

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

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

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The Honourable Daryl Reid  
Speaker*

**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	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne, Hon.	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Greg, Hon.	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	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	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
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Thomas, Hon.	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie, Hon.	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Wednesday, June 24, 2015**

*The House met at 1:30 p.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 afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**Mr. Speaker:** Introduction of bills?

**PETITIONS**

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing none, we'll move on to petitions.

**Rights of Manitoba Children**

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The provincial government should uphold the rights of children set forth by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by Canada over 20 years ago, to better protect and promote children and their rights, to ensure the voices of children are heard.

Instead, many children in Manitoba, especially those in the child-welfare system, reveal they sometimes feel they have no say in what happens to them.

Under this provincial government, Manitoba's children and youth are falling behind on several indicators of well-being and in areas that would prepare them for better outcomes in life.

This year, the provincial government's education system was ranked last of all Canadian provinces in science, reading and math.

Under this provincial government's education—sorry. Under this provincial government, Manitoba also has the second highest percentage of children

using food banks of all Canadian provinces and the highest child poverty rate.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the provincial government and the Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities to ensure that the rights of all Manitoba children are respected and that the opinions of children are taken into consideration when decisions that affect them are made.

We urge the provincial government and the Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities to correct the tragic systemic flaws that have failed Manitoba children in the recent past.

This petition is signed by K. Beaulieu, S. Becenko, T. Martindale and many other fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** In keeping with our rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to have been received by the House.

**Provincial Trunk Highway 206 and Cedar Avenue in Oakbank—Pedestrian Safety**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Every day, hundreds of Manitoba children walk to school in Oakbank and must cross PTH 206 at the intersection with Cedar Avenue.

(2) There have been many dangerous incidents where drivers use the right shoulder to pass vehicles that have stopped at the traffic light waiting to turn left at this intersection.

(3) Law enforcement officials have identified this intersection as a hot spot of concern for the safety of schoolchildren, drivers and emergency responders.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge that the provincial government improve the safety at the pedestrian corridor at the intersection of PTH 206 and Cedar Avenue

in Oakbank by considering such steps as highlighting pavement markings to better indicate the location of the shoulders and crosswalk, as well as installing a lighted crosswalk structure.

This is signed by C. Punzalan, J. Nelin, J. Lising and many, many other fine Manitobans.

#### **Beausejour District Hospital—Weekend and Holiday Physician Availability**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Beausejour District Hospital is a 30-bed, acute-care facility that serves the communities of Beausejour and Brokenhead.

(2) The hospital and the primary-care centre have had no doctor available on weekends and holidays for many months, jeopardizing the health and livelihoods of those in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority region.

(3) During the 2011 election, the provincial government promised to provide every Manitoban with access to a family doctor by 2015.

(4) This promise is far from being realized, and Manitobans are witnessing many emergency rooms limiting services or closing temporarily, with the majority of these reductions taking place in rural Manitoba.

(5) According to the Health Council of Canada, only 25 per cent of doctors in Manitoba reported that their patients had access to care on evenings and weekends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government and the Minister of Health to ensure that the Beausejour District Hospital and primary-care centre have a primary-care physician available on weekends and holidays to better provide area residents with this essential service.

This petition is signed by S. Kelly, N. Kirks, E. Donahen and many, many more fine Manitobans.

#### **Province-Wide Long-Term Care—Review Need and Increase Spaces**

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And this is the background to this petition:

(1) There are currently 125 licensed personal-care homes, PCHs, across Manitoba, consisting of less than 10,000 beds.

(2) All trends point to an increasingly aging population who will require additional personal-care-home facilities.

(3) By some estimates, Manitoba will require an increase of more than 5,100 personal-care-home beds by 2036.

(4) The number of Manitobans with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia-related illness who will require personal-care-home services are steadily increasing and are threatening to double within the current generation.

(5) The last personal-care-home review in many areas, including the Swan River Valley area currently under the administration of the Prairie Mountain regional health authority, was conducted in 2008.

(6) Average occupancy rates for personal-care homes across the province are exceeding 97 per cent, with some regions, such as the Swan River Valley, witnessing 100 per cent vacancy rates.

(7) The high occupancy rates are creating the conditions where many individuals requiring long-term care are being displaced far away from their families and their home communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

(1) To urge the provincial government to consider immediately enacting a province-wide review of the long-term-care needs of residents in Manitoba.

And (2) to urge the provincial government to recognize the stresses placed upon the health-care system by the current and continuous aging population and consider increasing the availability of long-term-care spaces, PCH beds, in communities across the province.

\* (13:40)

And this petition is signed by M.P. Foster Tamlyn, J. Herbal, C. Mackie and many, many more fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial statements—oh.

### **TABLING OF REPORTS**

**Mr. Speaker:** In compliance with section 4 of the Members' Salaries, Allowances and Retirement Plans Disclosure Regulation, I am pleased to table a revised report of amounts claimed and paid for members for the 2014-2015 fiscal year that—to include the former member for Arthur-Virden.

Any further tabling?

### **Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing none, I have—I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public—or to the loge to my left where we have with us this afternoon Mr. David Newman, the former member for Riel.

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

And also, seated in the public gallery this afternoon we have with us Mr. Riley Friesen, who is the nephew of the member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen).

On behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

#### **Infrastructure and Transportation Minister Request for Resignation**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the tale of the Tiger Dam pals continues.

We have learned that over \$8 million of contracts was awarded by the minister—the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), as minister, to his good friend Peter Ginakes. And we have also learned that coinciding donations were made either to the member for Thompson or to his party in the amounts of \$13,000. What's striking about the fact of these, both these generous gifts to one another, is the coincidental nature of them, Mr. Speaker, that they happened at the same time, in the same years, in fact.

So we all understand here that voluntary donations are a key part of sustaining political organizations and that earning those donations is

important. But this has all the appearances of some type of you-scratch-my-back-I'll-scratch-your-back scheme to reward NDP donors who then reward the NDP as a result.

So I ask the Premier today to discontinue this condoning, in fact, encouragement, of this ongoing display of bad ethics and to immediately seek the resignation of his minister.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the members of the Legislature that this is the political party, this is the government, that banned corporate and union donations in Manitoba. And the members opposite were opposed to that. They wanted to continue the practice of corporate donations going directly to candidates. We've opposed that. We brought in a law to prevent that from happening. We have public disclosure of any donations and we have a cap on any donations. That is a much stronger legislative provision to protect the public interest than members opposite were ever willing to support.

If the member opposite has—wants to convert on the road to Damascus right now, Mr. Speaker, let him stand and say that he supports the banning of corporate and union donations in Manitoba.

#### **Floodfighting Equipment Contract Tendering Process**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I support the elimination of kickback schemes that benefit any political party, and I see this as one.

It's important to earn friends, Mr. Speaker. Real friends are not purchased. Buying friends with taxpayers' money, really, should be beneath any political organization.

But how much of a friend, really? Turns out the only time that Mr. Ginakes was really a friend to the minister, the member for Thompson, was when the minister was a friend to Mr. Ginakes as well. When a contract went out, a donation came back in. When a contract didn't go out, a donation didn't come in. No contract, no donation; contract, donation. The relationship is clear in the pattern of so-called giving.

Now, doesn't this explain at least in part why the Premier pushed so hard for so long to get the \$5-million untendered contract to Mr. Ginakes approved, because what's good for Mr. Ginakes is obviously also good for the NDP?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, so much false information in one [*inaudible*] question, it's quite remarkable.

The reality is there was no contract put out for Tiger Dam 'dumes'—Tiger Dam tubes for the Interlake regional tribal council unless there was—it was done by a proper tender. And that's the process that was put in place. And that process was put in place right after the Cabinet discussion.

And the Ombudsman looked into that and decided to discontinue their investigation. They can continue to look at it again if they wish. We're completely comfortable with that, and we'll provide them all of the information they require.

The member opposite talks about doing things properly. He was part of a government that involved themselves in vote rigging, where there were donations to third party candidates that were prompted to split the vote to allow more Conservatives to get elected in the Legislature. That was what he supported when he was in government. He has never taken any responsibility for that. He has never apologized for that. He's never said that that was an inappropriate practice; that is the standard he has set.

If he believes there's anything untoward in the relationship that's going on here, I urge him to report it to Elections Manitoba immediately—immediately.

**Mr. Pallister:** This, Jets ticket denials, the outright misinformation around the PST hike and his intention to do it when he, in fact, denied he would, that's a fabulous record of footprints of a person who doesn't understand integrity.

The Auditor General gave a report last year, which the members opposite should read, and it spoke of an epidemic of untendered contracts that do not provide value to the taxpayer.

Now we have a cozy arrangement: Mr. Ginakes gets paid, the NDP get paid too. A friend in need is a friend indeed, Mr. Speaker, and the NDP needs a lot of friends right now. Last year their party lost more than \$100,000 despite the fact that they took a \$200,000 subsidy they did nothing for from Manitoba taxpayers. They need money, so I have to ask: How many more of these nudge-and-wink payments is the minister wanting to receive?

Will the Premier admit today that the reason for the \$5-million untendered contract was partly to benefit himself and his party?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, there has been no contract awarded. He's speaking about something that didn't happen. Any contract that will be awarded will be done having gone through a completely impartial public tendering process; that is what the reality is.

The members opposite followed a different practice. Mr. Speaker, they organized donations to do vote splitting and vote rigging, one of the largest scandals, which was an affront to democracy in Manitoba, an affront to democracy everywhere. The member opposite was a part of the government at that time. He said nothing about it. He did nothing to stop it. He never took responsibility for it, never apologized for it, has been completely silent on it.

And the political party he represents is in favour of corporate and union donations being made in Manitoba. They have never come out against that. Mr. Speaker, that is their approach.

Our approach is to ban corporate and union donations. All donations have to be individual. They have to be private. They have to be put on the public record and reported and they are capped at \$3,000.

I invite the members to meet that standard of public accountability in Manitoba right now.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

### **Tendering Practices Government Record**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Well, the Premier ran for re-election on a promise not to raise the PST, and then \$300 million later decided he would. That he took—and in the process took away the right of Manitobans to vote. So speaking about an affront to democracy coming from him is pretty ironic.

Now, it's a sad spectacle we've had to endure and Manitobans have had to endure and his colleagues have had to endure over the last two weeks. He's accused of trying to push a contract forward. Many of his colleagues are accusing him of doing the same thing, and he's using as a defence today the incompetence defence. He's saying not that he didn't do it, but that he failed to do it.

Now, a safecracker goes before a judge and says, I couldn't quite get the combination, set me free. Or an arsonist goes in front of a judge and says, I couldn't quite get that fire lit, I'm not guilty. Or a burglar says, I couldn't get past the guards so I didn't

get to steal the thing I intended to. The issue here isn't whether he succeeded or not; the issue he fails to address is whether he tried or not.

Now, will he admit today that he is guilty and he continues to be guilty of lacking the integrity to admit that he attempted and, therefore, he's guilty in the attempt?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I directed that we proceed by the way of a public tender, which is exactly what transpired.

