

First Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CHIEF, Kevin	Point Douglas	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 26, 2016

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam 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.

Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 2—The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Health, that Bill 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, this bill requires a by-election to be conducted within 180 days after a vacancy occurs. This requirement does not apply if the vacancy occurs less than one year before a general election held on a fixed date. And this is our first bill towards the openness and transparency that we have—that we ran on, and we look forward to having this bill pass through the House.

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

Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Crown Services): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report of the Crown Corporations Council for 2015 and the Quarterly Financial Report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

Madam Speaker: Any further tabling of reports? Ministerial Statements?

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Oseredok Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre

Mr. Blair Yakimoski (Transcona): Madam Speaker, I rise today in my traditional vyshyvanka, or Ukrainian shirt, in celebration of my Ukrainian heritage as I also did last Thursday here in the House, which was Vyshyvanka Day where Ukrainians across the globe participate similarly in their communities. I had the pleasure of participating in this event at Oseredok Ukrainian Cultural and Education Centre.

Oseredok was an appropriate venue for Vyshyvanka Day as this institution is all about Ukrainian culture and heritage. The centre's mission statement, Sharing Canadian-Ukrainian cultural experiences, reflects its role on a variety of levels.

Madam Speaker, it is the keeper of the community's collective memory by virtue of its extensive collections that document 125 years of the intellectual and cultural life of the Ukrainian community in Canada. These include archives of prominent Ukrainian Canadians and community organizations, an extensive research library, fine art and folk art, and an ethnology collection which includes about 4,000 pysanka, or Ukrainian Easter eggs.

The centre brings value in to the province of Manitoba as one of the preeminent sources of Ukrainian culture and heritage in North America, a place where scholars and the general public can pursue any information on things Ukrainian.

Oseredok also shares Ukrainian culture through diverse public programs, exhibitions such as New Dimensions of Pysanka Art, the pysanka mosaics of the Wasylyshen family, they connect tradition with a contemporary perspective on an ancient folk art form. Workshops, such as Oseredok's pysanka workshops, encourage individuals and families to embrace an activity that is both some ritual and art form. Special events, such as the annual Festival of Carols—which I have sung in—brings together community choirs in a festive celebration of Ukrainian Christmas music.

Oseredok Ukrainian Cultural and Education Centre deserves acknowledgement for its fine work in sharing Canadian-Ukrainian cultural experiences and its significant contribution to the heritage of all Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Climate Change Town Hall

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): Last night the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum), the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) and myself attended the federal government's climate change town hall here in Winnipeg.

The room was packed, there was some-300 people there, including—plus an additional 75 who stayed in the hallway to participate. Groups such the Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition as well as many local residents associations had a strong presence.

Indigenous people made their voices heard as well. I saw my friend from the Manitoba Metis Federation, President David Chartrand; as well as Chief of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Jim Bear, there; as well as activists like Sadie-Phoenix Lavoie and many others. Many non-indigenous people present at the meeting last night were saying: listen to the words of indigenous elders.

People urged the federal government to invest in flood protection, to restore wetlands to act as carbon sinks, to consider the emissions and spill impacts of proposed pipelines and much more.

A call to say no to the Trans-Pacific Partnership was greeted with hearty applause. People argued the TPP would limit our ability to regulate fossil fuel and to invest in green technology. Our caucus agrees that the current iteration of the TPP is a bad deal for Canada.

Of interest to this government was that many last night advocated for a carbon pricing plan. They agreed that the goal should be to provide a disincentive to the use of fossil fuels, and that such a plan should be transparent. All revenues should go to subsidizing green technology and green jobs.

The last word from the floor was a call to politicians to be brave, brave enough to make the changes needed to protect our planet and our people.

The first step to accomplishing that is to listen, and it appears as though the federal government is listening. The NDP is listening and I hope the members on the government side are listening as

well, after all, our grandchildren will judge us based on how well we respond to the challenge of climate change.

Dauphin Agricultural Society—125th Anniversary

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, the Dauphin Agricultural Society was the first organization established in the Dauphin area, even before the establishment of the now City of Dauphin or the RM of Dauphin.

* (13:40)

This year, the agricultural society is celebrating its 125th anniversary. The society continues to promote all facets of agriculture and encourages youth to understand and appreciate agriculture. The ag society is also a proud supporter of 4-H in the North Parkland area.

As part of the 125th-year celebration, the famed RCMP Musical Ride will be coming to Dauphin on July 7th. The Musical Ride is performed by a full troop of 32 riders and their horses. The ride provides the opportunity—experience the heritage and traditions of the RCMP.

Madam Speaker, over the years, the Dauphin Agricultural Society has contributed significantly to the development, growth and formation of the agricultural industry in the region, and all agricultural associations throughout Manitoba have played a significant role in building our province.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of myself and all of my constituents in Dauphin, I would like to congratulate the Dauphin Agricultural Society in reaching this significant milestone, and all the best with their future success.

Thank you.

Small Business Community

Mr. Andrew Micklefield (Rossmere): Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand in the House today and acknowledge the small-business owners in our province and the confidence they have shown in our government.

Today, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business released their Business Barometer Index, which shows that, under our new government, optimism in the Manitoba economy has already risen almost 3 and a half per cent in the month of May.

We know that small-business owners are looking to our government to provide an environment where they can thrive. And we intend on doing just that.

Small business is the backbone of the Manitoba economy and our Progressive Conservative team is ready to go to work to ensure that we do all we can for the Manitoba economy. Small businesses benefit us all and they deserve a provincial government that stands with them rather than in their way.

Madam Speaker, we know that the 'increst'—the increased PST and high income taxes were—that were the hallmarks of the NDP's economic plan damaged the confidence that Manitobans had in their government. That's why our Premier (Mr. Pallister) and Cabinet have in their mandates to make Manitoba the most improved province in this country.

We know we can't right the ship overnight and we know that it will take some time to undo the damage done by the previous government. That's why everyone on our side of the House will work hard each day to ensure that small-business owners and all Manitobans can again have confidence in the management and governance of this province.

Our province is finally moving in the right direction under a better plan that will grow our economy and help build a better future Manitoba for all.

Northern Economic Development

Mrs. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): Madam Speaker, I have been listening to my colleagues bragging about the great many businesses in their respective constituencies. It was nice to hear of the pride in their communities.

One day in the near future, with my colleagues' help, I hope to be boasting about the economic development occurring in my constituency.

I am an entrepreneur at heart, like my parents and grandfather before me. Indeed, there are numerous entrepreneurs all over the North. Before I left my reserve, I owned and operated a 24-unit laundromat.

It was hard to leave my successful business, but when I reflect, this is where I struggle. Was it successful? I sold confectionary and fruit. It was cheaper for a mother to buy a soda or a chocolate bar than a piece of fruit.

I left to attain my bachelor of commerce degree. I needed to know the ins and outs of what it takes to create a viable economy. A viable economy is resilient, dynamic, provides enough for all, while supporting social well-being. In short, a viable economy has funds that are generated in a community and then are circulated in that community.

In most of our First Nation communities, we have monopolies and black markets. These two economies contribute greatly to the decimation of my people. We suffer from economic leakage. The meagre funds we are privy to come in and leave. Yes, meagre funds, as there are so many filters that our funds are siphoned through.

The budget is coming. We need economic development for the well-being of our people. We need to educate them in the processes of entrepreneurship, and we need to start with the basics of financial literacy.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from the Oseredok Ukrainian Cultural and Education Centre Irka Semaniuk, Sophia Kachor and Yulia Zmerzla, who are the guests of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Yakimoski).

Also in the public gallery we have with us today students from École Lansdowne School and their teacher, Lucille Galvez, who are the guests of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Curry).

Also in the public gallery from Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary school, Katherine Friesen Campus, we have 21 grade 4 students under the direction of Mr. Wes Krahn. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Fort Richmond (Mrs. Guillemard).

And in the public gallery from Greenland School, 21 grade 6 and 7 students under the direction of Brian Penner. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lagassé).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Sale of MTS to Bell Government Support

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): We have been hearing from more and more Manitobans about this government's support for the sale of MTS to Bell Canada. They are concerned about the fact that cellphone rates could increase dramatically and that options like unlimited data will disappear.

Madam Speaker, at present, MTS is the only operator in this province providing unlimited data plans. Many Manitobans also don't support the Premier's statement that taxpayers should be subsidizing one of the largest corporations in Canada to provide cellphone service.

Why won't the Premier join with many Manitobans to oppose the sale of MTS to Bell Canada?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I have to admit, Madam Speaker—and I thank my colleague for the question and my—the opportunity it presents to me to say that I am somewhat disappointed at the doom and gloom preached by the members opposite in respect of this opportunity to improve services for Manitobans, in particular—in particular—in terms of improving services in areas that have not had access to cellphone, something that none of us should take for granted. The opportunities to provide better connections to people who are trying to protect themselves, trying to have security for themselves and their families, trying to increase their opportunities to do business and commerce and trade with others are very beneficial things to Manitoba.

And I'm very pleased to see that there are advancements being made in a number of communities through the installation, promised installation—as yet it has not been complete—but promised installation of three additional towers along Highway 75. I think that that will be of tremendous benefit to many in our province, including members opposite.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Official Opposition Leader, on a supplementary question.

* (13:50)

Ms. Marcelino: For years, the NDP have hammered away at the PC government for former Premier Gary Filmon's decision to privatize MTS back in the mid-1990s. They have constantly demonized the Tories as a privatizing, money-hungry party that can't be trusted with government assets. And now, only a month after winning the election, the Premier decided to wholeheartedly embrace the sale of MTS again.

My words, Madam Speaker? No. This is straight from today's editorial in the Brandon Sun.

In the interest of transparency, why did the Premier not indicate his support for the sale of MTS during the provincial election?

Mr. Pallister: Well, Madam Speaker, as was contained in my honourable colleague's preamble, the NDP has a long-standing position of advocating for—well, demonizing, I believe, was the word she used—demonizing our support for competitive free enterprise in our country and has advocated for monopolistic delivery of services, including, I expect, they would like to see Manitoba's telecom services put back into the public sphere.

This is not something we can support. It's a position that's been dropped by virtually every jurisdiction around the world, not solely in western democracies but in countries like Iraq, for example, which have gone to private sector competition for telecom services and telephone delivery.

So their position is antiquated and it is one which would only occur as a consequence of taking hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars away from things like public health care and public education.

The money has to go somewhere. We choose to try to encourage private sector competition where it's appropriate. And we choose to encourage and support uplifting, better services for Manitobans in areas like health care and education.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Official Opposition Leader, on a final supplementary.

Ms. Marcelino: For clarification, Madam Speaker, those were not my words. The preamble were that—were from the Brandon Sun's editorial.

Madam Speaker, does the Premier really expect anyone to believe that he hasn't known about this potential sale for weeks, if not months, before it was announced? With all the strong Tory ties to the MTS board, it is clear that the timing of the announcement

right after the election and the Premier's wholehearted support for the sale is not a coincidence.

Why won't the Premier admit his support for the MTS sale does, in fact, prove that his government cannot be trusted with government assets and cannot be trusted to stand up for the people of Manitoba?

Why won't he oppose this bad deal for many, many Manitobans?

Mr. Pallister: Well, setting aside for a minute the obvious innuendo in and false accusations contained in the preamble, which I will set aside, let me clarify that, for the member opposite, that the agenda that was rejected on April the 19th in this province by the people of Manitoba was the agenda that she just typified with her comments: an agenda of fear, of distrust, of a deep selfishness that has gone to now the past in our province and been replaced by an agenda that puts Manitoba's interests ahead of the selfish partisan interests of the previous administration, finally.

Now we can pursue an agenda of better services, lower taxes and a stronger economy. That is what Manitobans decided on April 19th. And the member not-ought to accept the will of the people of Manitoba and move on and not try with her colleagues to fight a failed election campaign over and over again in this Chamber when we could be talking about a better future for all Manitobans and working together co-operatively with one another.

Sale of MTS to Bell Government Support

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Pallister) as well.

I would like to table an independent report that states clearly the sale of MTS to Bell is a bad—is bad news. It's called Why Bell's Bid to Buy MTS is Bad News. It's a report submitted to the Competition Bureau assessing Bell Canada Enterprises' proposed bid to acquire Manitoba telecommunications services.

Madam Speaker, the report is clear. MTS invests relatively more on capital than Bell. And MTS cellphone rates are significantly lower than elsewhere in Canada.

Why is the Premier ignoring the facts and supporting this bad deal?

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): I do appreciate the member's question.

I just spent last night and this morning over at Centrallia and, obviously, a lot of business communities there. And I had an opportunity to talk with many rural Manitobans and northern Manitobans, and the message they're giving me on this Bell deal is that they want better service. They want better reliability. They want more speed in the product they're getting, and this particular deal will deliver that for Manitobans. That's the message we're part—we're happy to be part of a deal that will improve those services to Manitobans.

Mr. Maloway: I thought I asked the Premier the question.

Madam Speaker, the Klass and Winseck report is very clear. It states that Bell's proposed acquisition of MTS would result in the substantial lessening of competition. This would result in increased prices above the competitive levels that currently prevail and reduce service quality.

Can the Premier table any analysis, any reports that he used as the rationale behind his decision to support the sale of MTS to Bell?

Mr. Cullen: Again, I appreciate the question here.

I'm not sure if the members opposite are promoting a monopoly here on this or what they're proposing. But clearly—[interjection]—clearly, you know, we're focused on this side of the House in building infrastructure for Manitoba. We're hearing this from the business community as well. They want increased infrastructure in Manitoba. Clearly, technology is an important infrastructure component to Manitoba, all of Manitoba, rural Manitoba and northern Manitoba.

We look forward to working with companies that will provide this very important infrastructure to all Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Elmwood, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Maloway: Clearly, the Premier is hiding from the answers to these questions.

Hundreds of thousands of Manitobans are faced with seeing their cellphone rates rise dramatically. It's clear the Premier's done no due diligence.

Why won't he stand up for Manitoba consumers?

Mr. Cullen: Certainly, on this side of the House we are standing up for Manitoba consumers. I would suggest—*[interjection]* And I would suggest that Manitobans put their trust in this new government here to look after their needs and certainly their infrastructure requirements.

Madam Speaker, we—we're hearing some positive signs from the business community, increases in the survey from CFIB, very positive things happen over at Centrallia. Optimism in the province, there's a new government here, a new face, new optimism.

We're going to work with companies that want to come and invest in Manitoba. We're going to do that for the betterment of all Manitobans.

