take in their work and how much they take in order to make sure that safety is paramount at whatever they do. In fact, one of my constituents is a welder that lives in my area that works on trains and makes sure that those standards are held to the highest standard. And they have weekly meetings, and I know how serious they take those responsibilities and whatever they have to do to ensure that the safety is, in fact, in place.

And I know the member from St. Norbert talked about certain things that happened. In fact, I know recommendations that came as a result of, you know, Quebec's tragedy—one of the recommendations were that the federal government actually put in place was enhanced safety standards for tank cars used to transport flammable goods. The other one was that the transportation of dangerous goods requires route planning and analysis. And the last one: that emergency response plans be in place for any trains carrying out large quantities of liquid hydrocarbons such as oil, gas, diesel or airplane fuel.

Well, what we've seen here is a lack of research by the government and by the member from St. Norbert because these things are so important that the federal government sat down, listened, and I know from meeting with some of my municipalities around the province—and I can tell you that they take this very serious as well.

And I know that the Transportation Safety Board, some of their recommendations were very clear about what they wanted to see happen next. And, of course, part of that says is that the volumes of goods informed significant changes to the shipping level. In fact, what happened, tank cars must be operated by two persons. No trains carrying hazardous goods will be left unattended on a main track. Locomotive cabs must be secured against unauthorized entry or directional controls must be removed from unattended trains.

Another one: Special instructions on hand brakes for locomotives attached to one or more cars who are left unattended for over an hour. Again, another one: Special instructions for automatic or independent brakes for one attached locomotive or more which is left unattended for less than one hour. And lastly but

not least, rail companies must carry additional insurance so that they can be held accountable.

And I know that in my area, Prairie Dog Central is a recreational train that comes out to communities that actually go up to Grosse Isle, and they store a lot of trains there. In fact, part of the track that has been removed, they still store train cars on—along Highway 7. And we had an incident there where one of the tanks that was recommended for meltdown over at Selkirk at Mandan actually had a fire. It still had some chemical in it. And we want to make sure that all those safeties are in place.

Of course, the municipalities are responsible for fighting the fires on this, as well, and they need to be aware. And that's why the placards are so important that we make sure that whatever is in there is, in fact, products that we're familiar with, and how we are able to handle and work with those chemicals if they have not been handled in a way that would not be safe or whether it be a firefighter or any other incident that might come about as a result of those stored or those that are running up and down the track.

And I know the member from Flin Flon was talking about oil going out of the North, and we know that more and more exploration is being taken here in the province of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and North Dakota, of course, has the oil boom, and we know that that oil cannot all run up and down the highway. And we've seen that the United States has put a block on our pipeline that we wanted to send south to those folks in the United States that want and need our oil, and we know that the other option, of course, is by rail.

And we need to ensure—we need to ensure—that those checks and balances are in place because I think that the future will come. We may not see it, but the next generation might, where we see more and more oil go through Churchill. It's the most direct route to a number of those countries. And we can tell you for sure, Mr. Speaker, that as we move forward into the next generations, that we have to make sure—we have to make sure, that those facts are, in fact, implemented and made sure that safety is the upmost and paramount whenever we're looking at any of these.

So I know that the Minister of MIT had a little bit of a rant here again. He's very good at his rants and puts a lot of things on the record that he probably would not want to see in times coming. But we do want to make sure that whenever we do talk about

this stuff, we actually do put information on the record that is, in fact, what really is happening at the federal level. And I do want to make sure that whenever we're talking about emergency responses, that the task force and the transport safety board does have the tools they need. And I think that whenever we're looking at these, that we have the input, also, of those that are best equipped in order to handle this.

So we know that on this side of the House that we're more than happy to see that this resolution has the debate that's necessary, has the tools that are necessary in order to make good legislation. And we want to make sure that the federal government's there at the table to make sure it happens. And they've obviously done this, and with the safety week next week of April the 28th to May 4th, national celebration, and, of course, they're going to make sure that awareness and safety around railway operations and highlighting, of course, the government's commitment to make railway safety more aware, and of what we can do as citizens across this great nation in order to do that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there any further debate on the resolution?

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question before the House is the resolution on Rail Safety in Manitoba.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the resolution? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Gaudreau:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we can canvass the House to see if this resolution passes unanimously.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to let the record show that this resolution has passed unanimously? *[Agreed]*

Now, what's the will of the House? Is it the pleasure of the House to call it—the honourable member for Selkirk.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** I believe, Mr. Speaker, if you were to canvass the House, you'd discover a willingness to call it 12 o'clock.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to call it 12 noon? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 12 noon, this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m. this afternoon.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, April 29, 2014**

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The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings  
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

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