Only the member opposite denies responsibility for vote rigging in Manitoba, for believing in corporate and union donations to be the foundation of democracy. That may be very popular in the United States, Mr. Speaker, under the Republican approach. In Manitoba we banned corporate and union donations. The members opposite have never come into the modern era and accepted that that's the standard that we should follow in Manitoba. We've made all of those donations publicly on the record. We've put caps on those donations. That is a higher level of accountability and transparency members—than members opposite have ever supported.

If the member has a specific complaint and he believes that something is untoward, I urge him to put it towards Elections Manitoba immediately and make a complaint and ask them to investigate it. That's what Elections Manitoba is for. They have the ability to put a commissioner in place to investigate this matter.

\* (13:50)

I urge him to make a complaint instead of posturing in the Legislature.

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, the Premier and his colleagues take a million plus from Manitobans in an unearned subsidy, Mr. Speaker, and then he speaks about democracy. That's not a work ethic; that's a lack of a work ethic. That's a demonstration of a willingness to be subsidized for doing nothing except being lazy.

Now, the Premier didn't address the question, and the question was: Did he attempt—and he did attempt, it's alleged by his own colleagues, for several months—to push through a contract which was untendered?

The rebel five and others bolted because they said they couldn't serve this Premier with integrity. Those who stayed appear to be quite willing to serve without it. So Manitobans are left with a dysfunctional group of people, a replacement

Cabinet where the MLAs who stood up to the Premier are out and those who are unwilling or unable or bend simply to his low standard of ethics are in.

Now, those who left at least had some self-respect. But they certainly do not respect the ethics of their leader.

Will I have him admit today, Mr. Speaker—and I hope he does—that his ethics are far removed from the ethics that Manitobans aspire to?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, we are prepared, obviously, to be accountable for any policy decision we make for Manitobans and show them the results of the decisions we make. That's why we seek public office, to serve the public interest.

What is the standard of the Leader of the Opposition? Tory donations from MTS sale brokers, brokers that benefited off the sale of the Manitoba Telephone System: CIBC Wood Gundy securities, a broker for the sale of MTS shares, \$25,000 worth of donations between 1994 and 2000; Midland Walwyn Capital, \$71,000 donations between 1990 and 1997; Nesbitt Burns, \$50,443 of donations between 1995 and 1999, exactly coincident with when the telephone system was sold; Wellington West Capital, \$41,871 of donations; Bieber Securities, two—\$12,950 donations.

We banned corporate, union donations in Manitoba; members opposite have refused to do it. That's their standard: broker donations who benefited from the privatization of MTS.

**Mr. Pallister:** I know the Premier can't run on his record, so he runs away from it. I encourage him to get into this millennium, Mr. Speaker. I encourage him to answer the questions I've asked.

I've asked him why he tried to force through an untendered \$5-million contract to a friend of his party. He refuses to answer. He repeatedly refuses to answer, and this is the very ethical dilemma that his own colleagues in Treasury Board and elsewhere have confronted. They've confronted it by departing from his caucus. How low can he go?

Last week it was reported in the Winnipeg Free Press NDP had a team meeting. They had a team meeting, and out in the hall, staff could hear voices screaming at one another, members of the Legislative Assembly shouting accusations at one another.

Now, what are they fighting about? They're not fighting about who lied; they're fighting about who told the truth. They're fighting about leaks from their own caucus, from people who have some self-respect and who care about honest tendering processes and ethics in today's government in today's Manitoba.

Will the Premier finally confront the reality of his lack of leadership on this issue and admit that his failure of ethics is a failure for his whole organization?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, what we've just seen from the Leader of the Opposition is another classic example of what he practises every day in this Legislature: the double standard—the double standard. It's okay to have \$201,514 from five different brokers who sold MTS shares. That's fine to have those corporate donations: never renounced the idea that that's okay, never said that that should be banned and made illegal in Manitoba, even though we've done it.

These—lo these many years later, he still clings to the old practices, Mr. Speaker. That's a double standard, and it reveals his hidden agenda. The fact that he's not prepared to do that raises the question: What would he do if he was back in government? He would return to those old ways. We know he would start by privatizing the daycare system. Then he would move on to privatizing the social services system. And then, when he says he will accept corporate donations again, what will happen? Hidden agenda, corporate benefits, the people of Manitoba will be worse off. That's the approach of the Leader of the Opposition.

#### **Floodfighting Equipment Authorization of Purchase**

**Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West):** I don't know why the Premier (Mr. Selinger) is so angry. I mean, just calm down.

Mr. Speaker, there have been many questions in this House about the Tiger Dams or floodfighting equipment, but few answers. Whistle-blowers have released much information in this case.

Can the Minister responsible for Infrastructure and Transportation clarify for us today: Did he commit the Province to purchase Tiger Dams or floodfighting equipment for Peguis First Nation or the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council in August or September 2014, either verbally or in writing?

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures):** Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to serve in this Legislature for many years, and I want to say that, certainly, in any role I've ever served in, I fully expect to be accountable for my actions. I fully expect to be accountable for any actions I'm involved with, directly or indirectly.

But I want to put on the record, to the Leader of the Opposition, that when he stands in his place and uses a phrase like kickback, you know what? I'll deal with that in this House. I will deal with that if he dares to make that comment outside in—the House.

But I want to talk for a moment about the Ginakes family, Jimmy Ginakes, who came to this country as an immigrant and built, from nothing, a business, Mr. Speaker, and Peter Ginakes, who's been a part of this business community for a long period of time, well known, well respected in this business community, and I want to stress, by the way, because I was even asked whether I was related by marriage to the Ginakes family—

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

**Mr. Helwer:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that in a letter received September 3rd, 2014, to Chief Glenn Hudson, the minister for MIT refers to an August 5th, 2014, letter and invoice for the purchase of floodfighting equipment and commits EMO to provide financial support towards the purchase of floodfighting inventory. This letter is signed by the minister on MIT letterhead.

Mr. Speaker, obviously the money was on the table from the Province priority—prior to Treasury Board approval. The Deputy Premier knew. Did the Premier also know of this commitment made by the minister for MIT?

**Mr. Ashton:** I—as I said, Mr. Speaker, I was even asked if my wife was related to Peter Ginakes, and I want to put on the record that not—her extended family's in the Greek community, but not every Greek is related to every Greek.

And I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that he can take me on any day, but I think he did a disservice to the Ginakes family and to the many people in the business community who do nothing more than participate in the political process.

I say to the Leader of the Opposition—who, by the way, if he wants to talk about breach of ethics, may want to follow the advice of another PC,



Jim Prentice, and look in the mirror—he owes an apology not only to Peter Ginakes but to the many people in the business community who get involved in the political process. Apologize.

**Mr. Helwer:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP have misled Manitobans yet again.

I further understand that another letter, dated September 22nd, 2014, copied to the Deputy Premier and minister for MIT from the IRTC, that contains a motion to support the purchase of flood equipment with the funds committed from the Province for IRTC and have it stored at Peguis until the satellite centres are in place.

Mr. Speaker, clearly the minister broke all the rules in this purchase. The Deputy Premier knew. Did the Premier (Mr. Selinger) also know and approve of this purchase?

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear that we put on the record that as of September 2nd, it was made very clear to the Interlake regional tribal council that the equipment was going to be provincially owned. It would have to go through our own provincial procurement processes. In fact, that's exactly what happened.

And that's what I find particularly offensive, Mr. Speaker, is that the Leader of the Opposition would drag, you know, a family in. If he wants to criticize me, if the critic does, that's fair ball in this business, but we followed the processes and, in fact, we went to tender. No tender has been awarded.

In fact, the only purchase of equipment took through—took place through the federal procurement process. I notice the Leader of the Opposition didn't put that on the record.

#### **City of Winnipeg Sewage Treatment Plant Costs**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, the City of Winnipeg's finance committee accepted a status update report as evidence at its meeting earlier this year regarding the North End sewage treatment plant, and the status update outlined \$22 million in added costs above the original budget and cited four reasons for these cost overruns. The first reason for the cost overruns was, and I quote, an increase in the Manitoba retail sales tax rate from 7 to 8 per cent, and the second reason cited was the NDP expansion of the PST to include certain engineering design services.

\* (14:00)

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are tired of paying more and getting less from this NDP government.

Will the minister responsible for the City of Winnipeg indicate for Manitobans: Who will end up footing the bill for these cost overruns?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Municipal Government):** Well, Mr. Speaker, we are, in fact, working with the City of Winnipeg very diligently on a wide range of infrastructure projects. There's hundreds of millions of dollars being invested in the city of Winnipeg today. We've got a very good working partnership with the City.

I would invite the member to drive down Pembina Highway and see the tremendous investment that's being made in the roadways on Pembina. I would invite the member to virtually drive around any neighbourhood in the city of Winnipeg and see the investment that is being made in partnership with the City of Winnipeg to build this community.

We have aspirations to see Winnipeg grow to a million people in the years to come, Mr. Speaker, and the Province of Manitoba, our government, and the City of Winnipeg is working on all cylinders to make sure that we're building a world-class city here.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, we're talking about \$22 million in cost overruns as a result of this NDP government's policies.

Not only did the status update report indicate that cost overruns for this project were result of the PST hike and expansion, but the third reason given was rising hydro costs. These are all a direct result of NDP waste and mismanagement.

Will the minister indicate today: Who will end up footing the bill for these cost overruns?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we're proud, very proud on this side of the House. In fact, Manitoba, generally speaking, is very proud to have the most generous municipal grant program for municipalities in the country. Over \$300 million is going towards the City of Winnipeg in projects in the city of Winnipeg as we speak here in the House today.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we're building multi-year projects, multi-year waste water treatment projects—in fact, I'll come back to the floodway, a billion-dollar project that members opposite opposed day in and day out in this Legislature each and every day and each and every year, putting the city of Winnipeg at risk. They voted

against the floodway, a billion dollars of an investment for flood renewal in this city.

They vote against the grants that go to the City of Winnipeg. They're opposed to us building roads. Mr. Speaker, members opposite, really, their agenda is to shut down—

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

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, Mr. Speaker, \$22 million in cost overruns is jeopardizing this project, and that's happening under this NDP's watch.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth reason given for the cost overruns cited—the cited in the report was due to compliance costs associated with Public-Private Partnerships Transparency and Accountability Act which was introduced by this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister just admit that Manitobans will be left to foot the bill as a result of their ill-conceived tax-and-spend policies?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Well, Mr. Speaker, what I will say, that Manitobans, and Winnipeggers in particular, would be catastrophically impacted by the half a billion dollars' worth of cuts that the member for Whyte Ridge—or Fort Whyte proposes in his budget.

Mr. Speaker, not only that, we talked about the privatization of daycare and the privatization of health care—privatization of home care that the member, when he was here last time around, made a career out of attaining.

Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to building the province of Manitoba in partnership with the City of Winnipeg, with the federal government, with municipalities across the province.

Members opposite, led by the leader from Portage, wants to shut down investment in this province.

### **Manitoba Hydro Future Rate Increases**

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, the member from Brandon East probably should have just took the question as notice because, obviously, he didn't have the answer.

Mr. Speaker, hydro low rates are becoming a thing of the past. When the PUB grants the corporation its requested rate hike, rates will have increased by almost 20 per cent in just three years.