Education System Funding Concerns

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition): On this side of the House we would like to assure the Premier that we will work co-operatively on legislation and policies that will benefit most or many Manitobans, but we'll fiercely oppose legislation and policies that will bring grief and hardship to Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, the Free Press reported this morning that teachers are deeply concerned about this Premier's hidden agenda for education, pointing to cuts, freezes and layoffs they saw the last time the Premier sat at the Cabinet table.

The public is deeply concerned about the Premier's approach, with 57 per cent of Manitobans troubled by the Premier's hidden agenda.

Will—with the budget scheduled Tuesday, my question for the Premier: Will he cut now or cut later?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, I thank my colleague for her question again.

And I would tell her that one of the things that I must admit, as a former teacher and as a person who has many teachers in my family and many teachers as great friends, I know that they deeply resented the NDP's tactic of trying to frighten them and their families in the last election campaign.

* (14:00)

I know they deeply resented also the mass mailings and advertisements aimed directly at their children, trying to frighten their families.

Trying to get their way politically by trying to frighten children is not an admirable thing. It's never something to be done by respectful people with integrity, and I would encourage the member not to continue doing it, but should she try to continue doing it, I would tell her that it is a reflection on her character, not on the agenda of this government.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Official Opposition Leader, on a supplementary question.

Ms. Marcelino: Characters are hard to judge.

Madam Speaker, that same Free Press article characterizes that teachers fear a fiscal doomsday on public education with austerity measures to come. Teachers are deeply concerned about an approach that hurts the quality of public education.

With the future of our young people at stake, will the Premier come clean on his hidden agenda? Will he cut now or cut later?

Mr. Pallister: Teachers and all parents, all of us who are concerned with the betterment of our children in this province, are concerned about the quality of education. This government most certainly will act in respect of and in co-ordination with that strong belief.

We will address the dangers of the inadequacies of the administration previous to our own. We will look to repair the damage that has been done, which has seen our educational quality drop to last among Canadian provinces, and we will correct the course and we will do all of this while encouraging all members in this House to work co-operatively for the betterment of our children and their future through a better educational strategy.

Madam Speaker: The honourable interim Official Opposition Leader, on a final supplementary.

Ms. Marcelino: The Premier is not levelling with Manitobans, unwilling to define what, in fact, constitutes a front-line worker that deserves protection. The Free Press reports that his own Education minister can't even say if teachers would be protected, saying, we're trying not to define front-line workers.

We ask the Premier: Will he reveal his plans for our important front-line services, or will he keep us all in the dark?

Mr. Pallister: Well, I appreciate the member raising the issue, again, of agendas. We know that the agenda of the previous administration was clearly

laid out to the people of Manitoba prior to the last election and the one before, in fact.

In fact, in the one before, it was clearly stated that the NDP was going to run on the basis they would not raise taxes on Manitobans. They had a five-year plan, as I recall. Within weeks, they proceeded to then erode the take-home pay of Manitobans, including teachers, front-line workers and all Manitobans, especially impacting negatively on those struggling to make ends meet in the lower income brackets by jacking up taxes on a wide array of things at an unprecedented rate.

So I expect that the members opposite know what a hidden agenda is because they personified it in government, and that's why they're no longer the government.

We have an agenda which is clear, and it will focus on working with Manitoba front-line workers, protecting them, because without them we don't have the front-line services that Manitobans need and rely upon.

Teachers Employment Government Commitment

Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge): Well, Madam Speaker, I'm a little surprised to hear the Premier (Mr. Pallister) say that he will protect front-line workers when, during the course of the campaign, he refused to commit to maintaining the current level of teachers in Manitoba until he had seen the books.

Now he's seen the books. Can he now tell us whether or not he will fire teachers?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): I'd like to thank the member for the question.

We are very focused on education and the value of good education to our children here in Manitoba. Probably be good for you guys if you focused on getting a good education for the kids as well. I think, Madam Speaker, that there has been too long with focus on what worked for them and not what worked for the children.

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, my record in education in the community, both indigenous and nonindigenous, is very clear.

So we would like to know further details about the remarks that the minister made to the Manitoba Teachers' Society today. Apparently made quite an impression, because after he left the president of

MTS, the other MTS, that is, said we don't yet know what their agenda of austerity means for the future of public education, but we would be naive to expect the status quo. I would remind you that status quo was increasing education funding at or above the level of economic growth.

So can the minister tell us whether he plans to maintain the existing number of teachers now and into the future?

Mr. Wishart: I thank the member for the question.

I enjoyed a very welcome, a good welcome this morning, and I enjoyed my time with them and I plan on returning to their banquet this evening to continue my discussion with front-line educators in this province, listening to their needs. And, certainly, they have a lot to say about what they did and did not get from the previous government, did not get the type of support that they needed in terms of leadership, and they certainly didn't get the type of support that worried about the results for children in this province.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Rouge, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Madam Speaker, of course, we can't blame teachers for being confused. One week the government is delivering a Throne Speech that talks about consulting front-line education stakeholders, and then today the Minister for Education is saying that he can't define what a front-line worker is.

So notwithstanding the fact that they're using terms that they apparently don't know the definition for, we would like to know whether or not they will commit to maintaining the existing number of teachers now and into the future?

Mr. Wishart: I thank the member for the question.

We've been very clear that we're focused on getting good results for—in education here for Manitoba. And I think, in my discussions with the teachers, I certainly left the door open for ongoing discussions with the Manitoba Teachers' Society, and we certainly intend to listen to what they have to say.

But we are focused on getting good results. I suspect there are some people, perhaps on that side of the room and perhaps even in MTS, who have been listening to rumours and innuendo that has been spread by a number of members across the floor. I think it's time that they owned up.

Thank you.

QuickCare Clinics Expansion Commitment

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Madam Speaker, as we prepare to vote on the Throne Speech here this afternoon, Manitobans are still wondering what the government's hidden agenda exactly is. Lots has been left out of this Throne Speech, of course, including any mention of QuickCare clinics, which have proven to be an invaluable part of our health-care system.

Will the Minister of Health commit to expanding the number of QuickCare clinics in this province?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): I'm very proud of our government's Throne Speech. I look forward to seeing what the members opposite do when that vote comes to this House later this afternoon. I hope that they will stand with us and support the initiative of reducing ambulance fees. We heard during the campaign many Manitobans who said they had to choose between having somebody else drive them to the hospital or calling an ambulance.

That was the record under their government. They have an opportunity today to do the right thing, and I hope they support the Throne Speech later this afternoon.

Mr. Wiebe: We've heard from the Minister of Education today, Madam Speaker, that they're working hard not to define front-line workers. We've heard from the Minister of Health this week that he refuses to give his assurances that important capital projects like the Concordia health and fitness centre aren't on their list of cuts, and now he equivocates on a commitment to community clinics.

Will he commit today to expanding the number of QuickCare clinics from eight to 16 and bringing this service to underserved areas like northeast Winnipeg?

*(14:10)

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, the member opposite talks about definition of front-line workers. The only reason that they bring that up is they want to scare more people, just like during the campaign when they decided to go and try to scare Manitobans for the entire length of the campaign.

I think the only people they didn't try to scare during the campaign were cancer patients—oh, no, they tried to do that, too, actually.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Concordia, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Wiebe: Mr. Speaker, more than 170,000 patients have received non-emergent health care at QuickCare clinics, including in the minister's hometown of Steinbach. Surely the minister has talked to his neighbours, to his constituents, and he's gotten first-hand perspective from them of the positive experiences that they've had in the QuickCare clinics. Surely he can agree that this service should be available to all Manitobans.

Mr. Goertzen: I appreciate the frequent references we have to the great city of Steinbach now from these members. It's a little ironic because there's been more sightings of Elvis Presley over the last 17 years than NDP ministers in Steinbach, Madam Speaker.

You know, and when I asked, Madam Speaker, when I asked the premier to come to Steinbach to see the difficulty that they were having with the entrance to the hospital where people who were sick, people who were disabled couldn't get into the hospital, what I heard from the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) was he didn't have time to come. That's how they viewed Steinbach when they were in government.

Wildfire Prevention Northern Manitoba

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, first, I want to commend the heroic work of firefighters battling blazes in the Caddy and Beresford Lake area in Manitoba.

Last week, I asked the Premier (Mr. Pallister) to ensure the best possible fire prevention for our northern communities. The Premier replied by asking for my assistance to approach federal Liberals because the former Conservative government had changed the federal disaster assistance program, which pays for the cost of disasters and recovery but in fact offers little for prevention.

I ask the Premier: Did the—did I hear him correctly, that he asked me to help overturn the disastrous changes made by the former federal Conservative government to the disaster assistance program?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development): Madam Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. It gives me an opportunity to talk about the wonderful job that the provinces did

working together to address the fires that were recently in Beresford and in Caddy Lake.

And, Madam Speaker, I would also like to thank so much the responsible businesses out in West Hawk, the Nite Hawk Café and the local motel, who actually donated, generously, meals, sleeping accommodations for all of those individuals that were evacuated. I can assure you that working together, we really made a difference to all of those families that were evacuated within Manitoba and Ontario.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, fire disasters like at Fort McMurray are very costly, both battling the fire and in the recovery time. In his report on the 2003 British Columbia forest fires, Gary Filmon said an "area of clear consensus was that concentration of resources and effort on issues that anticipate, prevent and prepare for disasters is a better investment than on expenditures made in coping with disasters." That's a direct quote.

In view of Mr. Filmon's comments and the urgent need to prevent disasters like at Fort McMurray, I ask the Premier: What is his proactive plan to ensure that communities within the boreal forest region have preventive measures implemented to avoid the high costs associated with any disaster where fire gets into a community?

Mrs. Cox: Thanks, again, to the member opposite. Again, I think that it's fairly obvious, well, very obvious, that, in fact, when we work together with all of the other provinces as we've done in Manitoba, Ontario and in Alberta—we've also sent resources to Fort McMurray to assist them with the very huge, massive fires that they've seen out there—we do have the ability to address these fires.

It's not as if we don't have the resources. We have sprinklers; we have helicopters. We don't require fire boats because the use of helicopters has actually alleviated the need for them.

So just want to say that we have resources, and regardless of where those fires are, we're going to work together to ensure that we do everything we can for all municipalities and all cities and towns throughout the province of Manitoba.

Thank you.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, in northern Alberta it's been observed that the oil sands companies' installations were often better protected from fires than the community of Fort McMurray because there

were significant buffer zones around them and because structures in the installations were better fireproofed.

In light of the observation that more can be done to prevent fires spreading into our northern communities, I ask the Premier: Will he join me today in the opportunity to push our federal government, while the Prime Minister and Cabinet ministers are in Winnipeg this weekend, to support a major national effort to plan and implement better fire prevention measures to protect our northern communities?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, thank you to my honourable colleague opposite.

And I would say that I welcome co-operative approaches as the—as he is advocating on things like this. I've never felt that disasters should be partisan things and preventing them should not be a partisan effort, and we should work together in every respect to do that. So I encourage—I'm encouraged by his words and thank him for them.

I would also say in respect of the deductible which he referenced in his first question, the deductible issue, the tripling of a deductible expense to any provincial government is an onerous burden to put on a provincial budget, and I think all of us in this House should continue to advocate strongly, elbows up, for the changes that should happen in the federal government's policies in respect of the deductibles.

And in respect, also, of the efforts to—because we recognize no matter how skilful we are at prevention, flooding does occur, I think we should also join hands together and advocate very strongly for immediate action on the construction of an outlet at the north end of Lake Manitoba. These are very high priorities to prevent further damage and further hurt for the people of Manitoba, too many of them who have paid a high, high price to protect the rest of us for far too long.

Centrallia 2016 Francophone Business

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madame la Présidente, comme nous le savons tous, Centrallia se déroule cette semaine à Winnipeg. Ceci est un grand évènement pour les entreprises du monde entier à découvrir des nouvelles opportunités ici au Manitoba. Beaucoup d'entre nous déjà visité Centrallia, y compris la ministre responsable des affaires francophones.

La ministre peut-elle expliquer à la Chambre l'importance de cet évènement pour notre communauté d'affaires francophones?

Translation

Madam Speaker, as we all know, Centrallia is on this week in Winnipeg. This is a major event that allows businesses from around the world to discover new opportunities here in Manitoba. Many of us have already visited Centrallia, including the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs.

Could the minister explain to the Assembly the importance of this event for our francophone business community?

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs): Madame la Présidente, merci à mon collègue pour la question.

C'est un plaisir à parler avec les investisseurs francophones de partout au monde au Manitoba.

Translation

Madam Speaker, thank you to my colleague for the question.

It's a pleasure to speak with the francophone investors from around the world coming to Manitoba.

English

Our newly elected government is committed to expanding business opportunities and partnerships for Manitoba's businesses. We have a strong and dynamic francophone community and we are open for business, especially for business in French.

Manitobans being able to communicate in both languages, French and English, is certainly an asset when it comes to business development at the international level.

Merci beaucoup pour la question.

Translation

Thank you very much for the question.

**Corporate Audit
Public Disclosure**

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): Madam Speaker, the government has made a big pretense over being open and transparent, and yet the corporate—[interjection]

* (14:20)

Well, Madam Speaker, we'll see if they clap for the next part of the question.

The government has committed to spending \$750,000 on a corporate audit, and in that tender for the audit the exact language of the tender says that the corporate consultants will, and I quote, provide confidential—and advice and recommendations to the Minister of Finance.

Madam Speaker, what's the Minister of Finance hiding?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I thank the member for the question.

We could not be—we as a government could not be more pleased to be preceding—proceeding immediately to get done what we told Manitobans we were going to get done. We were elected on a promise to provide open government, elected on a promise to push resources to the front line. We were elected on a promise to find the duplication and waste in government and move to make it more efficient. That is the work that we're undertaking.

Couldn't be more pleased to answer the question and say it's the work that we're already pressing out. In the first 100 days these members will see real results.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Allum: Madam Speaker, I'm assuming that the Minister of Finance has a different dictionary than I do because open and transparent does not mean confidential advice to the Minister of Finance.

So will he commit to the House today that he will make this corporate audit, whenever it comes, will he make it public, yes or no?

Mr. Friesen: I thank the member for the question.

And I acknowledge transparency is very important, and Manitobans can be assured of the fact that as we go forward down this path they will have information, they will have the terms of reference. It is a journey that we must undertake. The challenge before us is enormous, the challenge of the work left undone by the previous government.

But Manitobans can be assured that they will be on this journey with us, that we will convey in real terms where we intend to go, and then, unlike our predecessors, we plan to actually go there.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry-Riverview, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Allum: I've asked three questions yesterday and two today. The Minister of Finance is oh for five now on very simple questions, and I know the Premier (Mr. Pallister) likes sports analogies so we'll keep pitching 'til this Minister of Finance gets a hit.