Will the minister commit today to stopping further hydro rate increases on the backs of hard-working Manitobans?

**Hon. James Allum (Acting Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro):** I'm always amused when the member gets up to talk about hydro rates, because he never concedes that Manitoba has among the lowest hydro rates in the country. And then, Mr. Speaker, when you put that together with home heating and you put that together with car insurance along with our lowest bundle of—along with our low hydro rates, then we have the lowest bundle of utility rates in the country as well.

Mr. Speaker, this is Manitoba's affordability advantage. The member opposite wants to make it Manitoba's affordability disadvantage.

**Mr. Eichler:** I can see why the member opposite is upset about this, because he's not even including the debt in his calculations on the backs of hard-working Manitobans.

The reality of this NDP plan has hampered the fact that Hydro is building capacity years before it's required and has no customers for its excess power. Mr. Speaker, power is being sold for pennies on the dollar, and it's Manitobans who'll have to foot the bill for all the Manitobans' mismanagement on behalf of this government.

Will the minister commit to all Manitobans, the real owners of Manitoba Hydro, that the rates will not be increased on the backs of Manitobans?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Mr. Speaker, what the member doesn't understand is that exports keep rates low; that's the point.

But more than that, Mr. Speaker, when we invest in hydro, we invest in jobs for Manitobans. Fully—this is an important point to point out—nearly one in five Hydro employees is Aboriginal right now, and 45 per cent of Hydro employees in northern Manitoba are also Aboriginal.

Investment in hydro keeps rates low. It ensures a clean, reliable source of energy for generations to come, and it employs Manitobans. Only the member opposite would be opposed to that.

**Mr. Eichler:** If they call a 20 per cent rate increase in the last three years low, guess what? They got a whole lot more coming their way, Mr. Speaker, a whole lot more.

On June 4th, Manitoba concerned with Manitoba's risky hydro plan described the situation this way, and I quote: The Province and governing body is prepared to sell us down the river without the slightest hint of the foresight into all the 'ramifications' of this costly endeavour, end quote.

So I ask the minister again: Will they commit to no more rate increases on the backs of the real owners of Manitoba Hydro, the people of Manitoba, yes or no?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the question for the member opposite is: Will he commit today to not privatizing Hydro if they ever get their hands on the wheels of government?

Already they've said they're going to privatize child care. Already they've said they're going to privatize social investment. Already, in the last provincial election, they went door to door and said that they were going to privatize MPI.

Mr. Speaker, we invest in Crown corporations for the people of Manitoba. We govern on behalf of all the people of Manitoba all the time.

#### **Student Financial Aid System Timeline and Costs**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, Snickers bar to aisle 1, please.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government announced the student financial aid system in 2007 was to come online in June of 2011. That system cost \$22 million-plus and this government broke its promise to Manitoba students and abandoned that very expensive promise.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that Manitobans are paying more and getting less, in fact, nothing at all, from this government?

**Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the student aid program, if the member opposite were to apply for a student loan today or for student aid, he would be able to go online and get the very kind of assistance he needs, as would every other single student in Manitoba.

But I need to remind him, Mr. Speaker, that in the last budget we committed to removing interest fees from student loans, and what did he do? He voted against it.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Once again, Mr. Speaker, this NDP government continues to put false facts on the record.

This NDP government promised a new online student financial aid system that would serve all Manitoba students. They spent \$22 million on it and then trashed it. Manitobans are not going to be fooled again. NDP promise, then they won't deliver it.

How much will Manitoba taxpayers lose this time around? What insurances—what assurances does this minister have—or give to hard-working Manitobans that they will follow through this time?

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as the member well knows, and we've talked about this before, phase 1 of that project was completed a few years ago. Phase 2 is currently being re-evaluated to make sure that there's a full benefit for the students of Manitoba.

\* (14:10)

But in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we have invested in our post-secondary education system that is second to none to any other government in Canada. Not only that, we have the lowest tuition rates in Canada. And then after students finish, they can get a tuition rebate as well in order to ensure that they're in a solid financial position when they move on to—into the job market.

Mr. Speaker, on every one of those items I've just mentioned, the member opposite has voted against it.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Just honesty, Mr. Speaker, that's all we're asking on this side of the House. We are not going to take any lessons from this minister. Manitobans are tired of NDP broken promises and they're wanting a change for the better.

Today, again, they are promising an operational online system for December—in December, of what year? We've been down this road before: NDP promise, well over budget, and don't deliver.

How can Manitobans trust this NDP government?

**Mr. Allum:** I'm hard to understand what the member's asking, because on this side of the House just yesterday we stood with the Canadian Federation of Students to announce a new post-secondary education strategy that will serve Manitoba students well into the future. In—within that plan, Mr. Speaker, we're looking to create a

seamless post-secondary education system for Manitobans, one where there are no wrong doors, one where there are no dead ends, where students have multiple pathways to student success so that they can get-go on and get a good job.

On this side of the House we invest in post-secondary education. Contrast that with the Leader of the Opposition's plan to cut \$500 million from the budget. That's not going to help any student anywhere.

### **Access to Information Requests Costs and Response Wait Times**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, from the day that today's NDP took office there have been problems with accountability: Hydra House, Crocus, Aiyawin Corporation and, of course, now the Tiger Dam situation. And, of course, many broken promises: disregarded climate change commitments, one example.

The credibility of this government is in shreds, and to protect it, today's NDP government is now delaying on many access to information requests.

Why is the government stalling in providing access to public information requested by Manitobans?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** My understanding is that we have a record number of freedom of information requests, and we comply with the overwhelming majority of them are complied with within the benchmark time frames.

We have strengthened freedom of information legislation in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, making information that was sometimes kept for—in private for up to 25 years, we've reduced it down to 15 years in the case of access to Cabinet documents. We've opened up the process.

We will make information available on a timely basis according to the request they received. And our freedom of information officers follow the rules rigorously and do the job of getting information out to people as requested.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, at least four departments have made their deputy ministers their access and privacy officers.

Manitobans seeking their overdue responses to information requests are being told it is sitting on a deputy minister's desk awaiting a signature, sometimes for several weeks. Surely, Mr. Speaker,

there's a more efficient way to provide timely access to information than to assign one of the busiest people in a department, the deputy minister, as the access and privacy officer.

Why has the government switched from having a dedicated individual, who can provide information in a timely manner, to having a very busy deputy minister delaying access to information?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, we have taken several measures to improve transparency and make information available to Manitoba. I've already mentioned the Elections Manitoba rules today with respect to donations.

In 2000, we extended the freedom of information legislation to public bodies, including municipal governments, school divisions, universities and health regions. The Conservative government refused to allow any freedom of information request to schools, to regional health authorities, to municipalities and universities. They are now all subject to freedom of information legislation in Manitoba, a major expansion of the jurisdiction for freedom of information.

We were the first to bring in whistle-blower protection in Manitoba, and we have modernized that legislation after five years. First to bring it in, first to update it. All the members have to do is pass it and it'll be strongest legislation in the country.

We brought in the office of the lobbyist registry to make sure it's an independent office and there's disclosure of lobbying, and I have further information to convey in the next question.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, a request for access to information about the sale of the Property Registry to Teranet was responded by with a quote for \$975 because there was so much information to find. But after a year of waiting, annual reports and copies of newspaper clippings—which are all publicly available—were the only thing that has been received to date. There is something very wrong with a system in which the government charges the taxpayer a fortune and takes over a year to provide publicly available documents.

When will today's NDP government acknowledge their accountability to Manitobans and stop hiding information in this way?

**Mr. Selinger:** In 2014, government received 2,260 requests for access to information, 64 per cent of them from political parties. In the first quarter

of 2015, there were a total of 640 freedom of information requests; 90 per cent of them came from political parties.

Mr. Speaker, we will try to honour all of these requests as long as they fall within the guidelines. This is adjudicated by civil servants that are trained in the skills of handling the freedom of information legislation.

If the member has a very specific request that he feels has been mistreated and not treated with properly, he can take that to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will review that and bring back a ruling and a set of recommendations.

### **Hometown Manitoba Program Grant Projects**

**Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon):** Mr. Speaker, we as Manitobans all take great pride in our hometowns. Our non-profit community organizations, small businesses and co-operatives are the lifeblood of the many vibrant small communities in rural and northern Manitoba.

Can the Minister of Agriculture inform the House about the Hometown Manitoba grant program and how it enhances our communities' main streets, green spaces and community projects?

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development):** I'd like to thank the member from Flin Flon for the question.

As many as 101 communities we'll be enhancing the main street, public areas and support for the \$225,000 from the Hometown Manitoba grant program this year. Since the program was launched in 2004, the government of Manitoba has invested over \$4 million in support of two–2,339 projects.

I'd like to thank all the organizations, the volunteers, who got involved in the enhancement of these projects and that provide such great pride for our communities throughout the province of Manitoba.

Thank you.

### **Floodfighting Equipment Contract Tendering Process**

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, the minister for MIT has proven time and time again that he would rather make decisions for personal and political gain rather than do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, how can this minister attempt to ram through a \$5-million untendered contract to help his political donors, yet drag his feet for four years assisting 2,000 displaced residents of Lake St. Martin First Nation?

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd put on the record that, as we've explained numerous times last year, the key issue we're dealing with in July was actually operating the emergency outlet to benefit the Lake St. Martin communities. We have operated the outlet.

There was a protest, Mr. Speaker, and I draw people's attention to a July the 11th article in the Free Press where it was stated very clearly by the protesters, supported by the grand chief of AMC, supported by the Interlake regional tribal council and all the chiefs in the area, and by fishers, that there were two major concerns. One was in terms of flood mitigation—in fact, the headline was, First Nations seek flood mitigation—and the second was in terms of fisheries. That's why we met with them, and on July 25th came to an agreement. Indeed, we've delivered on the fisheries side.

We did eventually put a tender out, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the equipment, which has been—which has not been issued. So there are no other issues here than working for the people who are flood-affected.

**Mr. Graydon:** Mr. Speaker, at least 63 residents of Lake St. Martin First Nation have died since the flood of 2011 having no houses, no schools, no traditional burial grounds to call home. It has been so long that many residents like Lillian Catcheway are starting to believe, and I quote: Maybe when it's time for us to go home, we'll be going home in boxes.

\* (14:20)

I need to ask the minister of MIT: Why were fast-tracking projects to support your political donors and promote your self-interest more important than fast-tracking the process to ensure the residents of Lake St. Martin had a home to go to?

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Speaker, I take great offence to that comment, because it's this government that has, for the first time, built an emergency outlet to deal with the 50 years plus of chronic flooding for the Lake St. Martin communities.

And I don't know, Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite was missing, but we just a few days ago had a commemoration ceremony with the Minister of

Aboriginal Affairs, representative from the federal government and from First Nations.

The fact that we now have flood-protected new housing that is in those communities, Mr. Speaker. It's this government that has been committed to working with the federal government and the First Nations to right a 50-year wrong, and we're making progress.

### **Bipole III Landowner Committee Meeting Request with Minister**

**Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland):** Yesterday the Minister of Agriculture seemed to have a fascination with his shoelaces.

So I have to ask: Why did the Minister of Agriculture snub and ignore the members of the Manitoba bipole landowner committee who are up in the gallery? What was he afraid of? What was he hiding from? Why did he not agree to at least acknowledge them at the very least, and why did he not meet with them when they took their time out from their busy days to be here to meet with him?

**Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development):** You know, it's not surprising the member from Midland would bring up the subject on hand. Obviously, we're a number of months away from the provincial election in April.

So let's go back in a comment he made in the Carman Valley Leader paper. Quote: The Tories will put less focus on other issues such as health care, roads, social services, agriculture, rural depopulation and First Nations. We're not going to win the next election on those issues, explained the member opposite from Midland.

So is he—is the question today, Mr. Speaker, is he playing political games on the advantage of his own personal gain and the political party of the Conservatives and not deal with issues as front-line services and a minimum \$500-million cut for front-line services, which is important to rural Manitoba, to the province of Manitoba, rather than a political gain as the member from Midland had indicated?

**Mr. Speaker:** Time for oral questions has expired.

### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Mr. Speaker:** It's now time for members' statements.

### **John Taylor Collegiate's Boys Rugby Team**

**Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia):** Good day, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize some amazing athletes from my constituency. Joining us today in the gallery are members from the John Taylor Collegiate Pipers varsity boys sevens rugby team.

For over half the team, this was their first experience playing rugby. They started practising indoors in January once a week, and in April they started outdoor practices regardless of the weather.

With only a short time to train, these athletes ended up ruling the pitch this year, winning the Winnipeg rugby sevens championships. In the semifinals, John Taylor defeated Collège Béliveau 20-10 in a hard fought game. In the city championship game, John Taylor was down at halftime with the score 7-0. In the second half, the team roared back to score 15 points and eventually to win the game.

Brett Catterson, one of the team—Piper's best examples of determination and team spirit; Brett joined the rugby team in grade 11. Shortly after he joined the team, his family moved from Assiniboia to downtown. But Brett didn't let the move stop him. He played at John—he stayed at John Taylor to keep playing on the rugby team and would get up early every day to take the bus to school. Coach Tom Johnson said Brett is one of the players that has come so far both as a person and a player. I wish Brett all the best as he graduates from high school this year.

I would like to ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating the Pipers on a job well done and thank everyone who helped their successes this year. Go Pipers.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the permission of the House that we include all the names of the players and coaches in the Hansard.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to include the names that the honourable member referenced in his member statement? *[Agreed]*

The names will be entered into the Hansard of today's proceedings.

*John Taylor Collegiate Pipers rugby team: Dawson Krahn, Cole Hobson, John Kim, Nathan Allen, Brett Catterson, William Joyal, Justin Passey, Sandor Gyarmati, Theo Eckel, Brian Hudson, Delaney Hudson, Marcus Anderson, Dyland Reinheimer, Caleb Dorrington, Andrew Lee and Brendan Adamo. Coaches: Paul Harland, Tom Johnson, Daniel Tingskou and Derek Mozshinski.*

### **Tait Palsson**

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain):** I stand today to give credit to Tait Palsson for all the hard work and dedication that he has put into the children's rights petition that I read today and over the course of this session.

Tait is only 11 years old and is already a foundation of knowledge about children's rights in Canada and across the world. This knowledge and his take-action attitude has resulted in a petition with hundreds of signatures.

Tait is in the gallery today and has been several times throughout this session, and is happy to have brought with him some of his friends and his family to hear his petition and this statement today.

Tait's interest in children's rights has stemmed from his personal experiences with the right to education and his right to have an opinion in family court disputes. As proud as he is to be able to see his petition read in this Chamber, Tait also said, and I quote: It really isn't about the petition. It's the fact that the government has failed children and caused the need for the petition at all.

Before I sit down, I think it's important to share with you Tait's favourite quote: The world is not a dangerous place because of those who do evil, but because of those who watch and do nothing.

For Tait, doing nothing isn't an option. Whether it is writing letters to politicians, gathering signatures for his petition or standing outside this building with a handmade sign, sharing it with anybody and everybody that comes his way, Tait won't stop until he sees that people are really listening.

I am glad to have the opportunity to work with Tait over the last several months. It has been an honour, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to tell Tait how proud I am of him and thank him for his hard work, his dedication for improvements that are

needed, so needed in the rights for children throughout Manitoba.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Flin Flon Heritage Project**

**Mr. Clarence Pettersen (Flin Flon):** A small town's pride often lies in its rich history. In Flin Flon we are lucky enough to have a group that has taken it upon themselves to preserve the heritage and history of our community. The Flin Flon Heritage Project is a non-profit organization that is run entirely by volunteers. This group is creating an online database of historical documents relating to Flin Flon.

These dedicated volunteers, who even supply their own equipment to keep operating costs low, have been running this project for the past three years. So far, the online database includes yearbooks for Hapnot Collegiate, issues of local magazines like *The Northern Lights*, newspapers, photographs of local people, books about Flin Flon and even a digitized version of the archives of Flin Flon, and they haven't stopped there. The project is always growing in scope and adding new content.

There are currently around 40 people involved as volunteers with the Flin Flon Heritage Project, and they are getting people from across North America involved. Documents about Flin Flon's early history as a tiny village are coming in from places like California and Nova Scotia.

With this level of involvement from the community, it's obvious that people think the Flin Flon Heritage Project is accomplishing important work. I completely agree.

This is a fantastic grassroots project that has adopted a democratic process towards writing history. Inviting everyone who has content relating to the history of Flin Flon to submit it means that everyone can participate in the stories. The volunteers have even started making house calls to bring scanning equipment to those who have mobility issues or who cannot bring their documents to the heritage project headquarters.

Without an understanding of our history, we cannot see where we are headed. Without a record of our past, we cannot look back and reflect on the mistakes we have made or the progress we have achieved.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have taken it upon themselves to create this wonderful resource. This is truly the work of engaged and caring citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Pricerazzi.com**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to express my congratulations and excitement for the achievements of Pricerazzi.com, one of the six amazing start-up companies who competed in Innovate Manitoba's annual Venture Challenge Pitch on Wednesday, June 17th. This annual event is a true demonstration of the breadth and depth of the entrepreneurial spirit in Manitoba.

\* (14:30)

Of the six great presentations, it was Pricerazzi.com that took the first-place prize thanks to the impressive success that they've already achieved. Pricerazzi.com offers a simple and brilliant service: users upload pictures of retailer receipts and then Pricerazzi.com will direct their clients to other retailers with lower prices. The service allows users to take advantage of the price-matching policies offered by many major retailers to ensure that they get the best value for their dollar.

Pricerazzi.com is the product of the hard work of entrepreneurs Declan McDonald and Robert Keizer. Declan first got the idea when he put some time into researching prices for some new home appliances he'd recently purchased. As a result of his research, he received over \$500 in refunds on just a few major purchases. He and Robert created Pricerazzi.com in the hopes that this money-back opportunity be made available to their own customer base. The company is currently on track to do \$2.5 million this year, taking in 10 per cent of their customers' refunds as a fee.

Pricerazzi's service was born in a very common-sense concept, but it took the incredible innovation of Declan and Robert to take this bright idea and develop it into an internationally available full-service website and smart phone app. It's clearly—it's clear that they, like many Manitobans and their many out-of-province customers, are of the understanding of the benefits of shopping around for the best price. They realize that smarter purchasing habits mean more money for their families and communities.

Mr. Speaker, Pricerazzi.com is just one example of the many great companies popping up as a result of the tremendous entrepreneurial spirit in this province. I am honoured to have Mr. Declan McDonald as my guest in the gallery today. I ask that all members join me in congratulating him and Mr. Keizer for their accomplishments and to thank them for setting an example that will encourage many other Manitobans to pursue their entrepreneurial visions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Accountability and Transparency in Government**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, as we get to the end of this sitting highlighted by the rampant disorganization of today's NDP government, the long list of problems with accountability and transparency continues to grow.

The list begins with the election rebate scandal of 1999, Hydra House, Aiyawin, Crocus, the O'Learygate affair with the school division speculating on land development. Horrific mismanagement was associated with the tragic deaths of children like Phoenix Sinclair, who was in the care of today's NDP government, and Manitobans like Brian Sinclair who died after waiting 34 hours in the one place that was supposed to help him.

The disregard today's NDP demonstrate for Manitobans, of course, does not end there. We've also been witness to the Winnipeg Jets ticketgate; the attempted cover-up of an email politicizing civil servants; the cancellation of a legislated commitment on climate change and then waiting years to even consider a new plan; failing to tender major multi-year hundreds-of-millions-of-dollar contracts like STARS; failing to ask for bids when privatizing the Property Registry; the Biomedical Commercialization Canada's lack of services mess; the conspicuously absent oversight for spending at Red River College; spending thousands of taxpayer dollars for a lunch to hear the Premier (Mr. Selinger); the Tiger Dams affair; and the inefficient process of making the busiest person in the department, the deputy minister, the privacy and access officer in some departments; the five senior Cabinet ministers resigning over a conflict with the Premier, which, ultimately, hindered the ability of this Legislature to sit in a timely manner as the whole province had to wait on one political party's leadership vote.



Even with a full day, it wouldn't be possible to cover all 16 years of failure by today's NDP government not only in accountability and transparency but in results. Certainly not an impressive argument for today's NDP to remain at the helm. It's time to change the government in our province. It's time for a Liberal government.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. That concludes members' statements.

Grievances? Are there any grievances?

Seeing no grievances, and prior to orders of the day, I'd like to draw the attention to the honourable members to the fact that, as has become our tradition, to recognize the last shift for our page, Shannon Furness.

Shannon has completed her high school in Stonewall and has been a lifelong resident of Stonewall. Shannon's average is 90 per cent and she received the highest ranking grade 12 English at 99 per cent. Shannon will be attending the University of Winnipeg in the fall for political sciences and then hopes to study law. She would like to enter politics as an MP or an MLA.

Knowing Shannon, watch out, any sitting MP or other member of the Assembly. Outside interests include yoga and current events, and Shannon loves doing vote calls, so we have some experience for her.

Thank you very much, Shannon, on behalf of all members of the Assembly.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Namaste. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce that the House will resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider the resolution respecting the Interim Supply—*[interjection]* Oh, yes.

Mr. Speaker, namaste. I'd like to call the Interim Supply bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** We thank the honourable Government House Leader. The House will now resolve into the Committee of Supply to consider the resolutions respecting the Interim Supply bill.

Madam Deputy Speaker, will you please take the Chair.

## COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

### Interim Supply

**Madam Chairperson (Jennifer Howard):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. We have before us for our consideration two resolutions respecting the Interim Supply bill.

The first resolution, respecting operating expenditure, for Interim Supply reads as follows:

RESOLVED that a sum not exceeding \$9,473,621,000, being 75 per cent of the total amount to be voted as set forth in part A, Operating Expenditure, of the Estimates, be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2016.

Does the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) have any opening comments?

Seeing none, does the official opposition Finance critic have any opening comments?

Seeing none, the floor is open for questions.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** It's my understanding that our Finance critic will defer his questions until the debate on the bill and when it moves to the committee at that time.