What we want to know today, in his corporate audit that he has undertaken to spend \$750,000 on, which says that to provide confidential advice and recommendations to the Minister of Finance, will he answer with a simple yes or no: Will he make this corporate audit public, yes or no?

Mr. Friesen: What the member always lacks in content, he makes up for in enthusiasm and energy.

Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to also convey to the members on both sides of the House that we're proud of the efforts that we will undertake to solicit from Manitobans ideas about how to bring the improvements that are necessary for Manitoba. Part of this comprehensive plan that we will embark on will be a comprehensive examination of the issues that Manitobans are going to weigh in on. There will be opportunity, there will be a context in which they will give that feedback.

But I would leave the member with this question: His leader said earlier that she fiercely opposed ideas that bring grief and hurt, and I would say to them, what about a PST increase to 8 per cent? Was that grief and hurt?

Budget 2016 Poverty Reduction Plan

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Six years ago, the former government developed Manitoba's first comprehensive poverty reduction initiative called ALL Aboard, which included affordable housing, sustainable employment, food security, education and training, closing the gap for indigenous Manitobans and supports for early childhood development and parents.

The Minister of Education said ALL Aboard should be scrapped, and this government has yet to put forward a comprehensive plan to address poverty in Manitoba despite the Premier's alleged concern for low-income citizens.

Since the government has dismissed the ALL Aboard strategy, what multi-faceted poverty reduction plan will the government put forward in the budget to take its place?

Hon. Scott Fielding (Minister of Families): I want to thank the member for her question.

A part of this—poverty obviously is an important issue that needs to be addressed just—not just here in Manitoba, but across the country. What we are committed to do, obviously, is providing more money in people's pockets, which we think makes sense in terms of raising the personal exemption which we think will make a big difference for them.

There is a number of programming that is there. We need to continue on that path because improving outcomes for people in terms of poverty is extremely important for us as a government.

Affordable Housing Units

Ms. Fontaine: Madam Speaker, safe, stable and affordable housing is a necessary prerequisite for families escaping poverty and is something many of our—my constituents depend on. The former government had allocated \$100 million in the budget for 2015 for Manitoba Housing and had committed to building 1,000 new social and affordable housing units over a three-year period.

How much can Manitoba Housing expect in the upcoming budget and how many housing units will this government commit to?

Mr. Fielding: I want to thank the opposition member for her question.

Housing is obviously something that's interlinked with a further question in terms of poverty. This government is one that fought for three years in terms of increasing the housing allowance, was a part of it, and until last minute, this government is the one that followed the lead of this Conservative government in terms of that.

So thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns, on a final supplementary.

Sustainable Employment Supports

Ms. Fontaine: A key piece of the ALL Aboard was supporting EI participants in their transition into sustainable employment. Programs like Empowered to Change has helped more than 200 parents of young children on EI transition into training or employment.

What supports will the government put in place to help Manitobans, specifically young parents, transition out of social assistance?

Mr. Fielding: Madam Speaker, you know, the proof is in the pudding. If you look at what the past government did in terms of poverty rates and everything else, it's dramatically gone up with the NDP government that was in place. So we need to work with everyone to get these problems addressed because it is an extremely important issue for us.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THRONE SPEECH

(Sixth Day of Debate)

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes), and the amendment and subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Elmwood, who has nine minutes remaining.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to continue addressing the Speech from the Throne.

And, you know, we have witnessed this Premier (Mr. Pallister), basically, for the last week or so acting as a No. 1 cheerleader for the sale of MTS to Bell in this province, a sale that is very large. It's \$3.9 billion. That's how big this sale is.

And just so you know how the relative share of the telcos in Canada, BC right now has about 28 per cent of the Canadian market in terms of revenue, Rogers is second at about 16.3 per cent and Telus is third at around 15.9 per cent.

The Manitoba competitors are going to drop from four to three. And, you know, that is a significant development, because what we had in Canada over the last 10 years is we had Prime Minister Stephen Harper, their federal cousins in Ottawa, running the government for the last 10 years, since 2006, promoting a policy that made sense to make certain that there was a fourth wireless option available in Canada across the country. And what this government is doing by supporting this deal is they are flying in the face of what their federal cousins were trying to do for the last number of years.

* (14:30)

Now, MTS, as most people know by now, has pretty much the lowest prices in Canada. It's got good profit levels; it's made substantial capital investments and we've proven that over and over again by showing charts that indicate that MTS itself has spent about \$200,000–\$200 million a year in each of the last five years in terms of capital investment in Manitoba. And going forward, this deal, Bell, in this deal, Bell is promising essentially the same amount of capital investment as has been going on, no more. They have basically aggregated the \$200 million a year that MTS has been spending in each of the last five years going forward, and they're saying, well, we're going to spend a billion. Well, that's exactly the same amount that MTS had been spending.

In terms of 4G mobile wireless fibre to the doorstep and competitive TV services, MTS is already a leader. As a matter of fact, in a lot of these areas MTS started developing these services earlier than Bell did, has a better penetration rate in the Manitoba market than Bell does in Ontario and actually covers more of the province than Bell does by percentage. MTS is covering, you know, up beyond 90 per cent of the people in this province, and I don't think Bell is doing that currently in Ontario.

Bell is planning to get this deal through, Madam Speaker. Bell is planning to divest one-third of its MTS wireless customers to Telus, and they already have an arrangement with Telus anyway, so this is kind of like not exactly as transparent as it looks.

Now, I just want to let you know that pre-merger in Manitoba, MTS has an incredible 50 per cent of the market. That means that one in every two wireless customers in Manitoba currently is with MTS. One of the reasons they're with MTS is (a) their low price, but also the fact that they have unlimited coverage on data. They're the only carrier that does.

And so many of you will know, if you're with Rogers, like I am, you get your monthly bill and there's frequently overcharges for extra usage. Well, that doesn't happen, Madam Speaker, with MTS.

Well, guess what's going to happen? As soon as this deal is concluded, you're going to have 50 per cent of the Manitoba consumer market having to deal with paying overage charges and having their rates go up, and I want to know what the Premier is going to say then, after all his cheerleading and with those pompoms flying, leading the parade, as if he's

being run out of town. That would, in fact, is going to happen in six months to a year; people are going to want to run him out of town when they find that they're—they have to pay all these overage charges and their rates are going up.

As I'd indicated pre-merger, Rogers has 34 per cent of the market. Bell has now 7, and they are going to end up with 40 per cent. Telus has 9; they're going to end up with 25 per cent. That is the argument that they are making to try to get this deal through. And whether it's going to fly or not I don't know because there are some sensible people in this country, fortunately, who are filing objections with the regulators in Ottawa, unlike this government and this Premier (Mr. Pallister).

We have a report from the Canadian Media Concentration Research Project that I tabled today in the House called, Why Bell's bid to buy MTS is a bad idea—bad news; report submitted to the Competition Bureau assessing Bell and Bell Enterprises' proposed bid to acquire Manitoba telecommunications services.

These are well-thought-out arguments developed by professors—one is a Ph.D.—pointing out how this deal is bad for Manitoba, and we have no evidence that this government has done any research on the subject at all, let alone attempt to file any objections. You would think, Madam Speaker, that even in the interests of getting perhaps a better deal for Manitoba, that they would file—that they would file an intervention in the hopes that they would reject this deal and then have Bell come back with a better proposition for the province. And by doing so they would actually look like they were more impartial in this sale rather than taking the cheerleading approach.

So, Madam Speaker, I indicated that prices are low compared to the rest of Canada. They want to talk about rates, rates going up. And, in fact, of course, since the phones were privatized—MTS was privatized—by the Filmon government in 1997, 20 years ago, rates have gone up. Of course they've gone up. But they are still lower than other parts of Canada, lowest in Canada out here in Manitoba and in Saskatchewan.

And, in fact, the members should check the facts and they would find out that on a couple of other fronts Saskatchewan telephone system, SaskTel, actually gives more money back, way more back to the Saskatchewan Treasury than MTS does. And they are a profitable company. MTS is a profitable

company. They're investing at the same level that is being proposed in this deal.

No one's been able to show me where this deal is a net benefit. There—it's just—give me one—one—criteria that shows that this is a good deal. And I—you know, I appeal to the—all these new members across the way. Like, why don't you start asking questions over there, right? Because it's your constituents, your constituents who are going to be demanding to know why they don't have unlimited service anymore and why they're paying overage charges and why their price has doubled. They're going to be asking you those questions real soon.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I would just remind all honourable members that when posing questions or making comments, that you do it through the Chair and not personalize it by using the word you.

So, the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and also to my colleagues on this side and also a third of the other side of the House.

It gives me great pleasure today to stand up and put a few words on the record in regards to our fantastic Throne Speech that was delivered by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba a couple weeks ago now.

Madam Speaker, I just wanted to start off by congratulating yourself on the election of Speaker. I know that you will do an excellent job in that Chair. You've always been a fair, common-sense colleague who had gone above and beyond your days and with your experience to help many of us so-called newbies. And some of us who are class of 2011, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) had stated yesterday, we found—we felt very privileged and honoured to have you as a mentor in the early years of our political career.

I'd also like to welcome back the clerks; the table officers; the Chamber staff; of course, the Hansard staff as well; everybody who works in this absolutely incredible building of the Manitoba Legislature. It is truly a privilege and a pleasure to serve the great people of the Lac du Bonnet constituency, as well as working hard for all Manitobans each and every day here in this great, great Chamber.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to offer congratulations to all of the—all of our new colleagues on this side of the House and on the other side of the House as well.

You're going to find that for the first while you're going to be sitting back and, maybe, at times, sit there and be in awe of this great room of this Chamber, and at other times you're going to sit back and think, what in the world did I get myself into, as we enter through question period and as we enter through the proceedings of the House on a day-to-day basis.

* (14:40)

But, overall, Madam Speaker, I know that every member of the House who put their name forward to run in the last election, those who were victorious and those who came close but didn't quite make it, I know that they all have put their names forward for the right reasons. And I believe that doesn't matter of the political stripe, you're here trying to do well for your constituents and to represent your constituents here in the Manitoba Legislature.

As we saw in the election just a few weeks back, Madam Speaker, of course you can't do these types of jobs without many, many people supporting you. And so I would like to reference a few of those people now who helped me out in campaign 2016. And, of course, some of those people had—were with me as well in the campaign of 2011.

Mr. Bob Grant, my campaign manager—I can't say enough about Bob. He's gone through many elections, and I believe of the elections that he's helped out in, I believe he was a campaign manager for at least seven of them, and I believe that he's only had one loss out of all those years. And I believe there was—there were some interesting times during that one loss, but we won't go there. We'd like to talk about all his victories. And the one thing that Bob brings to the team is that there's no one specific job that he's going to be doing. He ends up pounding in signs. He ends up putting together signs. He ends up delivering some food to the volunteers. He drives around. He does some door knocking. He does some get-out-the-vote training. He absolutely is that total package, and I just—my hat's off to Mr. Bob Grant, and, of course, his better half, Nancy, who has to put up with him because I honestly feel that he's the human Energizer Bunny for as much effort that he puts in on a day-to-day basis. So thank you, Bob and Nancy.

Phil, my get-out-the-vote chairperson—many, many people to co-ordinate and to organize and to instruct in regards to getting ready for E-day, plus, of course, advance polls now. We've put a major emphasis on get out the vote for advance polls. And

Phil, you have absolutely—over the last few years, you were also my constituency association president and we've become quite close friends, and I just—it's been an honour getting to know you, and thank you very much for all the help.

Claudia, my volunteer chair, who basically spent countless hours getting volunteers, co-ordinating them, whether it's to help service the campaign offices or to do the calling around the constituency and looking for that support. But not only looking for the support but then once we have that support, making sure that everybody is feeling part of the team and making sure that they're ready to get out and vote, whether it was in the advance polls or in—on E-day.

Al, Elaine and Joan, I can't say thank you enough for such a well-run Lac du Bonnet campaign office. We had two campaign offices in the last election, in 2016, and we had one situated in Beausejour and one in Lac du Bonnet. And Al, Elaine and Joan, they just absolutely ran that office like clockwork, Madam Speaker. It was just so nice to see and the way that they had decorated it and that welcoming feeling when constituents had come in and had any kind of questions. They were all so very prompt in making sure that if there was a constituent that had a question and I wasn't at the campaign office that particular day, to make sure that I got the message so I got back to those constituents in a very timely manner.

Phil S., my official agent—I should have probably ended my—today's speech to the throne with talking about Phil, but I'm going to attempt to do this right now. He's my official agent and he was my official agent for 2011, as well. I had got to know Phil quite well; as I was growing up he was one of my best friend's dad and I know that we've had a couple of stories in regards to accidents and losing some really, really close friends.

So back, I guess about 16, 17 years ago now, my friend Phil Jr. was in a truck-driving accident on the No. 1 Highway just in Ontario, and it was a—and he was a truck driver and he'd had a head-on collision with another semi. And, unfortunately, my friend Phil didn't make it through, but his dad, Phil Sr., agreed to become my campaign—or my official agent in the last election and he stuck with me over the last few years and it's just been a tough go. But I appreciate his dedication and his attention to detail, and with myself losing my dad in the last year, he has filled a little bit of that void, Madam Speaker. So

I just want to say thanks to Phil and his wife; I treasure her as well, so.

We had quite the sign crew, Madam Speaker, and the nice thing with being an incumbent MLA and following some great shoes to fill over the last 20 years, you end up inheriting and—inheriting team members that have come along for all these years. And my main sign guy, the construction brains behind the whole sign construction, is Gerry Lanoo. And they knew—we knew ahead of time, of course, that the time of year that we were going to be campaigning and so he devised a system so that it wasn't just those really thin wire H-stands that go into the signs. These things were fairly solid, and I know he spent a few weeks constructing them and getting friends to help with the welding all that type of stuff, Madam Speaker, and you needed a three-quarter-ton to haul around some of our signs, and the rebar and that, that went with them.

And so with Gerry, he had some great help to install the signs. And that was Robert, Jim [*phonetic*], Bill [*phonetic*], Jerry [*phonetic*], and, of course, campaign manager Bob, who went around the constituency, as well, as well as Art and Gil from further north, and, of course, another Paul from even further north, up in the Bissett area, that helped tremendously, because, as you know, the Lac du Bonnet constituency is quite large and so we go all the way from Garson-Tyndall all the way to Bissett. And some of those roads travelled are a little questionable at times but I know that with the infrastructure investments that this government, our government, is going to be making, they should be improving some of those along the way as well as others in Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

Now I've spent quite a bit of time talking about the campaign team and I know that on this side of the House, the Progressive Conservative government, we are all about that team and teamwork, Madam Speaker. You just can't do this type of job with not only a great team of new MLAs and team members, colleagues, but you absolutely need that family support. And I know that absolutely everybody in here who have already spoke does not forget their team and their home team.