**Madam Chairperson:** Are there any other questions?

Seeing none, is the committee ready for the question?

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Shall the resolution pass? *[Agreed]*

The second resolution, respecting capital investment, for Interim Supply reads as follows:

RESOLVED that a sum not exceeding \$675,631,000, being 90 per cent of the total amount to be voted as set out in part B, Capital Investment, of the Estimates, be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2016.

Does the Minister of Finance have any opening comments?

Seeing none, does the official opposition Finance critic have any opening comments? No?

The floor is open for questions.

Seeing none, is the committee ready for the question?

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Shall the resolution pass? *[Agreed]*

This concludes the business before the committee. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

\* (14:40)

### IN SESSION

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Irvin-Ross), that there be granted to Her Majesty on account of Certain Expenditures of the Public Service for the fiscal year—

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable member for Fort Rouge.

### Committee Report

**Ms. Jennifer Howard (Chairperson):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered and adopted two resolutions respecting Interim Supply.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), that the report of the committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, my apologies to the honourable Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Dewar:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's absolutely fine.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services, that there be granted to Her Majesty on account of Certain Expenditures of the Public Service for the fiscal year ending March the 31st, 2016, out of the Consolidation Fund, the sums of \$9,473,621,000, being 75 per cent of the total amount to be voted on as set out in part A, Operating Expenditure, and \$675,631,000, being 90 per cent of the total amount to be voted on as set out in part B, Capital Expenditure, of the Estimates, laid before the House at the present session of the Legislature.

*Motion agreed to.*

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 44—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Housing, that Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015, be now read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

*Motion agreed to.*

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill 44—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services, that Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** Agreed and so ordered—no?

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** I take this opportunity to put some comments on the record this afternoon with respect to Bill 44, the interim appropriation act, and I welcome the opportunity.

I've had a chance to look over the bill and, of course, we understand what it is, and it's a mechanism by which we maintain or ensure in this Legislature that the money continues to flow for the payment of services, for the payment of the civil service, for capital expenses to allow government to basically continue to operate.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to also just provide the backdrop for today's discussions and provide some context and, of course, the context is this: that this NDP government has, once again, failed to bring in a bill that would effectively move us forward as a province when it comes to the economic plan of this province.

This is a budget that puts us further behind. It's a budget that continues to add to Manitoba's debt, a debt that now stands at \$36.3 billion in the province of Manitoba and that has effectively doubled from just seven, eight years ago. It's a frightening thought, and it is exactly the principle of compounding interest working itself out plus, of course, the fact

that this government is choosing to operate perpetually in a deficit situation, and deficits simply become debt, new debts to be structured, new debts to be apportioned and new debt that has to be serviced.

What it means for all Manitobans is that debt servicing costs in the province of Manitoba now exceed \$800 million every year. As a matter of fact, those debt servicing costs are quickly approaching \$850 million a year. This is why the Auditor General of the Province of Manitoba included a, you know, an important citation against this growing debt. She included in her last year's annual report a chapter on debt and deficit, and talked about what a 1 per cent change in interest rates would mean for debt servicing costs.

\* (14:50)

And, of course, Mr. Speaker, it's important to recognize that when the Auditor General was speculating—or when the Auditor General's office was providing financial models, models that would consider what the additional cost for Manitobans would be, it's important to consider that when they came back with those calculations, they, of course, said, well, you know, even a 1 per cent change in interest rates would amount to an additional, I believe it was around \$30 million a year. But it's important to keep in mind that all they were referring to in that calculation is monies that were paid annually on the Province's debt, those debt servicing charges; it was only a portion of that; it was only that portion that was in cash.

So, Mr. Speaker, the true cost of a 1 per cent change in interest rates would be much, much greater and over time, of course, much, much greater, compounding as we move forward. There's real risk to the province of Manitoba for any government who fails to move in the right direction, who fails to respond to the cautions that are delivered by debt servicing agencies, companies, debt servicing companies like Standard & Poor's, like Moody's, like DBRS, and this government has not responded in a way that gives comfort to those groups.

As a matter of fact, just now, following the budget, mooder's investor service put out another statement saying that this government continues to prioritize program spending and capital spending over a return to balance. They went on to say that prolonged deficits and high capital spending will likely result in a continued gradual increase of Manitobans' debt burden until at least 2017-2018.

And here's the key, that in the end of this statement, it says, Kathrin Heitmann, an assistant vice-president and analyst for Moody's, she stated that all of these things, working together, will add additional pressure on the province's current Aa1 rating with a negative outlook.

So, Mr. Speaker, the context of today's discussions were that as a result of this government's failure to address its deficit tendencies, as this—as a result of this government's failure to address its high-spend practices, as a result of this government's failure to address its high-debt practices, already a year ago, last summer, I believe it might have been in July, that Moody's issued that initial warning, changing stable outlook to negative outlook. Now, this is a subsequent warning coming after that first one, and this one is saying additional pressure. Now, in the language of bond rating agencies I would submit that this is strong language, that this is—they have intensified their warning, and what, of course, they are warning is that with a loss of an Aa1 rating would come higher interest rates.

Mr. Speaker, when the Auditor General warned, in her chapter on debt and deficit, of the threat of increase in annual debt servicing charges, the Auditor General's office was only speculating about a rise in interest rates; the Auditor General was not speculating in those statements on what would happen if the actual rating for Manitoba would change. Coupled together, this could mean much, much more money diverted, diverted from delivery of front-line services simply going to pay for this government's pay-more-get-less, high-spend, high-debt, high-deficit kinds of strategies.

And, Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues have said in the last days and the last week, we know what the threat is. The real threat to this province is this NDP government's high-debt, high-spend, high-deficit strategies that suck more and more resources away from health-care delivery, away from educational strategies, away from effective social services program delivery, away from infrastructure, away from conservation where even yesterday my colleague the member for Morris (Mr. Martin)—I always want to say La Salle, Mr. Speaker, but it's Morris—was making the case again for the fact that there are cuts going on in this government, cuts that they will not talk about, cuts that they try to keep very, very quiet. And, indeed, the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) was talking about cuts to the Healthy Baby program in the western part of this province, and this government and their

members are very quick to deny those charges. And yet we understand that it is cause and effect because of their own practices that are leading to increased debt servicing charges. All of that money, all of those financial resources cannot be allocated toward these services that Manitobans depend on.

As a matter of fact, just this week in this House and last week, as well, we were raising this same issue with respect to ER wait times that now CIHI, the Canadian Institute for Health Information, coming back to deliver the verdict again that Manitoba trails the country, dead last when it comes to ER wait times. I believe that the average wait time in ERs across Canada—I believe the calculation was something like 3.1 hours, and yet at the Grace Hospital alone, I believe the average ER wait time is in excess of eight hours. And this Minister of Health (Ms. Blady) had nothing to say on this subject. As a matter of fact, she pushed a senior bureaucrat to take an interview because she was ducking for cover and would not even stand to talk about her own record.

So, Mr. Speaker, what it comes down to is this: more money for debt servicing charges, less money for front-line services.

No wonder it's the case that with this Interim Supply bill, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) is asking for much, much more, and, Mr. Speaker, I noticed that in clause 2(1) under operating expenditures that the minister is asking in this bill for 75 per cent of the total appropriations. We must understand that that is not a static number. It is a number that is determined and arrived at as the result, I would imagine, of negotiations and consultations and the discussions that he has with his most senior people in the Finance Department and the deputy minister.

But I would remind the Minister for Finance that just last year the authority for operating expenditures was pegged at 35 per cent. And even in 2013, in the same year when this government raised the PST, in that year which should've probably been the highest percentage of a total appropriation in recent memory, even then the amount was only 65 per cent. So compare that to this year's. Why does the Finance Minister need 75 per cent of the total appropriation? Why is this number ticking up and up? And that is certainly a question that I would want to ask the minister.

And I can hear the—one of the members here, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), saying it's

part of the spending addiction, spending more. And, of course, what we are saying as an opposition party is, yes, but it's Manitobans who are getting less and less.

On the same note, I would just mention, as well, Mr. Speaker, that in clause 2(2)—and I invite the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) to listen because he will learn something in all this—that when the Finance Minister's asking for \$675 million, he's asking for 90 per cent of the total appropriation set out in part B of the Estimates. Now, compare that last year to just 75 per cent. I guess my question for the Finance Minister is, why does he need 15 per cent more of the total appropriation than his predecessor needed just one year ago to make government function? Consider that in the year that this government broke their word after promising every Manitoban they wouldn't raise the PST, and then they came across the line, won the election, widened the RST and a year later broke their word to any—every Manitoban when they raised the PST—even in that year when this opposition party held them to account during the month of July, during the month of August, into the fall—we held that vote on behalf of Manitobans—that budget only passed in December of that year, and yet the Finance Minister's predecessor in that case had only required 80 per cent of the total authority for capital investment, 80 per cent of the total appropriation set out in part B of the Estimates.

Why does this Minister of Finance need 90 per cent? Maybe he knows something we don't know about sitting in the months of August and September and October and November. But based on my deliberations in this House, I'm inclined to think he doesn't know more than the rest of us when it comes to these things.

\* (15:00)

So my question to him is just simply—and I would invite him to put this on the record and say, what is the rationale underpinning his decision, along with, you know, in deliberation with his most senior people, to require 90 per cent of the total appropriation when I can see here, even looking back at 2009, 75 per cent; 2010, 75 per cent. These numbers are high. These numbers are historically high, I would submit, and it seems like a government who is simply wanting a lot, lot more.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that this is the lead up to an election year, and that does bring me to one more point I would want to make on the record.

And that is that in clause 3 of this Interim Supply bill, this interim appropriation bill, there is a section on the limit of expenditures for inventory. And I understand from my conversations with the minister's staff that the amount here that is being requested is paid out of the Consolidated Fund for the purpose of developing or acquiring inventory to be disposed of in a subsequent year. Now, what this actually refers to is cottage-lot development.

Now, this is cottage-lot development, and we know this government's record when it comes to cottagers. This is a government that has gone back to cottagers and demanding more and more and more, and cottagers have organized and they said: Listen, we're willing to pay our fair share, but show us value for money, show us how the additional monies collected will actually go for service delivery. And instead of doing that this government has been simply hungry for another cash grab, and they found a way to do it in this year's budget and that is to go back and hike the rates for cottagers. And I would say again, this is an important issue for value for money. Many, many cottagers in this province, they're third-generation cottage owners. They can't afford the kind of fee increases that the minister's talking about. That's the backdrop of this. But now, in this Interim Supply bill, the minister is asking not for the \$800,000 as in last year's interim appropriation. He's not asking for the \$800,000 as was the case in 2013. As a matter of fact, in 2010, the amount then was even—it was less again. This year the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) is requesting over \$3,200,000 to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund for cottage-lot development. Now, I guess the first question would be: is it just a coincidence that he's hiked the cottage-lot development to this kind of number in exactly the lead up to another election year? I mean, these numbers have not been there before. They are there now.

But I guess another question for the minister would be, and this—and I know that the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Wishart) would say the same—is that, shouldn't the Finance Minister be providing an explanation? Who would want to venture here when this government has been such a poor broker when it comes to building relationships with the cottage associations of the province of Manitoba? Basically, they took the opportunity to slap them upside the head, but they have not participated with them in a respectful manner. They have not collaborated with them. They have not been

forthright when it comes to their deliberations about why they have hiked the fees as they did.

So my question for the minister is why he has asked in this interim appropriation for four times the amount to be put for cottage-lot development.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are the comments that I wanted to make this afternoon with respect to this bill. I invite, in the proceedings we have this afternoon, the Finance Minister to give answer to these and other concerns that I imagine will be raised in this context.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there any further debate? Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Well, the House will now resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole to consider the—and report on Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, for concurrence and third reading.

Madam Deputy Speaker, will you please take the Chair.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### Bill 44—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015

**Madam Chairperson (Jennifer Howard):** Will the Committee of the Whole please come to order.

We will now be considering Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015.

Does the honourable Minister of Finance have an opening statement?

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** Madam Chair, I just have a brief statement. I believe—as we said, this bill is required to provide interim spending and commitment authority for the 2015-2016 fiscal year, pending approval of the 2015 appropriation act.

Section 2, as we discussed, represents \$9,473,621,000. This authority represents 75 per cent of the \$12,618,661,000, which is a total amount to be voted on, as contained in part A, Estimates of Operating Expenditure, in the 2015 Manitoba Estimates of Expenditure.

Section 2 of the bill includes an amount of investment authority of \$675,631,000. This authority represents 90 per cent of the \$750,701,000, which is a total amount to be voted as contained in part B,

Estimates of Capital Expenditure, in the 2015 Manitoba Estimates of Expenditure.

Section 2.3(3) provides that expenditures made under the special warrant issued pursuant to order-in-council 106/2015 shall be subsumed. The order-in-council was approved to provide interim funding for the 2015-2016 expenditure, authority pending approval of an appropriation act by this Legislature.

The member talked about section 3. This, of course, has the authority of \$3,237,000 is being provided by for the development or acquisition of inventory, primarily for the development of cottage lots in 2015-2016. As the member raised, he did ask about that, when these lots are sold and then the title transferred to the new owner, the related expenditures and revenues will be included in the main Estimates for that fiscal year.

Madam Chair, with these comments, I commend the bill to the members of this committee.

**Madam Chairperson:** Thank the honourable minister.

Does the honourable critic have an opening statement?

Seeing none, we will move to clause-by-clause consideration. We shall now proceed to consider the bill clause by clause.

The title and enacting clause are postponed until all other clauses have been considered.

Shall clause 1 pass?

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** I have a question pertaining to this section. Oh, pardon me. I think that we're in the definition section. Okay, I withdraw that question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Clause 1—pass.

Shall clause 2 pass?

**Mr. Friesen:** Question for the minister when it comes to clause 2, because under the section dealing with authority for operating expenses, in my comments earlier this afternoon, I was asking for a response to the minister as to why we see a larger percentage in this year's interim appropriation act when it comes to the amount of monies he would like to have released at this time.

Can the minister provide an explanation as to why he is requesting 75 per cent of the total appropriation, especially when last year the request

in the Interim Supply bill was only for 35 per cent? How does he explain that difference and that significant increase of the amounts that he's requiring at this time?

\* (15:10)

**Mr. Dewar:** We're asking for—as the member knows, we had a chance to talk to him, brief him yesterday with the Finance staff in my office, and the reason we're asking for 75 per cent of the operating is because of the length of time it'll take to pass the act. As members know, it is not the expectation that the main appropriation act won't pass until November.

I understand from my notes, the member said—mentioned the number 35. I have it was 65 last year because it was, of course a shorter period of time and that was—it was expected to pass in September. So that is the reason why. It's because of the—as the member knows, the—under the new rules which, of course—potential new rules of the Chamber, the House won't be able to pass the main appropriation act until later on this year. And it was calculated by the Finance officials that the 75 per cent of the authority was necessary to ensure that the government operates until the main appropriation act is passed later on this fall.

**Mr. Friesen:** I want to correct the minister. He is mistaken when he says 65 per cent referring to last year's appropriation under clause 2, when it talks about the authority of operating expenditures. I just happened to bring a copy of last year's interim appropriation act. It's something I carry around with me at all times—no, it's not something I carry around with me at all times, but I happen to have one here today. And in clause 2, I just want to correct him. It was indicated as 35 per cent of the total appropriation. The minister would be correct if he was referring to 2013, and in 2013, two fiscal years ago, yes, at that point in time the request was for 65 per cent.

And I want to, then, just ask the minister an additional question, a supplemental question. He indicated in his response that he's asking for 75 per cent of the total appropriation because of the length of time that it is determined or estimated that it will take until the main appropriation is passed. But then I would ask him to make a comment about the 2013 process whereby his predecessor in that year asked for only 65 per cent, and yet the minister will remember, because he and I were both present at that time, that after the budget to introduce the PST, at that time the main appropriation was held a long

time. Yet, at that time the only—or the actual amount of the total appropriation requested was 65 per cent.

My question for the minister: Why 75 per cent this year if the length of time that is anticipated is actually shorter than in 2013?

**Mr. Dewar:** I do—the member is correct, I was wrong. But the—that's correct. In 2013-2014 there was an ask for 65 per cent. The—this, of course, is—the 75 per cent is based upon advice from the Finance officials to ensure there are no cash flow problems between now and the passage of the main appropriation act, which, again, may not be until later on this year, and perhaps not until November.

**Mr. Friesen:** The minister says that the 75 per cent is on the basis—or of advice given by Finance officials. Can he say a little bit more about the rationale for that? What was the rationale underlying that recommendation to request 75 per cent, and let's say—and not something closer in line with what would have been requested in the last number of years? For instance, as I mentioned, 35 per cent in 2014; 65 per cent in 2013 even in the year of the PST. But even going back farther in time: in 2010, 48 per cent; in 2009, 48 per cent. It seems that if we were to do a running average, 75 per cent is on the high end. I don't know where that would stand. I don't have the historical knowledge to know how that would compare to 10 years ago, and perhaps the minister has that information in front of him.

But my question, then, for the minister, again, is: What would have been the substance of that advice and what would have been the rationale for that advice? Why so high this time around?

**Mr. Dewar:** As I mentioned to the member in a previous answer, the main act, main appropriation act, will not be passed until perhaps three quarters of the way through—almost three quarters of the way through the fiscal year, and there was the advice made to me by the staff that they wanted to ensure that there would be no cash-flow issues in any of the areas. And, you know, so they decided that based upon their experience, based upon what they felt was an amount to ensure that we have no cash-flow issues, that the government's able to function until the main act is passed, that 75 per cent was a reasonable number.

**Madam Chairperson:** Seeing no further questions, shall clause 2 pass?

**Some Honourable Members:** Pass.

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Madam Chairperson:** Oh—is there a further question?

Yes, the member for Morden-Winkler.

**Mr. Friesen:** I'm sorry. I beg leave here. I had to flip the page of the bill, and I noticed that (2), (3) and (4) are actually on the next page, still included, though, under section 2. Do I have the opportunity, still, to ask one more question?

**Madam Chairperson:** Yes, you can—you're—the floor is open for questions if you'd like to ask them now.

**Mr. Friesen:** Just also on the subject of the authority of capital investments, and I made these statements earlier, so just over the page, still in clause 2, but under (2), very much the same nature of the question. Now, here I understand from my conversation with the minister and his staff yesterday that this appropriation is, of course, for those capital investments to make sure that the—obviously, no one wants to see a capital project stop, not the Province and not the contractors and certainly not the beneficiaries of that work that is being conducted, but, again, my question for the minister is not about the nature of the appropriation but rather about the percentage of the total appropriation that is being requested in this interim appropriation bill.

So, again, if I compare these numbers to previous, I'm going to invite the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) to explain why it is that he is requesting 90 per cent, almost the total appropriation, now in the interim bill. Compare that to 75 per cent of last year. My question, I guess, is: What has changed so dramatically between last year and this year that when it comes to this bill, the Minister of Finance is asking for 90 per cent of the total appropriation for the purpose of capital investments?

**Mr. Dewar:** I'll remind the member, in 20—or, excuse me, 2013-2014, 80 per cent was the amount with the expectation that the main appropriation act would pass in September. Again, it was based upon advice from staff in the Department of Finance that 90 per cent would be required and that it's—90 per cent is, of course, not an unusual amount, again, because it's likely that the main appropriation act won't be passed until later on this year and we want to make sure that we have sufficient resources.

We know that most of the capital work outside of the—some work done on the East Side Road

Authority, most of the capital work is undertaken in the summer months, and I'm pleased to report to the House that so far we've had an excellent year, excellent construction season so far, and I think everyone would acknowledge that is a very good thing for the province. As we move later on into the year, especially the fall, weather becomes a trickier thing to predict and it doesn't take much, unfortunately, to stall the—our capital investment.

So the consideration was done—provided to us by the staff that 90 per cent would be a fair amount to ensure that we have sufficient resources to fund the capital program until the main appropriation act is passed.

**Mr. Friesen:** First, I want to provide some assurances to the minister. I heard on the radio on the way in this morning as I travelled that it's supposed to be a hot, dry summer. So that would bode well for the construction industry. Of course, we know it's Manitoba and things can change very quickly, so we'll hope for a good, long summer for both the construction industry and for our agriculture producers as well.

\*(15:20)

I did want to take this time, though, to correct the minister. He is mistaken when he says—when he talks about the number being 80 per cent last year. In the fiscal year ending '13—for '13-14 it was 75 per cent of the total appropriation. For the fiscal year '12-13 it was 80 per cent—so that he might just want to check his numbers. I want to supply him also with these other numbers. In the fiscal year 2010 the percentage of the total appropriation set out in part B of the Estimates for two—sub two was 75 per cent and for 2009, 75 per cent.

So, once again, the per cent of the total appropriation being requested by this Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) is significantly higher than previous fiscal years than requested by previous Finance ministers. So if I look at the rolling averages here, I would say that, you know, the average expenditure is probably around 78 per cent for the last number of years, suddenly a jump to 90 per cent.

Could the minister rationalize, could this be perhaps because of the fact that we understand that his government actually underspent on infrastructure for the last five fiscal years, that when you look at the budgeted amount for infrastructure for capital and the actual—that the variance is actually almost \$2 billion? Is that the reason for the fact that he's

taking more this year, the fact that he underspent on infrastructure for the last five years by—to the tune of almost \$2 billion?

**Mr. Dewar:** Well, the member knows that we have a capital plan, a highway capital plan—infrastructure capital plan of \$5.5 billion over five years. We've just completed the—year one of that plan. We've, as I mentioned to the member earlier on, that we've had a good start to the construction season this year. We want to ensure that all the resources that we've committed to are investment—infrastructure investment program are spent. We've made a commitment to do that, as the member knows, and I'm pleased to report that, again, as I told the member and I know that he agrees, it's a positive thing.

They've had a great start to the season and we feel that providing 90 per cent authority would get us through to the—to November when the main appropriation act is passed. We know the vast majority of our infrastructure projects are—will be our plan and will be developed and completed within the rather short construction season. And the decision was made that we make sure that there be no cash-flow problems and that we ensure that all of our projects are funded, and that, hopefully, all of them will be completed this year.