My wife, Tracey, and my boys, Brayden and Jarvis, when I first decided to run in 2011 it took us about two, two and a half weeks to decide to even throw my name for the nomination. And then this time around when we were thinking about running for the 2016 election again, this wasn't just an

automatic, Madam Speaker. And I know you've gone through a few elections as well and you do need that support and confidence of your home team.

* (14:50)

And so, again, we sat down as a family and, of course my boys are older now. One is—Brayden's driving; not fully on his own yet, so Tracey, my wife, she still has all her hair as she's co-piloting as we go down the highway. And my younger guy, Jarvis, you know, they're getting to be a little more aware. And as far as the TV ads during the campaign, whether it was the NDP ads or the Liberal ads or our ads, I mean, they were critiquing them as they'd come up on the television, and of course reading a lot and listening to what their classmates were saying and various people throughout the constituency in the province.

It is a great time to educate our youth, and we need to encourage more and more youth to get out and vote and participate in democracy, Madam Speaker, because the—our youth is our future and we need to make sure that they're well-educated and they're going to be staying in the province because many of us are going to be getting older, of course, and we know that that large bubble is going to be happening around 2035 and we're going to need to make sure that our youth are very well-educated so that they can take care of us.

So I just want to say thanks to my home team, Tracey and Brayden and Jarvis, for all their support, because, of course, as all of us know in this House, campaigning is not exactly an easy thing to do and sometimes you just need to come home for that great big hug, so.

To my mom, Lydia, I've already referenced—this could be a tough one—I've already referenced the loss of my dad a year ago. It's been a tough year, but we've kept ourselves very, very busy, and with that there's not a day that goes by where you don't think of dad. And so mom was a huge help throughout the campaign, kept her busy on the phones, and I don't think she pounded too many signs but she definitely helped with the calling and getting the snacks to the volunteers and all that, and just being that support again. So it's just been, again, a great family support.

My brother-in-law and sister-in-law, again, with their kids, came out canvassing, door knocking. It was quite the election this time. It was a bit different because we only had the one candidate running against us, the NDP candidate, and, again, I applaud

her for putting her name forward because it should be a race; it should be a competition within the various constituencies. And, even though they didn't have too many signs out there and the candidate wasn't all that mobile around the constituency, we kept working as if there was four competitors against us and we were, you know, 10 votes behind, Madam Speaker. And so with the family support and all the volunteer support, it was very much appreciated.

My brother, Greg, and his wife, Monique, I just have to say a couple of quick words. We've—we as a family have tackled and survived cancer over the last few years, and my sister-in-law Monique actually yesterday, Madam Speaker, underwent some major surgery in regards to cancer yesterday, and it's—I'm very, very happy to report that it went very, very well. Of course, we're going to wait for some final, final results, but, again, it just hits you, because absolutely everybody in here has been affected one way or another by cancer, and I sure can hardly wait to see the day when we can eradicate that cancer. So I encourage everybody to join together a non-partisan issue and make sure that we're doing everything we can to try to eradicate that sickening, sickening, disease.

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

So, that being said, I mean, in some of the situations with my brother and my sister-in-law and her—their two boys, there was lots going on on their plate, so sometimes it was just nice to have those conversations to take some of that pressure off of them and to talk about campaigning or various political things, so sometimes just telling stories, Mr. Acting Speaker.

And congratulate—congratulations to you, Mr. Acting Speaker, for being appointed to that position. I know you're going to serve us quite well, you've got a great sense of just being and listening to people so I think you're going to do a great job there, and your demeanour serves that seat very, very well, as well. So congratulations to you.

Now I know my time is getting closer and closer to the end here and I just wanted to mention that this year, just recently within the last week, I just—I started my 22nd year as a teacher and I wanted to say thank you to absolutely all those friends and coworkers and all those connections I've made over those 22-plus years in the teaching profession for all the emails of congratulatory—or the congratulatory emails.

Many people across Manitoba were looking for a change and they were looking for Manitoba—for a better Manitoba and they knew that by electing us, the Progressive Conservative government, that they were going to see that change, they were going to see that change for a better Manitoba because they were tired of the fearmongering. They were tired of the broken promises, and so I know that Manitobans spoke loud and clear on April 19th in regards to giving us a very, very, very solid mandate of 40—of a seat of 40 people to represent them as MLAs on the Progressive Conservative side.

I just want to say thank you for the opportunity for getting up to put a few words on the record. I look forward to our—to everybody joining this afternoon and, hopefully, making that vote for the Throne Speech unanimous. I encourage everybody to work closely together and make sure that we're moving Manitoba forward in a better way.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): Monsieur le Président, c'est un grand plaisir d'être ici, donner ma réponse au Discours du Trône dans cette Chambre ici dans la Législature du Manitoba.

Je vis à Saint-Boniface depuis 38 ans maintenant avec mon épouse Claudette. On a élevé nos enfants Pascal et Eric là. C'était une place où il y a un sens d'identité, un sens d'être enraciné dans la communauté, une place où il y a l'histoire du Manitoba chaque jour que vous êtes là. Tu peux voir la tombe de Louis Riel, tu peux voir l'histoire de notre province en pleine évolution. Je suis très fier d'être un membre de la communauté.

Et c'est une communauté en pleine évolution, Monsieur le Président, une communauté où il y a les francophones, le cœur de la francophonie et aussi le cœur de la communauté belge depuis longtemps et aussi les Ukrainiens, les Polonais, et depuis les dernières 30 ans on a vu les Vietnamiens, les Laotiens, les personnes qui viennent de l'Afrique de l'ouest qui parle le français comme leur deuxième langue mais leur langue de préférence ici au Canada.

Et c'est une communauté où il y a beaucoup de diversité. La communauté de Norwood, c'était d'origine une communauté anglophone. Maintenant il y a un énorme mélange des personnes qui habitent là. Donc c'est une communauté en évolution comme la province du Manitoba.

Translation

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to be here to give my response to the Throne Speech in this Chamber, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

I have been living in St. Boniface for the last 38 years now with my wife Claudette. We raised our children Pascal and Eric there. It is a place where there is a sense of identity, a sense of rootedness in the community, a place where the history of Manitoba is felt every day. You can see Louis Riel's grave, you can see the history of our province as it evolves. I am very proud to be a member of that community.

And it's an evolving community, Mr. Speaker, a community where you have francophones, the heart of Francophonie and also the heart of the Belgian community for a long time, and also the Ukrainians, the Poles, and for the last 30 years we've seen people from Vietnam and Laos also and people from Western Africa who have French as a second language but as their language of choice in Canada.

It's a community where we see a lot of diversity. The community of Norwood was originally English-speaking but now you have quite a mix of people living there. So it's an evolving community just like the province of Manitoba.

English

So it's a community that I've always been proud to live in. It's a community where you make good friends. You have a sense of rootedness, a sense of history, a sense of identity of the province, and I'm very proud to serve the community and to have the support of the community over these many years.

C'est aussi une communauté où il y a les problèmes de pauvreté, les sans-abri. Aussi c'est une communauté où il y a les riches, les personnes qui a fait beaucoup d'argent avec leurs entreprises. C'est une communauté où il y a les juges et les professionnels, une gamme de personnes avec les capacités de faire les choses comme la construction, les plombiers, les électriciens, les menuisiers. Donc il y a un énorme caractère à la communauté. Ils ont construit beaucoup des choses ensemble qui a fait une différence dans la qualité de vies des personnes qui habitent là.

Translation

It's also a community where you have problems of poverty and homelessness. It's a community where you have rich people who have made a lot of money

from their businesses, and judges and professionals, a wide range of people with the ability to make things like buildings, the plumbers, the electricians, the carpenters. So it is a community with a lot of character. They have built many things together which have made a difference in the quality of life of its residents.

* (15:00)

English

So it's a community with a great range of people, everybody through—from homeless people to people that have been very fortunate in our society and have made enormous amounts of money and everybody in between, professionals and tradespeople of all different kinds, a community of builders, and they've always made a tremendous contribution to looking after each other.

J'aimerais dire un énorme merci à ma communauté et j'aimerais considérer mon équipe électorale aussi. Ils ont fait une énorme différence. C'était un groupe où on a eu beaucoup de fun ensemble. Nous avons travaillé fort en ordre de gagner l'élection mais nous avons eu une attitude positive de faire les choses dans cette façon où tout le monde était respecté.

Translation

I would like to say a big thank you to my community and I would like to consider my electoral team as well. They made a huge difference. It was a group in which we had a lot of fun together. We worked hard in order to win the election but we had a positive attitude to do things in such a way that everyone was respected.

English

It was a great team of people that I enjoyed working with.

Les bénévoles, ils ont fait une énorme différence. Ils ont donné généreusement de leur temps. Ils ont fait beaucoup de travail dans les soirées, sur les weekends. Ils ont mis les pancartes dans beaucoup de cours dans la communauté.

Translation

The volunteers made a huge difference. They gave generously of their time. They did a lot of work on evenings and on weekends. They placed signs in many yards in the community.

English

They did a lot of work, and they had a lot of fun, and we had an attitude of making sure that it was a positive experience where we made friends.

J'aimerais dire un énorme merci à Bill et Lucille, Tom, Anders, Setha, Jenny, Roanna et beaucoup des autres, ma famille, bien sûr, et beaucoup des autres.

Translation

I'd like to say a great big thank you to Bill and Lucille, Tom, Anders, Setha, Jenny, Roanna and many others—my family, of course, and many others.

English

I'd like to thank all the volunteers for the efforts that they put in and the friendships that we've made.

Not only is it a community where all kinds of people of all different walks of live life and come from many experiences.

Mais, c'est aussi une communauté des organisations. Ça commence avec l'influence de Louis Riel. Sa tombe est là à la Cathédrale. Son influence est énorme, donc la communauté de Saint-Boniface, c'est une communauté unique. Il y a un parc Lagimodière, la mère, la première femme de Québec qui a établi à Saint-Boniface, qui est une des personnes qui a commencé la nation métisse à Saint-Boniface.

Et nous avons encore l'Union nationale des Métis dans le communauté, et Paulette Duguay, elle est un voisin, elle a fait une contribution. Et avant elle, c'était Gabriel Dufault qui était le président de l'union nationale des Métis.

Mais aussi nous avons l'Union nationale des Français, et il y a deux semaines on était ensemble dans la communauté, nous avons fait un tour de la communauté, un tour historique sur le bicycle. Et nous avons fait beaucoup des choses ensemble à célébrer leur participation dans la communauté.

Donc j'aimerais reconnaître la famille Parent et beaucoup des autres membres de cette communauté qui a décidé de vivre ici au Manitoba, de vivre en français mais de vivre à Saint-Boniface, mais de faire leur vie ici dans le province du Manitoba.

Translation

It's also a community of organizations. It begins with the influence of Louis Riel. His grave is there at the Cathedral. His influence is enormous. So the St. Boniface community is unique. There is

Lagimodiere Park, the mother, the first woman from Quebec who settled in St. Boniface, one of the people who started the Metis nation in St. Boniface.

And we also have the Union nationale métisse in the community, and Paulette Duguay, she's a neighbour, and she also made a contribution. And before her, there was Gabriel Dufault, who was the president of the Union nationale métisse.

We also have the Union nationale des Français. Two weeks ago we were together in the community, and we did a historical tour of the community by bike. And we did many things together to celebrate their involvement in the community.

So I'd like to recognize the Parent family and many other members of the community who have decided to live here in Manitoba, to live in French, but in St. Boniface, but to make their life here in the province of Manitoba.

English

So we have many unique organizations in the community. The Union nationale métisse with their president, Paulette Duguay, and her predecessor, Gabe Dufault. And his brother, actually, is a neighbour of mine, just lives out the back door.

And they're very committed to the reconnaissance de la communauté métisse ici au Manitoba, mais aussi la reconnaissance de la langue française et en particulier la langue Michif. C'est une des langues officielles autochtones ici parmi six autres, cinq autres ici au Manitoba.

Translation

And they're very committed to the Metis community being recognized here in Manitoba, but also the French language being recognized, especially the Michif language, which is one of the five or six official Native languages here in Manitoba.

English

There's also the national union of our French citizens in St. Boniface. I've got many friends in that community, and we spent the day together a couple of weeks ago where we did a tour of the community, a 26-kilometre bike ride, and we saw all the different historic sites together and explained them to each other.

C'était un tour en français, mais il y a beaucoup de personnes là avec le français comme leur deuxième et peut-être même leur troisième langue.

Translation

The tour was in French but many people there have French as their second, or even their third, language.

English

We had a young family there from, actually, Peru, and they were wanting to learn the French language because one of the members of that family was an engineer for Hydro International and was going to be doing work in Africa, so he came out to participate in the community and develop the skills he needed to be able to work in French in another part of the world.

We also have une organisation qui s'appelle AMICALE. C'est une organisation qui représente les immigrants, les réfugiés qui parlent français comme leur langue officielle ici au Canada. C'était une organisation qui a fait une énorme différence dans l'intégration des immigrants et des réfugiés dans la communauté. Beaucoup des personnes qui travaillent dans les trois paliers de gouvernement, dans le secteur privé, les personnes professionnelles, les personnes qui organisent à l'avantage de leur communauté mais aussi de notre communauté aussi.

Translation

We also have an organization called the Amicale. It's an organization that represents immigrants, refugees who speak French as their official language here in Canada. It was an organization that made a huge difference in the integration of immigrants and refugees in our community. Many people who work at the three levels of government, in the private sector, professionals, people who organize for the benefit of their community, but our community as well.

English

We also have two legions in St. Boniface, the Belgian legion out of the Belgian Club and the Norwood legion, and they represent many of the veterans in the community, many of whom served in all of the conflicts that we have entered in as recently as Afghanistan back to the Korean War and, of course, the Second World War, and there's very few left that you can ever find now from the First World War. But the legions are very active in our community and bring families together from across many generations.

Il y a aussi les églises, la paroisse de la Cathédrale, c'était une présence énorme dans la

communauté et ils [inaudible] ce weekend. Je serai là.

Translation

You also have the churches, the Cathedral parish, an enormous presence in the community and they [inaudible] this weekend. I will be there.

St. Philips Anglican Church, and before that the United Church was in the area and there's a Mennonite church in the area and many other small congregations that bring people into the community and they're all around us in the community.

Il y a trois divisions scolaires dans la communauté:

Translation

There are three school divisions in the community:

English

La division scolaire Franco-Manitobaine, the Louis Riel School Division and independent schools, and they represent all the historic currents of the community. The Holy Cross independent schools have been there for decades, and they do a good job educating lots of folks in the community.

La division scolaire Franco-Manitobaine et leurs successeurs, reconnue par la Constitution du Canada d'avoir la capacité pour la communauté francophone de contrôler et de gouverner leur système d'éducation en français. C'était la législation nous avons mis en place dans les années '90 dans cette Législature après un ordre du Cour Suprême que on doit avoir un système d'éducation en français gouverné par les représentants, les parents en particulier de la communauté, et cet système nous servons dans une façon très positive. Ils ont la petite enfance là. Ils ont un engagement de investir dans les jeunes familles en ordre de préserver leur capacité dans la langue française et aussi d'avoir leurs jeunes préparés pour le commencement de leur éducation formale.

Translation

The Division scolaire franco-manitobaine and their successors, recognized by the Canadian Constitution, so that the francophone community would be able to control and govern its own educational system in French. That was legislation that we adopted in this Chamber following a Supreme Court order requiring that we have a French system of education governed by the representatives, the parents of the community in particular, and this system has served us in a very

positive way. There is also an early childhood centre there. They are committed to investing in young families in order to preserve their capacity to speak French and to prepare their youth for their formal education.

English

The Louis Riel School Division is also in our community, and it makes a big difference at schools like Nelson McIntyre School where I recently was. And they had a Living Library day there, and the Living Library had a number of our indigenous leaders show up at that school and have working groups with students there and talked about the experience of indigenous people in Manitoba, and you could see the excitement of the students as they were talking to real leaders in the community and then referencing that back to their studies in the school. That was a very concrete act of reconciliation that I thought the school division and that particular school, Nelson Mac, deserved a lot of credit for.

And they're moving on a new system of education there which they call experience-based education in partnership with The Forks where they're going to allow young people in that school to go to The Forks and do outdoor education, to do outdoor science, to do real experiments and to learn about the culture and history of our province at The Forks. And they're also going to do that through a project they call Propel, which is experience-based learning, and, as that project moves forward, every level of that school will have an experienced-based learning model that is not only academic but will also introduce them to the real opportunities to make a living in this province. And they should be commended for that.

Il y a aussi l'Université de Saint-Boniface, une des plus anciens institutions postsecondaires dans la province de Manitoba. C'était en existence avant l'Université du Manitoba. Pour plusieurs décennies, c'était un collège de l'Université du Manitoba mais notre gouvernement avec la pression de la communauté a mis en place un projet de loi de faire le collège de Saint-Boniface un université indépendant. C'est le seul université cent pour cent en français dans le ouest – à l'ouest de la province de Québec. C'est un université unique, c'est un université avec la capacité de former dans un façon très positive la prochaine génération des personnes qui aimeraient de vivre ou travailler en français mais aussi avec un capacité de travailler en anglais dans, pas simplement ici dans la province du

Manitoba, mais à travers le pays. Et l'Université de Saint-Boniface, c'est un institution énormément important, pas simplement dans la communauté de Saint Boniface mais dans la province du Manitoba.

Il y a aussi les institutions culturelles dans la communauté. La semaine dernière, nous avons eu les représentatifs de le Cercle Molière ici à la Législature. Mais il y a aussi le Centre culturel franco-manitobain. C'était un société de la couronne—It's a Crown corporation—mis en place durant le centenaire du pays du Canada en 1967, mais c'est une institution clé, parce que c'est une institution culturelle qui appuie beaucoup des autres organisations de la communauté d'avoir leur présence dans la communauté.

Et aussi il y a le Festival du Voyageur. Le Festival du Voyageur était fondé par Georges Forest, le grand champion des droits linguistiques ici dans la province du Manitoba.

* (15:10)

Translation

There is also the Université de Saint-Boniface, one of the oldest post-secondary institutions in the province of Manitoba. It existed before the University of Manitoba. For many decades it was a college of the University of Manitoba but our government, pressured by the community, introduced an act that made the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface an independent university. It's the only 100 per cent francophone university west of Quebec. It's a university that is unique, with the capacity to educate in a very positive way the next generation of people who would like to live and work in French, but also have the capacity to work in English not only here in Manitoba but all over the country. So the Université de Saint-Boniface is an institution that is enormously important, not only for the community of St. Boniface, but also for the province of Manitoba.

There are also cultural institutions in the community. Last week we had representatives of the Cercle Molière at the Legislature here. There is also the Centre culturel franco-manitobain, a Crown corporation that was established during Canada's centennial in 1967, but it's a key cultural institution because it supports many other organizations in the community, to have a presence in the community.

There's also the Festival du Voyageur, which was founded by Georges Forest, the great champion of linguistic rights in Manitoba.

English

So we have an enormous quality of cultural institutions: the cultural centre, which is a Crown corporation; the Cercle Molière, which is the longest running theatre company in North America—the longest continuously running theatre company in North America; and, of course, the Festival du Voyageur, which was founded by Georges Forest, who was a great champion for linguistic rights in the province of Manitoba—et aussi une personne métisse qui était fier d'être personne métisse.

Translation

—and a Metis who was very proud to be Metis.

English

We have community organizations, grassroots organizations, some, like the south St. Boniface residents' group that I've been in contact with in the last week, who are fighting enormous battles to make sure that their community is protected from industrial pollution right across the street from them. And they are fighting hard for the quality of life in their community.

L'Association des résidents du vieux Saint-Boniface, une organisation dans laquelle j'étais impliqué pour plusieurs années, une organisation qui a fait un plan pour la communauté à protéger la communauté d'être une place pour les familles mais aussi une place pour les autres.

Translation

The Association des résidents du vieux Saint-Boniface, an organization I was involved with for several years, that made a plan to protect the community and make it a place, not just for families, but for other people as well.

English

So these grassroots organizations like residents' associations, they make an enormous difference. They're a place where everybody can get involved at a grassroots level.

Nous avons aussi les organisations pour les buts non-lucratifs, comme Pluri-Elles, une organisation qui appuie les femmes dans la communauté, qui a mis en place les projets d'alphabétisation, literacy projects, et aussi l'Accueil francophone, une organisation qui appuie les immigrants, les réfugiés, d'être établi dans la province du Manitoba. Et bien sûr, la Société franco-manitobaine, la porte-parole de

la communauté francophone, leur siège social c'est concentré dans la communauté de Saint-Boniface. Et la Société franco-manitobaine était d'origine une organisation qui a appuyé les droits des familles d'avoir leur éducation en français, mais il est évolué dans une organisation qui appuie les droits linguistiques, qui appuie le culture de la francophonie dans la province du Manitoba, qui appuie le projet du loi numéro 6 sur l'essor de notre culture francophone dans le province du Manitoba, qui aimerait avoir une définition de la francophonie, d'être une personne qui aimerait de vivre ou travailler en français, pas simplement une personne avec la langue maternelle en français, en ordre d'avoir une définition de la communauté plus inclusive, plus ouverte aux autres qui aimeraient d'être membres de la communauté.

Il y a aussi le Flavie-Laurent qui a fait une énorme différence pour les pauvres dans notre communauté. Et the Catholic Health Corporation; the Catholic Health Corporation est maintenant responsable pour l'hôpital de Saint-Boniface, et aussi Marymount, et aussi Sara Riel, et aussi le centre de Santé en français.

Translation

We also have non-profit organizations like Pluri-Elles, an organization that supports women in the community, that started literacy projects, and the Accueil francophone which helps immigrants and refugees settle in Manitoba. And, of course, the Société franco-manitobaine, the organization that represents the francophone community, headquartered in St. Boniface. The Société franco-manitobaine was originally an organization that supported the right of families to be educated in French but it evolved into an organization that supports language rights, the culture of the Francophonie in the province of Manitoba, Bill 6 on the rise of our francophone culture in Manitoba, which seeks to define francophone as any person who would like to live or work in French, not just someone whose mother tongue is French, so that we would have a definition of the community that is more inclusive, more open to others who would like to be members of the community.

There is also the Centre Flavie-Laurent, which has made quite a difference for the poor in our community. And the Catholic Health Corporation, now responsible for the St. Boniface Hospital, and also Marymount, Sara Riel, and Santé en français.

English

The Catholic Health Corporation is a very important organization. They actually took over many of the institutions originally run by the Grey Nuns, including the first hospital in Manitoba, the St. Boniface Hospital, which remains an incredibly important institution in the community.

Mais il y a le centre d'accès de service en français pour les services en français et dans les centres d'accès il y a centre des services bilingues, il y a Santé en français, il y a l'aide sociale, il y a l'appui pour les garderies et cetera. Donc c'est une communauté aussi où il y a les organisations pour les affaires, des échanges, the World Trade Centre, which is currently hosting Centrallia in Manitoba.

Et aussi l'Entreprise Riel qui fait le développement économique local mais aussi the business improvement zones: the Provencher business improvement zone, the Marion business improvement zone. Donc c'est une communauté où on peut être fier d'être un membre de la communauté. C'est une communauté dynamique et vitale. J'aimerais féliciter tous les chefs des organisations, tous les citoyens et citoyennes de la communauté pour leur contribution.

Translation

There is the centre for services in French, and in these centres there are bilingual service centres, Santé en français, welfare services, support for daycares and so on. So it is a community where you have organizations for business, trade, the World Trade Centre, which is currently hosting Centrallia in Manitoba.

And Entreprise Riel, which does community economic development, and the business improvement zones: the Provencher business improvement zone, the Marion business improvement zone. So it's a community of which you can be proud to be a member. It's dynamic and vital. I'd like to congratulate all the leaders of those organizations, all the citizens of this community, for their contribution.

English

And, of course, there's the community clubs.

You can never forget les centres récréatifs parce qu'ils donnent les opportunités pour les jeunes de participer dans les loisirs, les sports, et cetera.

Translation

You can never forget the recreational centres because they provide opportunities for youth to be involved in sports and recreation, et cetera.

English

You've got Notre Dame community club; you've got Champlain Community Club; you've got the Norwood community club. You have tremendous opportunities for everybody.

Now, I want to thank all the new members and welcome all the new members to the Legislature. It's a real privilege to be elected here, and very few people get that experience in their lives. And it's important and precious time that we use every single day to make a difference not only for our constituents, but also for the people of Manitoba.

But I also want to thank the members that have served here in the past, and many of those members have been recognized already, but I do want to talk about the Eric Robinsons and the Greg Dewars and the Kerri Irvin-Rosses, the Sharon Bladys and the Deanne Crothers's and the Melanie Wights, as well as the Steve Ashtons, the Tom Nevakshonoffs, the Ron Lemieux's and the Ron Kostyshyns, as well as the Dave Chomiaks and the Erna Brauns, who were most recently members of Cabinet and put in countless hours. And I know the new members will be doing the same thing as well, because there is no 9 to 5 job when you become a member of the executive. So I want to congratulate those that have served and pay my respects to those people that are going to serve in the future.

As to the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, we need to position the province to move forward in the future, and I know every government has their own version of how we want to do that. But I always believe that many of the changes that we need to make not only come from the grassroots, but they also connect us to the larger issues that we're facing around the world: issues like how to grow the economy at a time after recession where the economy has been slower than what everybody wants and hasn't generated the resources we need to provide the services that people require to have a decent and dignified quality of life.

So we're going to have to ask ourselves how we can have a green, inclusive and growing economy. And that connects to the issue of climate change, which is one of the big issues we face in this period of history throughout the world. And it has to be a

solution that acknowledges the need to reduce carbon emissions and at the same time creates opportunities for the next generation to have decent employment. And that connects to our issues of infrastructure and the opportunities to take advantage of infrastructure in this province, and the issues of reconciliation, missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, and customary care and community-benefits agreements when we do things. All of these are important issues—and issues of inequality and poverty, all of these issues are not only global issues but they're Manitoba issues, and they're constituency issues. And as we connect those dots together we can, each of us, make a contribution at the local level. We can, each of us, make a contribution at the provincial level and at the Canadian level. And this Throne Speech has to allow us to move forward—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member's time is expired.

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): It is an honour and a privilege to have the opportunity to address the Assembly this afternoon.

And I would like to start off by expressing my deepest gratitude to everyone who supported and encouraged my journey into this Chamber as the MLA for Riel.

Like most other elected officials, I stand on the shoulders of a great number of women and men who mentored, assisted and volunteered for me in both of my campaigns, most recently in this past election, and prior to that in my initial campaign in Riel in 2011 where we did not win by conventional measures, but experienced our entire team becoming entrenched in the values of persistence, perseverance, patience, and above all else, the belief that when you are pursuing an admirable goal with an honest heart and integrity, to stick with it.

We learned a lot about teamwork along the way, and I will forever be grateful to the numerous supporters who stayed with me throughout it all, including: my campaign manager Keith Poulson and his entire family; my riding association president, David Meunier; my election-day duo of Lee Anderson and Lynn Cooper; as well as Carrie Wershler, Shariff Kahn, Brian Stepnuk, Mia Schorpion; my fundraising team of Wayne Anderson and Ken Cooper; along with many others.

Also, like many others in this Chamber, integral to my success was the love and support of my family. My husband Daniel Brunet was the most passionate sign guy a candidate could ever hope for and was responsible for painting Riel blue for the duration of the campaign.

* (15:20)

My mom offered the friendliest reception to all who came to our campaign office. And my children were exceptional volunteers, including my eldest son, Tyler Kehler, and his wife, Kara-Lynn; my grandson, Jaxon, who told everyone to vote nana; my youngest son, Joshua Kehler, and his partner, Madison Tardi; and my stepdaughters, Nicole, Chantal and Melanie Brunet, who helped in ways they could, both at home and on the campaign trail. I was especially touched when my 19-year-old stepdaughter passionately advocated for me on social media, telling all her friends to vote PC and to support her stepmom.

It was fitting that we had just celebrated the centennial of women's right to vote shortly before our campaign began. With that in mind, and with a declining voter turnout since 1973 in our province, I gave each of my five girls a commemorative coin that celebrates the anniversary of suffrage and asked them to always exercise their right in democracy and to always remember that nice women do want the vote.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm also grateful for the support of my predecessors in my constituency of Riel, Gerry Ducharme and David Newman, who have provided me great mentorship. I will also forever be indebted to my many colleagues in this House who door knocked with me in forty below and offered their unwavering support.

Also, to the women of this party who have offered me mentorship, friendship and, at the risk of sounding overly sentimental, a sisterhood, I say thank you. This talented and diverse group of women, many of whom are now integral part of our new government's caucus and Cabinet, each with a unique skill set and strength that will serve this province well, we stand together with many other women who make up our proud PC team: women like Jeannette Montufar, a leader in her profession as an engineer and an advocate for women's equality; Edna Nabess, a businesswoman with a huge heart for her community; Audrey Gordon, a woman who fought against many odds to achieve incredible success in her own right; as well as Sarah Langevin,

Raquel Dancho, Tracey Maconachie, Belinda Squance, Barbara Judt, Rae Wagner, Marsha Street, Allie Szarkiewicz and Angela Enright.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these and many other women are a part of our team and part of our new government. Our Premier (Mr. Pallister) has ensured the value of teamwork and inclusion are an essential part of our government. We believe that we are stronger when we work together and are committed to working with everyone, men and women alike, who want to make Manitoba the most improved province in the country for all Manitobans.