**Mr. Friesen:** Could the minister just provide an explanation, and this is just in the way of I'm just seeking an explanation for this section: 2(3), when it comes to the 'spessage'—special warrant authority subsumed, could he remind me, is this a section that is new for this year—pardon me—or is this a standard section of the interim appropriation act that we would see the same every year?

**Madam Chairperson:** Honourable member of Morden-Winkler, have you concluded your question?

**An Honourable Member:** Could you repeat that?

**An Honourable Member:** Yes, I can repeat. Thank you, I'll repeat that question.

**Madam Chairperson:** Honourable member for Morden-Winkler.

**Mr. Friesen:** Thank you Madam Chair.

I'm just seeking an explanation from the minister. When it comes to 2(3), Special warrant authority subsumed, I notice—I'll make the question more clear. I notice a slight wording change from the previous year's Interim Supply bill. I believe we discussed this briefly at yesterday's briefing on this



bill. But I wondered if the minister could just provide that explanation as to what is the change in 2(3), and what basically—just give me one second here. I want to make sure I'm referring to the correct point. Oh, pardon me, Madam Chair, I think I understand the minister's confusion. I was referring to 2(4)—2(4), pardon me.

So 2(4)—not the section about authority subsumed—Expenditure by responsible department, that's the section I was referring to. That's the new section not included in last year's appropriation act.

Could the minister explain there what the rationale is for that inclusion of that particular subclause and how it benefits Manitobans and makes the process more streamlined?

**Mr. Dewar:** I'd have to get back the member on that.

**Mr. Friesen:** Okay, well, the minister says he doesn't have that information, and here we thought he was the fiscal hawk.

But when it comes to 2(4), this is what I understand; he can correct me if I need to be corrected. What I understand from reading this particular section is that basically it seems to be saying that, when it comes to a capital investment or an operating expenditure, now no longer is the Finance Minister alone responsible to basically make that decision. But it looks to me like—that the appropriate minister of a department could make that decision about that expenditure or about that investment.

So what I'm thinking is that the process was designed to streamline things. My guess—it would be that when you got into the Estimates process that you could be asking a question of the minister responsible on a—about a particular decision and not having to come to the Finance Minister first where all—where—by which he would probably just tell you to go and see the minister responsible. Is that the change here, basically saying that before only the Finance Minister could authorize, and now the appropriate minister can authorize?

**Mr. Dewar:** Well, I want to be certain. I want to be sure I provide the member with the right information, so I'll look into that and provide that as soon as I can.

**Mr. Friesen:** I would thank the minister for providing that information at whatever time he can get that to me.

**Madam Chairperson:** Any other questions?

Clause 2—pass.

Shall clause 3 pass?

**Mr. Friesen:** Under the section, Limit on expenditures for inventory—this is clause 3—again, we see that there is an amount that is significantly increased as compared to last year's interim appropriation act. I understand from my discussions with the minister that this has to do with cottage-lot development. Now, this afternoon in his opening comments, the minister made a statement that I would like to have him clarify if he would. He indicated that this particular area is, in his words, primarily for cottage-lot development. Could I ask him for a clarification? Is it primarily or solely for the purposes of cottage-lot development? And, if not solely, what other things would fall under this same category of limit on expenditures for inventory?

**Mr. Dewar:** Yes, Madam Chair, I understand it's primarily for the development of cottage lots.

**Mr. Friesen:** So, if it's primarily for cottage-lot development, what else falls under that category in clause 3?

**Mr. Dewar:** Madam Chair, I'll—I'm sure the information will be available shortly for the member.

\* (15:30)

**Mr. Friesen:** I would thank the minister for providing that information, and when he provides it, it would be good if he'd give quantitative data and not just qualitative so that we would understand, you know, how much of that \$2.3 million would be made up of activities or areas apart from cottage-lot development. It would be good to have an exhaustive list of what other things are there and the dollar amount that would be allocated to those.

Still on the subject of clause 3 though, and my question will—is 'remiscent' of others I've asked this afternoon. So I notice that in 2014, in last year's Interim Supply bill, the total amount of this appropriation paid out of the Consolidated Fund for the same purpose of developing or acquiring inventory to be disposed of in a subsequent year, basically said, cottage-lot development, the amount was \$800,000. So, again, this amount this year in excess of four times last year's request. In 2013, \$800,000; this year's request is four times that amount. Even if I go back in time as far as 2009 and 2010, the amounts requested at that time, don't come near this year's request.

My question for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) is: Why the significant increase in the request under clause 3 for sums to be advanced for cottage-lot development? Is there a new and expanded initiative on the part of government to expand lots, and is it being done post-haste and that's why it needs to be included under the Interim Supply bill?

**Mr. Dewar:** I'm sorry, Madam Chair, I'll get the information. But I understand that the—this in general—that this is just for cottage lots. It's—the reason why, of course, it's for a longer time period. That is why the amount is of a higher nature.

**Mr. Friesen:** The minister says again it's for a longer time period, and I understand, you know, it's how he answered when I asked him about clause 2.1 and 2.2.

But, if I refer to even 2013, we know at that point in time, the Interim Supply bill would have been brought in and voted on. And even in 2013 we know that everyone was anticipating it would be a significant time before the main appropriation was voted on and passed.

So it doesn't seem to me like the Minister of Finance can claim that this time, certainly, isn't four times as long as in previous years. He's asking for four times the amount of money under this section. Is he simply saying it's because he anticipates it will be four times as long to pass the main appropriation? Because if he is, it's something that probably the House leaders aren't aware of. Maybe he is aware of something else.

**Mr. Dewar:** Is it—was—I didn't understand that there was actually a question there, Madam Chair, but.

**Madam Chairperson:** Did the honourable member for Morden-Winkler want to put the question again, if there was a question?

**Mr. Friesen:** I'll repeat the question, Madam Chair.

I'm asking the minister: He says it's—the reason it's higher is because the—it's anticipated it will take longer to pass the main appropriation. I'm clarifying for the minister the amount he's asking for is four times the amount of last year. Is he suggesting that it's going to be four times as long as last year, that he anticipates to pass the main appropriation?

**Mr. Dewar:** The amount for cottage lots is based on the Conservation and Water Stewardship development plans.

**Mr. Friesen:** And I understand, you know, these are probably questions that will be addressed by our

critic for Conservation with the minister responsible under that area, but just for the purposes of our discussions this afternoon, I'm assuming, then, the minister is referring to the government's five-year plan for cottage-lot development. Is that the case?

**Mr. Dewar:** I would argue, yes.

**Madam Chairperson:** Any other questions?

Clause 3—pass.

Shall clause 4 pass?

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Chair, just a quick question about clause 4. I noticed that in the past this particular area, and this, of course, has to do with payments for long-term liabilities, and we understand when, you know, it comes to mining site cleanup. It can be having to do with fuel site, fuel depot site cleanup. Anyone who's ever been involved in that kind of work understands that can be long work. It's expensive work. The mitigation work that has to be done is extensive. So I know in the past that number has been high, and it has been low and it fluctuates. But I do notice that it's up significantly from last year. In 2014 that—the number there was only—well, not only, but the number was \$20 million; this year, indicated as over \$35 million.

Can the minister provide a concise explanation of why the number is up so dramatically in this point? Is it simply because of the time that he's anticipating it will take to pass the main appropriation, or is there more significant work that is being undertaken in this fiscal year in this regard?

**Mr. Dewar:** The answer, Mr.—or Madam Chair, is both.

**Mr. Friesen:** And then I will allow, then, the critic responsible for that area to ask specific questions pertaining to that minister's area of responsibility. We won't do that in this context.

So I thank you, Madam Chair.

**Madam Chairperson:** There any other questions?

Clause 4—pass; clause 5—pass; clause 6—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. Bill be reported.

That concludes the business before the committee.

Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

**IN SESSION****Committee Report**

**Ms. Jennifer Howard (Chairperson):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015, and reports the same without amendment.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), that the report of the committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

**CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS****Bill 44—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015**

**Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), that Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015, as reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

*Motion presented.*

\* (15:40)

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** I'm pleased to rise at third reading of this bill and put a few comments on the record.

It's important for us to understand as legislators in this Chamber this afternoon, that this—while this budget—while this particular bill that we are discussing this afternoon is about the interim appropriation that is necessary to allow the government to continue to function, the broader perspective is, of course, this is about the budget. This is about the economic record of the NDP government. This is about the decisions that this government has undertaken in the last 16 years that have put us further behind and not further ahead when it came to the economic conditions that Manitobans live with and live inside.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has added debt, a significant debt. This is a government that, after so many attempts, failed attempts, even after pledging they would do so to drive down the deficit, they have proven to be unequal to the task of driving down the deficit. If it's because of a lack of effort or lack of acumen or a lack of consistency or determination, those are subjects that are up for speculation. Perhaps it's a combination of all of

those factors taken together. But the fact of the matter is they have not done it.

In the same conditions, the same enviable lending rates, other provinces have moved more effectively in this direction. This government often makes the argument that they are choosing to spend on front-line services, but they do not recognize that they put those very front-line services at risk as a result of their reckless spending essentially, and over time, as more and more money goes to pay to service a \$36.3-billion debt, a debt that, if left unchecked, will result in higher annual payments to service our debt.

Even so, Mr. Speaker, they're not getting the job done. In this budget alone, the government has gone looking for new places for new revenue, and let's understand this is the same government that said, in 2011 before the election, that they could be relied on to not raise taxes. I believe they even said it was nonsense, the idea that they would raise the tax. That was the government—the same government who, when I and other new legislators came into this Chamber in late 2011 for that Throne Speech, by the time we were into 2012, they had already chosen to widen the RST to include whole new areas for taxation, areas never before contained in tax, areas like home insurance policies and life insurance policies, group insurance policies, haircuts over \$50 and personal services. These are all areas that the government not just implemented as new tax measures, but it is clear that they were entertaining these, that they were studying them, that they had every intent to implement prior to the election.

That same government, then still desperate for revenue, of course, went back to taxpayers in 2013 and then raised the PST to eight, raising it from 7 to 8 per cent. Now, that is an increase that nets for the government alone additionally \$300 million each and every year. Taken together, all the tax increases from this government to Manitobans since the last election, these tax measures generate over—or about \$500 million more per year for government than previously, and to think that this is a government who has not been able to make a dent in the deficit is appalling. It is indeed not just appalling to the members of the opposition, but it's appalling to Manitobans, it's appalling to the business community and employers across this province, and it is appalling to economic forecasters and bond-rating agencies because they understand what the stakes are for this high-risk game that the NDP are playing.

And, indeed, we must understand that even this current Finance Minister, he's made statements saying things like, you know, each year since the great recession our deficits are getting smaller here in the province, and this statement is patently false, Mr. Speaker. The deficits are not getting smaller, and he's not citing the right numbers. The minister gets into a funny, fancy math whereby he cites one year's budgeted amount, and then he looks at how he actually did in the actuals at the end of the year and realizes he hasn't done well. He missed his target, spent more than he said. And so then what he does is he brings in a new estimate, a new budget, and he'll write a number down that's slightly less than the last budget and say that he's moving in the right direction. Well, that's patently false. It's—to compare one failed record to the next projection tells Manitobans nothing. It is not the way that any analyst would report numbers.