I would also like to note that equality and celebrating women's achievement is a non-partisan issue. And I congratulate all the talented and diverse women in this House for being leaders in their communities and role models in their society.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a proud Manitoban and Canadian, I would like to say how grateful I am to live in a place where a person like me, a former high school dropout and a teenage mom on welfare, could rise up through poverty and hardship to hold public office and become a leader and an advocate for our future generations.

At this time I would like to acknowledge my late maternal grandmother who walked away from domestic violence at a time when walking away meant walking alone; and my mother, Jeannette Nurse, who taught me that above all else our children are always worth fighting for; and my late stepfather whose untreated alcoholism prevented him from being the father he wanted to be, but taught me first-hand the need for a reduced stigma and the importance of breaking down barriers when it comes to mental health and addiction. The collective wisdom and experience of these family members, the battles they won and the battles they lost, will always be my guiding factors as I set out in my career as an elected official.

I would also like to mention two other individuals: my real father who abandoned me at the age of two, and then another man who, not unlike my father, left me when I was most vulnerable; 17 and pregnant. These two men gave me the heart of victim for a brief period of time, but they ensured that I would, for the rest of my life, have a heart for those who are victimized and always be willing to lend a voice to those who are struggling to find their voice and a helping hand to those who need it most.

I share these details of my personal life with my colleagues and all Manitobans because my experience of living in poverty and struggling to obtain a better life for my children and myself has left an indelible impression on me. It has shaped the way I view the world; it has taught me not to prejudge others, it has taught me to fight for worthy causes and to stand up for our future generation, and it has taught me to respect and value the diversity that is found in each and every human being.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am privileged to have now reached a point in life where I can give back to others. Together with my wonderful husband Daniel, we are nurturing our five children successfully into adulthood and welcoming their children, our grandchildren, into our lives.

But all too often we are seeing other families and individuals in the midst of struggle and hardship, struggles that have become all too common in our province. To those Manitobans, our government wants to assure them that they now have a team working for them, a team committed to helping them achieve a brighter future. They have a government that will provide a stronger economy so that they can find better jobs and obtain better programs and services. They have a government that is united in intent and enthusiasm to work hard for the betterment of all Manitobans, and I believe that the time has come for hope and optimism once again in our great province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to point out a valuable lesson that my personal experiences taught me. That we can best help and serve others when our own house is in order. I'm happy to be part of a government that shares this philosophy. Our Progressive Conservative government believes a strong fiscal plan and getting our house in order means being able to provide better programs and services to those who need them the most.

A stronger economy has benefits for us all and will help many people achieve that common dream of providing a better tomorrow for their children and their children's children. A stronger economy means our young people have a reason to stay in our province instead of leaving for greener pastures that had become all too common in our province of late.

With the previous administration's intent on increasing taxes and debt that ultimately hurt the underprivileged and the youth of our province the most, and with the broken promises that made average families choose between buying basketball

sneakers to help their kids stay engaged in sports or groceries because their dollars weren't stretching enough, all Manitobans paid the price.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Manitobans expect more of their government. Our PC team answered the call. We are engaged and ready to work every day for all the people of this great province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to share a story about a couple I met recently while out on the campaign trail. This couple living on a fixed income told me about their 20-year-old daughter who is prone to epileptic seizures. One night, out with friends, this young lady had a seizure and her friends called an ambulance. The young woman received the urgent medical attention she desperately needed and was okay. But, sadly, after her parents received an ambulance bill they could not afford to pay, they issued a dire warning to their daughter's friends do not call an ambulance; we cannot afford another bill.

I'm proud to be part of a government that listened to this family and many others, and we'll reduce ambulance fees for Manitobans in critical need.

This is but one example of how we're committed to helping others. We're also going to address the urgent needs of our most vulnerable and protect our children who need it most. I'm also extremely proud to be part of a team dedicated to developing a comprehensive mental health strategy. We are committed to working with mental health professionals and advocacy groups to ensure Manitoba leads the way in access to services like mental health programs, addiction counselling and treatment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as someone who has used education as a foundation for building a better life, I am immensely proud to be part of a government committed to a brighter future and better education for our youth. Our early childhood literacy strategy as well as our commitment to better access to post-secondary education will be life changing for many young people, and will help all our students succeed in our economy.

I am so proud to be part of a team that believes in the values of integrity, caring, inclusion, common sense and teamwork. These are the values that guide many wonderful Manitobans who have overcome adversity and are seeing better days ahead, and those who are still struggling but are hopeful and optimistic that a bright future is right around the

corner. These are the values that will guide our government as we face challenges head on and ensure that all Manitobans, those who are new to our province and those who have lived here their entire lives, achieve that brighter future.

These early commitments are just the beginning of a better Manitoba for everyone, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are just getting started.

* (15:30)

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): It is with great pride that I rise on behalf of the constituency of Dauphin and address the Throne Speech.

Thank you and congratulations, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on your appointment and to the appointment of Madam Speaker. The position of Speaker is held in high regard, and you're truly deserving of this distinction.

I'd like to begin by thanking—or congratulating all the 57 MLAs that were elected to this House, and I'd also like to acknowledge all those who weren't successful but, nonetheless, played a significant role in letting their names stand for election and for giving Manitobans a choice.

In my case, I want to thank Mr. Dwayne Sydor and Jim Macmillan for competing in the nomination, and I want to thank Darcy Scheller, Kate Storey, Gary Gulke [*phonetic*], and Darrell Inkster for their candidacies during the election.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a lot of reasons to be thankful. We live in a great province. We all have stories why we are here, but one thing's clear: getting here isn't easy, and it takes a lot of help from people along the way.

I know the chair is small behind me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but there's lots of people sitting in it right now, and it's one of the great things Manitoba is known for: a great caring people that help people out.

The Dauphin constituency is located in Manitoba's beautiful parkland north of the—Riding Mountain National Park and includes the communities of Roblin, Grandview, Gilbert Plains, Ochre River, Ste. Rose du Lac, Laurier, and the city of Dauphin. Agriculture is the foundation of this region, and, with its natural beauty, an area of the province that is second to none.

I want to begin by thanking the people of the Dauphin constituency for the privilege to be their

representative in the Legislature. It is indeed an honour to represent them, and I want to thank all those who helped me over the last year and a half leading up to and during the election.

My core organizational campaign team of Tere Stykalo, was my campaign manager; Jennifer Christjanson, my finance person; Jason Beyette, my sign and communications guide but who also did just a little bit of everything—and he was with me right from the beginning of the nomination; Ernie Sirski, who doesn't really have an official title but another one that brought a lot of depth and knowledge to our campaign and who was with me right from the beginning and helped—and he also helped out in so many ways; Ken Dyck, who was my fundraising chair; Kristen Hazel was my campaign office assistant; Lori Michaleski was my wife—or is my wife and—

An Honourable Member: That's on the record now.

Mr. Michaleski: Thankfully, now is on the record. Thank you. Well, for the record, then, she is also my motivation and who also did so much.

And also on my campaign team was Joanna Wasylyshen, my daughter, who also did a lot right throughout the campaign and right in the summertime doing the door knocking, and, if you can envision the Tasmanian devil, that's the type of personality she is—comes whipping into the situation and stirs it up and gets things going. So I appreciate that.

Madam Speaker—or, Mr. Deputy Speaker—sorry, just as important is many of the—are many volunteers, mentors, family, friends, volunteers, contributors of time and money for all—from all over the constituency, from Roblin to Ste. Rose, Laurier and everywhere in between, I thank all of them.

Thank you to Mr. Jordan Katz and Mr. Ivan Melny for all their help and guidance throughout the campaign. I want to thank my senior MLA colleagues of the PC team, all of the rookies, and Manitoba's new Premier (Mr. Pallister) and wife, Esther, for all the help, advice and support they provided during this campaign, a campaign about change, a campaign of hope and renewed optimism, and a campaign in the Throne Speech that improves confidence and gets Manitoba back on track.

The Throne Speech was consistent with the message and vision of our new Premier during the election, a message and vision clearly supported by Manitobans.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

I'd also like to thank the following people for their help and advice: the MLA from Lac du Bonnet, who was one of my main go-to guys throughout this election; Mr. Stu Briese, the former MLA for the Agassiz constituency; the Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Relations (Ms. Clarke); the MLAs from Arthur-Virden and Riding Mountain; and Mr. Robert Sopuck, Member of Parliament for Dauphin, Swan River, Neepawa, and his wife, Caroline.

And I'd also like to thank Mr. Stan Struthers, who formerly represented the Dauphin constituency. While Mr. Struthers decided not to run, and I didn't necessarily agree with a lot of his politics, Mr. Struthers was always approachable. Whether it was during my time on municipal council or simply talking about provincial issues over the last year or explaining to me what I was getting myself into, he was always fair and good to me, and I want to thank and acknowledge him for that.

My family came to Manitoba and settled in the Dauphin area in 1897. I grew up on a farm southwest of Dauphin where my wife, Lori, and I still live. We raised our family there, and it's where I was raised, along with my three brothers, by my parents, Frank and Olive Michaleski.

It's there that I was taught a lot about consequences, learned tried and true positive values, the same values being used today to build a better Manitoba. I thank my parents for the strong guidance they provided, the independence they encouraged, the wisdom, creativity and determination that they showed, the love and help and support that they simply gave and for the discipline that I now understand.

Trust, teamwork, compassion, common sense and inclusion: promoting these valley—values, which is the basis of the Throne Speech, makes as much sense today as it always has.

As I said already, I grew up in Dauphin. I got an education about hard knocks and life from the farm and a formal education at Dauphin public school system, and over the last year and a half I ran into a number of teachers from my high school days, who I appreciated them encouraging me on my way, and I also want to thank them right now for—because those report cards weren't always rosy for me. I want to say thank you to them for providing fair and critical report cards because it did help me.

Education is important, the best investment we can make for the future of our province, and we need to get it right. It's a key and necessary component to making Manitoba the most improved province in all of Canada and key to a stronger economy and stronger families. And striving to ensure that all children are able to gain the skill of literacy at a young age is just good policy. Developing a literacy strategy will allow parents and educators the ability to track the progress of a child all the way through their educational careers, and our government is looking forward to partnering with teachers and educators, school boards, parents and communities to develop a long-term literacy strategy for Manitoba kids.

Madam Speaker, or—yes, we got Madam Speaker—small- and large-business confidence plays a significant role in a strong, growing economy and provides the means for effective and affordable social programs. Broken trust, rising debt, a campaign of fear, division and false promise by the previous government has hurt that confidence.

Madam Speaker, I've been involved in agriculture most of my life, but I've also worked within the building construction and manufacturing industry throughout this province for many years. Confidence and trust is key to building a better Manitoba, and our government is determined to overcome the challenges facing our province and to restore confidence. It takes teams with balanced approach to grow strong businesses and families and also to build a strong economy and trust that leadership will be open and fair with Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, Manitobans have welcomed a new Progressive Conservative team committed to a clean, open government and inclusive decision making. We will work together with Manitobans to ensure that our decisions reflect the value of integrity, caring, inclusion, common sense and teamwork.

*(15:40)

Our new Progressive Conservative government believes partnerships will lead to prosperity, partnerships with front-line workers, public servants, entrepreneurs and community leaders. These partnerships and other initiatives are aimed at improving health care and education results, economic innovation and restoring prudent fiscal management. It is encouraging that one of our government's first orders of business is to do a comprehensive value-for-money audit to ensure that

our government is prudent with the resources provided to us by Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, I also spent eight years as a municipal counsellor for the RM of Dauphin and I am pleased to say our government will embrace municipal governments, to provide them with a fair say on strategic infrastructure investments; infrastructure spending commitments are important to municipalities and our government will ensure long-term, assured and targeted infrastructure investments of no less than a billion dollars.

Madam Speaker, this infrastructure commitment along with our commitment to jobs, investment and economic growth, are the centre of our plan for a better Manitoba, a plan that will allow us improve front-line services in health and education, a plan to enable investment in programs and initiatives most important to supporting Manitoba families.

Madam Speaker, in talking with my constituency—or constituents over the last year and a half, whether they work in the public or the private sector, frustration and an I-don't-care attitude was unfortunately a very common response at the door. Now I know Manitoba is great and Manitobans are great, and it's time a positive culture gets restored.

I want to echo the words of the member from St. Norbert, and appreciate that our campaign took the high road during the election and that we were very forthcoming with Manitobans on our plans moving forward. Manitobans needed to hear this and it's step 1 in restoring a positive culture here in Manitoba.

Our government will restore the right to a secret ballot vote in workplaces, to foster a more open and respectful labour environment that protects workers' rights and freedoms. Madam Speaker, this is simply an issue about fundamental democratic process and must be addressed if we are to restore a positive culture of growth and development. I want to thank the people who came forward during the campaign and expressed their concerns and ideas in this regard.

As a government, we will ensure ongoing vigilance and support while protecting the jobs of the dedicated front-line workers who provide these services. We will engage with our front-line education stakeholders in the development of long-term plans for our children.

Madam Speaker, like yourself and many of my colleagues in this House, we've seen Manitoba from a number of different lenses. First, as a father—or first as a child then a father, as an employee and as an

employer, as a business owner and manager, as an agricultural producer, as a municipal councillor, as a student and a teacher living and experiencing both rural and urban life, and now I begin as MLA. What is clear to me is that we all need each other. We're all important when we're talking about building a better Manitoba.

I want to thank those also who are working in the House: the clerks and the pages for the great work they do, as well as all the legislative employees working within the buildings and on the grounds who I run into daily and always seem to have a smile and a wave for me—and I really appreciate that. It's a great place to work.

I had the good fortune, Madam Speaker, to be involved in agriculture all my life, and I wouldn't change this for anything. Manitoba agriculture is a good-news story and this should not be forgotten. I think back to a comment made by my colleague from St. Paul, who so eloquently speaks and reminded us never to forget why we came here, why you sought public office. My constituency is mainly an agricultural-based economy and I want to see and help it grow. My experiences have taught me that opportunity exists everywhere if you choose to see it.

Madam Speaker, I would suggest that the Throne Speech reflects the priorities of Manitoba and is, indeed, a speech to empower, to enlighten and enrich the lives of all Manitobans. It is not divisive, it is very inclusive and it speaks to all Manitobans. And it also speaks out for Manitobans, to people across this country and around the world that Manitoba is getting back on track, and this is huge.

Our announcement to enter the New West Partnership, our plans to do a value-for-money review across government, are part of our plan to build a better, stronger Manitoba economy. And it's important for all Manitobans to understand that we do this because a stronger economy and fiscal responsibility will allow us to improve and protect our front-line services in health care and education that Manitoba families want.

Our government will address this challenge in a balanced and responsible way, as outlined in the Throne Speech, not because it's easy; because it's the right thing to do.

The Dauphin constituency has tremendous tourism potential, Madam Speaker. And the Throne Speech offers a vision and initiatives that will enable growth. Our government is committed to realizing

additional tourism potential which will most certainly benefit the wonderful area of the Manitoba's Parkland area and all of Manitoba. Our government will increase our investments in the promotion of Manitoba's many and unique attractions to visitors from all over the world.

This is a very positive initiative by our government, Madam Speaker, and we do this to help the many Manitobans working to promote their communities throughout this province, which is also helping to build a better Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I want to recognize and thank Mr. Terry Yates, who, unfortunately, passed away quite a few years ago, but had a pretty significant role in why I'm here.

After obtaining a design and drafting technician designation at Red River Community College in Winnipeg, my wife and I moved back to Dauphin to live and start farming and raise our family. Our family farm wasn't big enough; my parents were farming, my brother was also farming, and I chose to start, and it wasn't big enough to support three families, so we had to go get a job.

And Mr. Yates hired me, and that's nothing really special, other than he gave me a job, but it turned out to be something special. I worked for his company for 13 years. And I worked in design and estimating and sales for nine years before being promoted to general manager of the company, of this manufacturing company that they owned.

And I want to express my gratitude to his family, and say that Terry was a most positive influence in my life and a big reason for why I stand here today. In my opinion, Mr. Yates was a person you worked with, not for, and while I think we were both learning the manufacturing business at the time, he gave me the confidence and support as a young person to both grow my farm and his business and, most importantly, and I'll never forget, he gave me the ball and let me run with it.

This leadership quality will always stick with me. Give people a chance, give them support, show them the opportunity and encourage them and give them the ball. Nothing is more rewarding.

I also learned this from my parents, Madam Speaker, for which I'm grateful. My parents gave me a positive attitude and prepared me to look after myself and my family. They gave me the ball on many occasions, taught me not to feel sorry for myself and move forward.

And I also want to thank them for saying no. A land, a piece of land came up for sale, and I thought I needed the help to the financial backing, and they told me no. And I was angry at the time, but they gave me the tools that I needed and the help that I needed and this was one time that they thought I didn't need it. And I have to say that that is one of the turning points of my life. So I thank them for that.

I have to thank my brother—I see I don't have much time, so I'm going to thank my brother Brian and my brother Brent for helping out and putting the crop in this year.

I want to help—thank my wife, who I can't say enough about. I'm thankful for her sense of humour.

* (15:50)

And I'd like to end with a quote, Madam Speaker: Inclusion is not a strategy to help people fit into systems and structures that exist in our society; it is about transforming these systems and structures to make it better for everyone. Inclusion is about creating a better world for everyone.

Thank you.

Mr. Kelly Bindle (Thompson): I want to thank all the previous and new MLAs in our PC caucus for the encouragement, advice and mentoring, and I especially look forward to working with, helping and learning from all of you in the Assembly as we make Manitoba the most improved province in all of Canada by building better services, a stronger economy and a brighter future for all Manitobans.

Many people outside these walls, and, arguably, some inside these walls, despise politicians. Yes, it's true. But I believe that if you go in with the intent to help people and you maintain your integrity throughout and you leave with your integrity intact, it's an honourable way to live your life.

Teamwork is how past generations have survived on this land, teamwork built the province and the North, and teamwork is required to build a better province. Only through teamwork can we achieve the goal of equality and only then will we be able to clearly see the true beauty of the scenery, recognize the true spirit of the people and know the true potential of this province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. *[interjection]* I'd also like to continue. I'm not sure for how long I'd like to continue.

Okay, I was born and raised in Thompson. I attended Juniper elementary school there and I graduated from R.D. Parker Collegiate in 1983, class valedictorian.

My mother, Grace Bindle, she's a retired schoolteacher. She still lives in our family home across from Juniper School. She's a Block Parent and she still substitute teaches while volunteering at the Heritage North Museum, the Anglican church ladies' auxiliary and various other community organizations.

My father, Otto Bindle, before passing away in February 2009, was a pioneer of Thompson in the early 1960s. After serving in the Canadian Navy in World War II on a minesweeper where he honed his boxing skills, he returned to Saskatoon. He then moved to Thompson to manage the opening of the Thompson Inn and Burntwood Hotel, later opening his own business, Thompson Bargain Furniture, which he operated until retirement. Dad was a founding member of the Thompson Rotary Club, and his years of community service were recognized with the naming of the sliding hill below the Highland Tower wolf painting; it's now known as Otto Bindle Slide.

After graduating from high school in 1983, I initially remained in Thompson working as a carpenter's helper for my brother-in-law, Mervin Dick, at Precambrian Press, and as a labourer for La Furlane Construction in the Inco refinery night shift, jackhammering concrete. And that was before they had the, you know, every 20-minute breaks. Shortly after, I attended University of Winnipeg and Red River College, and I worked as a civil technologist at a consulting firm here in Winnipeg.

After living in Winnipeg for five years, I happily returned to the North to work for Inco as a mine surveyor at Birchtree Mine in Thompson. And I remember driving up North and seeing the northern lights again that I hadn't seen in a long time, and I felt I am home.

A couple of years later, I took education leave to attend a civil engineering program at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. I received a bachelor degree in civil structural engineering in '95 and returned to work at T3 Mine as a mine ventilation engineer, and eventually at Inco Central Engineering to work on projects all over surface plants and underground in Thompson. After a brief stint in Saskatoon and on the TransCanada Pipeline near Swift Current, I returned to Inco, in 2002, and

transferred to work with Inco, in Indonesia, for three and a half years as a project manager. And, when it comes to organizing, maintaining contracts and getting equipment, I don't think there's any place harder than trying to do it in Indonesia.

After working on the equator and travelling all over Southeast Asia, I happily returned to northern Manitoba again, in 2006—I always return to Thompson—and opened my own engineering consulting firm, Bindle Engineering Limited, which I've operated ever since I got back. And, along with—three years ago I opened a meat shop, Ripple Rock Meat Shop, in 2013.

While consulting, I've worked on many projects around Thompson, including construction and inspection of phase 2 of the Thompson Regional Community Centre, design and construction of the poppy canopy at the Royal Canadian Legion, MacLean Park stage and drainage project and the Thompson skateboard park.

I'm proud to have been an active member and a 28-year member of the rotary—the Royal Canadian Legion, in Thompson, including master of ceremonies for the 2014 Remembrance Day service. I'm also proud to be a two-year member of the Thompson army, navy, air force veterans' association. I was one of the original helpers for the Thompson Humane Society and monthly charity fundraisers, and I provided structural advice for constructing the Thompson wolf exhibit and have sat as a citizen representative on the City of Thompson public works and infrastructure committee, all volunteer contributions to which I am proud to have made.

First and foremost, I have to thank my mother, Grace Bindle. She's been a tireless supporter of mine throughout my entire life and that continued, without hesitation, into the campaign and it continues today. The whole time I went to school, college and university, my mom and dad made sacrifices and made it possible for me to take advantage of all opportunities that came my way, and, for that, I owe them everything. They taught me to respect people, accept differences and never judge.

Also, because he's—these people are mainly responsible for what makes me who I am, I have to again recognize my late father, Otto Bindle, my late brother-in-law Merv Dick, and my late friend Larry Fountain, all best friends that passed away at different points in my life, suddenly and unexpectedly. And, when you look up the word

integrity in the dictionary, you'll see those three guys.

I was very lucky to be raised in the North, where there was prosperity in my community, there was endless rugged beauty and, you know, the freedom to explore. My mother still maintains our family cabin on Paint Lake within the provincial park where we have hosted many relatives and visitors over the years, and it is still a gathering place for family. Growing up, I spent every summer at the cabin, fostering childhood relationships with neighbours that are still dear today. It was originally a remote cabin but, eventually we got a road and electricity, which made roughing it a little less rough.

My dad was an avid fisherman and it—and he was in his glory guiding and entertaining people on the lake. He had an expression that I always remember; he said, and it's true, fishing is the best therapy. He said, because if—because it doesn't really matter what's happening in your life. The stress—however the burdens of life are, if you're fishing and you have a fish nibbling on the end of your line, you don't care about anything else except catching that fish.

Paint Lake Provincial Park in our riding is a beautiful area of the province; it's 20 minutes south of Thompson, has full-service campgrounds, boat launch, main beach, marina and endless opportunities for fishing and boating, and it is truly worth experiencing northern summer at Paint Lake.

Another scenic area is Setting Lake, about 45 minutes south of Thompson, where you'll see the beautiful Pisew Falls and Sasagu Rapids and, if you feel like hiking for a day, you can also take in Kwasitchewan Falls where the Grass River meets Phillips Lake, all with excellent camping and angling opportunities. North of Thompson, on the way to Split Lake, there are countless small, scenic, ruggedly beautiful and accessible lakes and rivers where you can catch many different species of fish.

To the east of the communities are Pikwitonei and Thicket Portage, on Partridge Crop Lake, and Wintering Lake. You can get there by water, airplane, train and winter road. These are beautiful, remote, scenic and serene communities with a very warm and friendly people, not to mention the other communities on the rail line, like Ilford and Bird.

* (16:00)

I feel proud and honoured to—and blessed to have been elected MLA for Thompson. This honour

didn't just happen, and I'm entirely grateful to those volunteers that helped to make it happen. I'm thankful to our Thompson Progressive Conservative association members and the PC MLAs who braved the cold mornings to attend our breakfast meetings, our PC team and our PC team leader, now the Premier (Mr. Pallister), who—all of whom offered sage advice, encouragement and support and believed in me even when the odds seemed to be stacked against me. There are many people I owe thanks to, and I will get—I will thank them—I have thanked them personally and I will thank them publicly.

Because of—I've had all the opportunities I've had and benefits—benefited to the point that I can make a difference, I sincerely believe it is my duty to do all I can to create opportunities for those less fortunate in our society. This is my belief, this is my conviction, and I'm asking you to join me because this province cannot succeed unless we all succeed equally together.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the motion by the member for St. Norbert, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Mayer) to thank Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for the gracious speech that she addressed to us on the commencement of the First Session of the 41st Legislature of Manitoba.

I want to begin by offering my congratulations, Madam Speaker, to you on assuming your role. You've been a tremendous contributor to this place and to the profession that we enter into—some of us just recently, some of us for a little while longer. And I wish you the best, and I believe you are an excellent choice and I think that the people of this Legislature chose well when they chose you as our Speaker. So thank you.

If I may, I would also like to offer my thanks to—on behalf of—I hope, of all of us, to the many volunteers who worked hard for our campaigns, who volunteered their time, their effort and their money to try to participate in the—a democratic process that we believe is tremendously important. Choice gives us freedom, and by the candidacy of all those here and those who were not successful, we gave Manitobans the choice in this election that was just conducted. And I think we owe a depth of gratitude to our friends, our family and our supporters and volunteers, and I think that that is tremendously appreciated by all of us here.

If I might, I wanted to offer a specific thanks to the people of my constituency in Fort Whyte for their support and encouragement, and also to my wife, Esther, and our daughters, Quinn and Shawn, for their endless love and support. It makes, I think, our jobs much more enjoyable to know we have the support of those who love and care for us. I mean, I want them to know that they have it back from me, and I know, on behalf of all of us, that we appreciate the tremendous support and sacrifice and commitment that our families make to our ability to do this career together.

In respect to the Throne Speech itself, I wanted to echo the words of the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes), who said that the Lieutenant Governor, in her speech, had reminded us of the severe challenges we face as a province. We have a deficit that is projected to be much, much larger than we were told, a fiscal hole far deeper than we were led to believe. It threatens the ability of our government to deliver the important services that Manitobans need and rely upon. And we understand where the members opposite were coming from during the election campaign, but we also note with some disappointment that they weren't coming from a place of full transparency and openness.

We know also that sweeping measures of austerity are not going to work. They would only cause harm to our most vulnerable citizens. And so what is needed is an approach different from the one taken previously, a careful and a sensitive approach that will eventually restore Manitoba to fiscal balance. And that is the approach that this government will be taking.

Nous avons besoin d'une démarche prudente et réfléchie qui permettra à le retour à l'équilibre budgétaire de Manitoba. C'est la démarche que notre gouvernement adoptera.

Translation

We need a careful and thoughtful approach that will allow a return to fiscal balance in Manitoba. That is the approach our government will follow.

English

I used a metaphor a few weeks ago at a ceremony I was speaking at, and I think it is worth repeating today.

Imagine 200 years ago. Imagine 200 years ago to the minute, perhaps. A beautiful day in the spring in Manitoba, a man in a canoe with a precious cargo for

trade, gliding down the Assiniboine River to The Forks with opportunity in his mind and hope in his heart. And then he is carried into the Red River, and suddenly the current that's been his friend for the past couple of days is now taking him further and further away from his intended destination. He is seeking a better shore than the one he's being driven to, a place to trade, a place to prosper, a place that offers protection and security to his family. And, immediately, as he's swept on by the current, understands the challenges that he must now face, but he also knows the dangers of overreacting to those challenges. He accepts the need to steer a new course gradually, deftly, the need to protect his cargo as his paddle carves a new direction in the water.

That's the challenge that we face. That's the challenge that Manitobans face, choosing a new direction to a better shore.

C'est notre défi. C'est le défi du Manitoba, choisir une nouvelle direction vers un horizon plus prometteur.

Translation

That is our challenge. That is the challenge of Manitoba, to choose a new direction toward a more promising horizon.

English

This is not a new challenge and it is not a unique challenge. For generations, men and women from all over the world have made this place, this Keystone Province, our Manitoba, they've made it their home, their home of hope. They chose to build a better life here. They carved out a new route. They found a better shore. And their example is our inspiration. We know that Manitoba is a wonderful place to live in. All of us here believe that very strongly, and we know it's a wonderful place to love in and to laugh in and to learn in as well.

But it is also important that we leave a legacy here, that we leave this place better than we found it. That is a responsibility that we believe in.

Nous savons que le Manitoba est un merveilleux endroit à vivre, aimer, rire, l'apprendre et laisser un héritage.

Translation

We know that Manitoba is a marvellous place to live and love and laugh, to learn and to leave a legacy.