Here are the real numbers, Mr. Speaker, that—when the government said to Manitobans that they were going to run a deficit of \$357 million just last year, the end result was that this government overspent by almost 20 per cent, and what we now know from this budget is that the actual deficit will be \$422 million—I think it's \$424 million. And then this same government writes a new deficit projection for this upcoming year as \$422 million—\$2 million less than last year's 20 per cent over target—and say that they're moving in the right direction.

We know, Mr. Speaker, they are not moving in the right direction. We know that this is a government who's said that they were on track to return to balance by 2014. They said that in 2012 in that very first Throne Speech where I and so many colleagues on both sides of the House were new legislators in this place. They missed that target—they missed that target by a country mile. But it went on. The Minister of Finance said in 2014 in March that we are on track to return to balance in 2016. Now, that was just a year ago. That Finance minister would've understood at that point that there was no way they could make those targets.

And, indeed, this current Finance Minister, the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), stood up when he was new in the role on December the 12th last year just after this House had concluded at—before Christmas, and he stated it is the goal of our government to return to a surplus in 2016-2017. At that time, there would've been no one in this

province who would've been sitting on the actual picture more than this Finance Minister. This Finance Minister would have understand that he didn't have a hope of making that target. And so, indeed, all he did was defer the bad news until his budget and said, whoops, we missed it again. So, really, truly, Mr. Speaker, there's not a Manitoban who believes him now when they offer any projections.

Our concern is this: It is not the members of the opposition party that this government member—this Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) needs to convince. It is the people of Manitoban—Manitoba who, quite honestly, won't be fooled again.

But more than that, it comes back to these debt servicing costs that we must pay. And this Finance Minister has another job when this House recesses at whatever point that will be, and that is that we know that he will have meetings coming up with Standard & Poor's. He will have meetings coming up with Moody's Investors Service. He will have meetings coming up with DBRS, and he will have to sit in a room with these groups and he will have to try to put on brave face and tell them that he is heading in the right direction, and they will have all the numbers in front of them. And, Mr. Speaker, it is becoming more and more difficult for this Finance Minister to continue in this long bluff that he's playing in this poker game, and it is not a bluff that he can keep up because they know the numbers.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is a budget—I have failed to mention earlier—in which the government is moving away from transparency. In 2009, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) of the province who was the Finance minister put out a press release who said we are moving to a focus on reporting total government cost, providing total government forecast, moving in essence from a reporting of only core government, moving to the comprehensive report of all government expenditures, moving to a summary position. And, at that time, the Premier of the province said that was the preferable route. He said it was more transparent, he said it was more comprehensive and he said he was doing it at the behest of the Auditor General. Those were the comments that the Premier of this province made when he was the minister of Finance.

\*(15:50)

And yet, when this minister brought in this new budget there was something missing, something very important. He got out his eraser; he erased it out. And he kind of redacted it. It's like taking a giant Sharpie marker and then redacting every—anything that he didn't want Manitobans to read. It's not there. And he plays a funny game now where he tries to pretend that the numbers are still there. The forecast numbers that were in his budget last year are not there anymore for five years coming. I've held up the document to him. I've pointed to the line in last year's budget where the table was included. That same table is now missing. As a matter of fact, and I wish I had the copy in front of me right now, Mr. Speaker, but there is one great line in the preamble of the budget whereby the whole preamble reads identical to the preamble of last year's budget save for one sentence that has been removed. And the one sentence that has been removed from last year's document to this one is a sentence that talks about the fact that the summary budget is the best method of providing transparency and full reporting to the Manitobans who rely on this data.

Now, of course, I'm paraphrasing, but I challenge that minister to go and take a copy of his budget from 2014, take his new budget, and find the sentence that is missing. The sentence in 2014 made a powerful argument saying that the summary budget, that comprehensive picture of government that took into account all things: amount they spend for floods, amounts they spend on government business enterprises, amounts they spend on special operating agencies, amounts they spend on regional health authorities, amounts they spend on school divisions. All of these things factored in, he said a year ago, gave the best picture of the performance of government. Now, they erase it, they redact it, they remove it, they whiteout, they use that old-fashioned whiteout that we used to have in school. And they just took it out of the document.

And now he claims that he's providing the same information; he's not. And he can obfuscate in here, and he can make a show of this. But what we want to know on the opposition side is, what is the dance he's going to perform when he's in the room with Moody's Investors Service this summer? What fancy jazz hands is he going to do to distract them from the real knowledge? They will have the numbers. Is he going to share the tables with Moody's and DBRS and Standard & Poor's that he is declining to share with us? So maybe what we should be doing is contacting in advance bond rating agencies and see if

they can provide, in a third party practice, those numbers to us, if the Finance Minister won't provide them himself.

Mr. Speaker, it comes down to this. Under this NDP government, Manitobans are simply paying more and getting less. We know that the financial mismanagement of the province by this Finance Minister, by this Premier (Mr. Selinger), by their predecessors, by all those members on the other side, have meant that there is less and less for front-line resources for Manitobans, the front-line resources that we all depend on.

I would again cite that same study that came out just last week. The member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), the critic for Health, clearly raised the issue that again for the second year in a row—for the second year—Manitoba leads the nation in this category. Now, this government is always trying to talk about where they lead the nation. I'll tell you where they lead the nation. They lead the nation for the highest wait times for ER. Now, that's not a category where we want to be leading.

And I would want to state for the record, Mr. Speaker, that this Minister of Health (Ms. Blady) wouldn't even take the interview from the press who went looking for a comment and said, how do you possibly justify no improvement? You're still dead last. She ducked behind a senior civil servant. She sent her senior civil servant out to the wolves to answer to the media while she took refuge in her office: a minister who is happy to take the car, who is happy to take the salary but not happy to take the heat when she's dead last in Canada. That's an example of the kind of dead-last mentality: dead last in education for our children, dead last when it comes to kids in care, the child poverty of Canada.

They can say all they want to about investing, but we know that their principal investments are in debt servicing costs, which will only escalate with a rising prime lending rate, which will only escalate if this minister gets the bad news this summer that we fully expect he will get, the doom and gloom that he will get because of 16 years of financial mismanagement. And he will go into those offices all morose and try to say, look over here. But we know that those bond rating agencies will have the full picture. They will—even if they will not give the transparent, full, comprehensive picture to Manitobans, we know there will be no fooling that

group, and that Aa1 rating is at risk just as Moody's warned of.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there's much more that we could talk about in this context, but it comes to this: it comes to that this is a government that continues even now to look for new sources of revenues. It's a government that continues to mismanage on so many levels the budget.

It's a government that gives only the most begrudging relief to Manitobans who are paying far more than their share, among the highest taxes in all of Canada and the biggest tax increase of any jurisdiction. And all of this backdrop because the fact that they're taking the Fiscal Stabilization Account and emptying it, so badly reducing the balance of that account that, really, with this kind of trend, there will be nothing left in the Fiscal Stabilization Account. Essentially raiding that account at a time when the minister crows and says, it's all good in the province of Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are the comments I'd like to make. We must understand that while today's bill is a bill about Interim Supply, we understand that the true context here is these are all comments on the budget. They're all comments on the NDP's financial record and they are all comments on the fact that that record is one of loss, of financial mismanagement, of paying more, of getting less, of escalating debt—escalating deficit and escalating debt service charges, all of which produce conditions in which Manitobans should continue to be very, very concerned about this NDP government.

**Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance):** I'm eager to follow the member opposite in his concerns—his false concerns. He raved about the provincial economy and this government's record, Mr. Speaker, and he'll have a chance to debate it further tomorrow in this House. We'll let the member know that there are certain facts out there. One is that this government has a tremendous record when it comes to growing the economy, providing opportunities for Manitobans.

We have had and we're proud to say, the second lowest unemployment rates in the nation. And we have some of the finest—the forecasters: the Conference Board of Canada, the Royal Bank of Canada, the Bank of Montreal have all predicted that Manitoba will either be the leader or one of the leaders in terms of economic growth in the years ahead. And that is all news that we can all celebrate.

You know, and I had a chance to meet with Manitobans; they're proud of the fact that this government—or this province has tremendous record of accomplishment when it comes to growing the economy, creating opportunities for Manitobans.

The member talked about the debt servicing costs. I'll remind the member, remind all members of this House, when the Leader of the Opposition was in charge, when he was running the government in the '90s they were paying over 13 cents on the dollar to service their debt. Now it's down to 5.6 cents of the dollar to service our debt. The net-debt-to-GDP ratio when they were in office was significantly higher than what it is now.

We have a plan. The plan is to, as I said, to grow the economy and we're seeing results. I—just the other day in this House, I was very happy to inform the House that as of April the province of Manitoba is the only province in Canada that saw an increase in their monthly survey of manufacturing—the only province in Canada. Now, you'd think the members opposite would be proud of this. You'd think they would stand up and acknowledge this, but they did not.

You know, our sales increased here. Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, was down 4.9 per cent. They always like to speak about Saskatchewan. Wholesale trade numbers last month, Manitoba recorded its fifth increase—fourth increase in five months. Again, Saskatchewan, a 2 per cent increase. Saskatchewan saw their sales only increase 0.6 per cent.

\* (16:00)

We know that we lead the nation when it comes to full-time employment. We lead the nation when it comes to total employment. We lead the nation when it comes to private sector employment, Mr. Speaker.

So the members opposite can stand up, the gloom-and-doom party across the way, the negative nellys that occupy the benches, including the member for the Liberal-independent member for Fort Rouge, they can stand up and criticize all they want, Mr. Speaker, but Manitobans know, when it comes to who's on their side, when it comes to growing the economy, when it comes to creating jobs, it is this government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further debate on this matter?

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question before—is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** I hear a no.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015.

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Speaker:** Opinion of the House—the Chair, the Ayes have it.

#### Recorded Vote

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Could you call in the members for a recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

Order, please. We'll now proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 44, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2015.

#### Division

*A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:*

#### Yeas

*Allum, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Dewar, Howard,*

*Irvin-Ross, Jha, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.*

#### Nays

*Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Martin, Pallister, Piwniuk, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Wishart.*

**Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish):** Yeas 28, Nays 17.

**Mr. Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

#### CORRIGENDA

On June 23, 2015, page 2083, second column, second paragraph, should have read:

If I am senior, I don't know how much income you have and how much money you are getting in your pension. I won't have more than \$2,000 to spend per month. Out of \$2,000 per month, maybe there's items which don't charge PST. So take away about 500 to 700. Only you have to pay extra if you really have to pay 12 to 15 dollars extra. Now, think about that.

On June 23, 2015, page 2083, second column, fourth paragraph, should have read:

I said, what about—unfortunately, seniors use more health services compared to younger ones, and think about that. If somehow have to go to—for operation, it might cost 3,000 to 5,000 dollars per day. Will you be able to afford that? I know you will say, well, there are going to be insurance, and who will lose money on insurance? They want to make money; it will cost more than \$12 or \$15 per month.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

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