English

Our goal, the duty we each share, is to replace doubt with optimism, disharmony with unity and to replace fear and anxiety with hope and opportunity for all Manitobans.

It will not be easy, Madam Speaker. It will require a lot of hard work because the challenge before us is so great; it is so enormous. We need to undo the damage. We need to avoid the dangers in front of us. We need to change the course toward a more stable and prosperous future. We begin this process at a considerable disadvantage, but we have the advantage of the talents of the people in this Chamber and the brilliance and the incredible gifts of the people of Manitoba.

* (16:10)

We have challenges and we should acknowledge them. We have unreasonable ER wait times; all of us know that. We have several hospitals now currently in the city of Winnipeg that lead the national rankings, four of the top five, in terms of wait times. Far too often, people in distress, patients in need of urgent medical care, are waiting far too long. You could—they could—well, they wouldn't because they'd be in an emergency room waiting but the amount of time they wait is more than would be the time you would need to fly to Vancouver and then return. And that is simply not acceptable. It is not acceptable. And that is if they, in fact, stayed in the ER long enough to get that care. More and more are simply walking out in frustration.

We have ambulance fees in our province that are the highest in Canada, that victimize those who are suffering with urgent medical issues. Can you imagine a situation, Madam Speaker, where a senior in Brandon, for example, is having chest pains, but doesn't call 911 because she's afraid that she can't afford the \$700 it would take to get her to the hospital? This is not acceptable.

Or a pregnant single mom in Thompson who hesitates when her contractions begin before they were expected to because she is afraid that she won't be able to afford the food for her children. These are not acceptable circumstances. It happens in this province; it's happening right now. It happens far too often.

High ambulance fees are forcing too many of our citizens, the poor, the elderly who are living on fixed incomes, to make life-threatening choices at a

time when they desperately need our help and that is not our only problem.

We have poverty in this province; we must accept and deal with this. We have the highest child poverty rates in the country; one in every four children in our province grows up in poverty, and the vast majority are indigenous children. And we have children who are forced to relive the horror of sexual abuse because government agencies do not work together and do not talk to one another. Or the children report the abuse and then they're taken away from a caring parent or from a loving community. This is unacceptable. We are revictimizing the victims.

Too many of these children have been moved from foster home to foster home to foster home, or they've been warehoused in hotels for days or weeks on end. This is not acceptable. These children are not being given the stable home environment that every child needs in order to grow and develop and thrive.

The performance, Madam Speaker, of our school students on national tests has worsened over the past several years to the point where now we are ranked lowest in the country in English, and in math, and in science as well. And these outcomes are not acceptable either. They are evidence that we are robbing our children of their great potential; we are robbing them of their futures. It makes them harder—it makes it harder for them to compete for jobs; it makes it harder for them to do the jobs if they get the jobs properly. It interrupts their ability to achieve that great potential we want them to achieve, and must see them achieve.

Our failures in child education are failing our children and they are threatening the productivity of our province, the competitiveness of our province, and the economic future of our province, and, most importantly, they are hurting the very children we care for a love the most.

Madam Speaker, we just learned this past week that the core government deficit for the past fiscal year is not projected by finance officials to be more than \$1 billion; that is \$346 million higher, 52 per cent higher than the estimate released by the previous government just 11 weeks ago.

For many of us the number 1 billion is a difficult number to comprehend; it is hard to realize how big that number really is. Allow me to put it in context: a billion seconds ago it was 1959; a billion minutes ago Jesus Christ was alive and walking the Earth; a

billion hours ago our ancestors were living in the Stone Age; and a billion dollars ago was last year in NDP Manitoba.

Now, Madam Speaker, a deficit that is of that size, that large, on the backs of previously record-setting high deficits puts us in a very precarious position. According to the 2015 provincial budget figures, the interest on the provincial debt amounted to an \$842-million bill. Now that is \$2,600 per family of four, and that's not small change in the family I grew up with, and not small change in the families of Manitobans. Now those numbers are going to go up because of a much larger inherited deficit, and the deficit that we have now following a decade of deterioration and dysfunction.

Now hundreds of millions of dollars that could be spent each year on the delivery of high-priority, critical government services that Manitobans rely upon and value, like health care, like education, like public protection, are instead going to happy bankers in Toronto and New York. Manitobans have been put in a precarious position, vulnerable to an interest rate hike, either through a general increase in interest rates as many are predicting, or through a further credit rating downgrade like the one we just suffered from a few months ago, the first downgrade in three decades in our province. *[interjection]*

The first downgrade in three decades, Madam Speaker, and the member opposite, the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) fails to comprehend the basic financial fundamentals that most Manitoba homeowners have grasped a long time ago: when your borrowing costs go up, your disposable income goes down. The member doesn't seem to get that.

Now, if our credit rating, and we are doing our best to ensure that the credit rating will not go down again, but if it did our borrowing costs would go up even higher than they have gone up, and that would be a shame. And that speaks to another problem, a lack of transparency, the ongoing failure of the previous administration to be honest with Manitobans about the true state of our finances.

We saw it in 2011 when Manitobans were told that the possibility of a PST increase was, well, it was ridiculous, it was nonsense, it wouldn't happen. And we saw it again a few months ago when the previous government's fiscal update came out and we were told by that administration their books would be balanced in 2018-19, and we now know that that projection was not even remotely true. In fact, it was

a billion dollars away from the truth. That's a shame, Madam Speaker.

And we saw it in the election campaign that just ended as well when massive spending commitments were made, massive, by a government anxious to be re-elected that knew full well it would not have enough money to keep those empty promises anyway.

Now, Madam Speaker, Manitobans have a reputation, well deserved, for being smart shoppers. They spend their money very, very carefully, and they deserve a government that will spend carefully as well, and now finally they have one.

Manitobans have seen in the past far too many sole-sourced contracts that give no evidence as to what the market might have given in terms of a deal, a better deal for taxpayers. Far too many times when proper tendering practices were not followed right under the nose of members opposite, Madam Speaker, who rubber-stamped approval for their fellow ministers to give special deals to pals, party pals, without tender, without any shopping at all—this happened under the previous administration; this will not happen under this administration.

Manitobans shop smart, Madam Speaker, and they like fairness, and they value it, and they want it. And I heard a story recently that I think makes the point about how the unfairness of the previous government has hurt Manitobans. Two hockey moms are talking to each other; they're watching their girls play hockey at a local arena. One of them works for a small construction company; the other works for a large construction company. Now the smaller company is not unionized and it doesn't get to bid on the government jobs that are offered unless it pays union dues. The large company is unionized; it gets to bid on those jobs.

Now both women pay their taxes, they look after their children, they care for aging parents, they volunteer in the community and they love their children equally well. But they don't have equal opportunity because the woman who works for the smaller company has far less job security than the woman who works for the larger one because the government's decided that her employer can't bid on government jobs unless he pays union dues into union coffers.

* (16:20)

And that is simply unfair. It is wrong. It creates two classes of citizens in our province, two classes of

taxpayers who deserve to be treated equally by their government but have not been treated equally by the unfair practices of the previous government. They will be treated equally now.

We can do much better, Madam Speaker. We must do better. Our new government will do better.

Nous pouvons faire tellement mieux. Nous devons faire mieux. Notre nouveau gouvernement fera mieux.

Translation

We can do so much better. We must do better. Our new government will do better.

English

Madam Speaker, this is the time, long past time, to listen to Manitobans. The challenges we face are not challenges any government alone isolated from the input of Manitobans can solve effectively or well. They are too complicated. They are years in the making. These are serious issues and they must be urgently addressed in the interests of all Manitobans, and we will work with Manitobans to address these issues.

And I want to say that our government must focus on serving Manitobans, and I encourage all members in this House to focus on addressing these issues co-operatively and well. We will be introducing opportunities for members who wish to participate in co-operative exercises, so we can address these things together, not separately.

These are—it is time to focus on putting Manitobans' agendas first and setting aside partisan agendas. Our government will not reject good ideas because we didn't think of them first; we'll use the best ideas wherever they come from. We can accomplish so much if we work together and if we stop worrying about who gets the credit.

Notre gouvernement ne rejettera pas de bonnes idées parce qu'il n'a pas été le premier à y penser. Nous utiliserons les meilleures idées peu importe leur provenance.

Translation

Our government will not reject good ideas because it was not the first one to think about them. We will use the best ideas no matter where they come from.

English

So, with that in mind, I sincerely invite all members opposite to work with us in a spirit of

goodwill, to address the very important challenges facing our province, to set aside partisanship for the next few weeks, months, I hope years, on the key issues that we need to face together in a collaborative manner to serve Manitobans as best we can, given the opportunity we've been given by Manitobans.

I welcome and I encourage everyone to fully participate in debates. My grandfather used to say when my brother and I would get into an argument, as we still do, he would say to us: Fellows, that's okay. If two people are always in agreement, one of them is probably not thinking.

We are going to have disagreements, but showing respect for one another in the context of our discussions is, of course, the best demonstration of the calibre of the people involved in the debate.

So I encourage all of us to pursue this together. I want to work in full co-operation and partnership productively with all members of this Chamber, and I believe I am surrounded by people who long for that same approach.

In terms of reaching out, I want to reach out and work in partnership with all Manitobans, front-line workers, organized labour, indigenous Manitobans in the coming departmental performance review exercise. I think it's a very important opportunity that all of us can participate in and should have the opportunity to do that. As well, in terms of sustainable health-care delivery in everyone's best interests where we are failing so much on so many fronts, I think that there are important lessons to be learned, especially from the people who work on the front line of health-care delivery. And in red tape reduction where there are real opportunities to improve the creative genius that exists in so many Manitobans in terms of the efforts they put out to provide services and goods to others, there's just a real opportunity for us to work together to find ways to do those jobs better within government, within the private sector, within the non-profit sector, wonderful opportunities. We need to pursue those together.

We must eliminate wasteful spending, and we have to slow the growth and the unsustainable spending and restore some sense of fiscal security and confidence to Manitobans. And we need to improve outcomes in health care and education. We want to work with indigenous Manitobans all over the province and throughout our communities, our urban communities, to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to be a full and valued partner in our

society and to contribute in every possible way to the growth of their own personal security and of the economy of our province.

We're going to make sure, we must make sure, that we create a business-friendly climate that will encourage investment here in Manitoba. We have lagged the country for far too long, there is too much potential here in Manitoba not to share the rewards with investors from our province and around the country and around the world. We need to attract the investment.

And we're going to continue to invest strategically in infrastructure because we understand that it is the backbone of economic development. Growth and prosperity throughout our province will provide our children and our grandchildren with a range of career opportunities that will convince them to stay here after graduation, and isn't that what we're all about, keeping families together *[inaudible]*

This will take time, it will take patience, it will take hard work, but we can do this. We can do this if we replace selfishness with generosity; if we replace indifference with true compassion; if we replace cynicism with confidence and faith in one another; if we abandon our fears and instead embrace hope and optimism for the future of this province and of all its people. And I say to all of us, we need to be partners in this, work together to make sure that Manitoba becomes Canada's most improved province.

Nous avons besoin de vous en tant que partenaires dans cette entreprise. Travaillez avec nous pour faire du Manitoba la province où la situation s'améliore le plus au Canada. Travaillez avec nous pour retrouver la force du Manitoba et lui assurer un avenir brillant.

Translation

We need you to be our partners in this enterprise. Work with us to make Manitoba the most improved province in Canada. Work with us to make Manitoba strong again and ensure that it has a shining future.

English

Work with us to recapture Manitoba's true strength, to secure Manitoba's bright future. Embrace with us the challenges of change. Our best days are ahead of us, and I say to you that the only thing better than today in Manitoba is tomorrow in Manitoba.

Thank you. Miigwech. Merci.

Madam Speaker: Are there any other speakers in debate?

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is the subamendment to the motion for an address in reply.

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: *THAT the motion be amended by adding after clause (z) the following clauses:*

- (aa) commit timely construction of the road network connecting communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg; and
- (bb) commit to improving and enhancing the Provincial Nominee Program and the process of bringing immigrants to Manitoba; and
- (cc) commit to putting the highest possible priority on the establishment of a dedicated stroke unit in Manitoba; and
- (dd) commit to addressing the urgent need for First Nations housing; and
- (ee) commit to implement, together with First Nations and Metis people in Manitoba, a plan to improve nutrition and to decrease diabetes in our province.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the subamendment?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the subamendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

I declare the subamendment lost.

Recorded Vote

An Honourable Member: Madam Speaker, a recorded vote.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have support for a recorded vote?

There is support for a recorded vote.

A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (16:30)

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux), that is, the subamendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

Allum, Altemeyer, Chief, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Selinger, Swan, Wiebe.

Nays

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 16, Nays 37.

Madam Speaker: I declare the subamendment lost.

Madam Speaker: The question now before the House is the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: *THAT the motion be amended by adding the following words at the end:*

But this House regrets that the provincial government failed to:

- (a) recognize the diversity of this great province by failing to present a positive and inclusive vision for all Manitobans; and
 - (b) acknowledge and commit to implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; and
 - (c) commit to ensuring a successful and participatory national inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; and
 - (d) commit to keeping public and social services public to prevent corporations from profiting on the backs of the poorest people of this province; and
 - (e) commit to protecting and enhancing the rights of LGBTTQ* persons; and
 - (f) commit to protecting and enhancing the rights of workers; and
 - (g) commit to protecting and enhancing supports for persons living with disabilities; and
 - (h) commit to keeping the province's valuable Crown Corporations public; and
 - (i) commit to focus on environmental and water protections, expand the network of protected areas or fight climate change with innovation and green jobs; and
 - (j) commit to take steps to increase the minimum wage and to bring the incomes of all Manitoba families above the poverty line; and
 - (k) commit to eliminating the wait list for child care by adding 12,000 more spaces for families, and expanding Manitoba's workforce of early childhood educators; and
 - (l) commit to focusing on prevention and supportive programs for early years learning; and
 - (m) commit to investing more in community schools, early childhood hubs, and after-school programs in the inner city and in northern Manitoba; and
 - (n) commit to ramping up the First-Year Now initiative to ensure high school students earn university and college credits to get a head start on their careers; and
 - (o) commit to expanding community-based programs that help skilled newcomers get good jobs in their chosen careers across Manitoba; and
 - (p) commit to a plan that ensures all Manitoba students learn about the histories, languages, cultures and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples; and
- * (16:40)
- (q) acknowledge that indigenous communities must be full partners in efforts to support and keep families together; and
 - (r) commit to keeping post-secondary accessible to any student who wishes to attend by keeping tuition fees low and limiting increases to the rate of inflation; and
 - (s) commit to partnering with post-secondary institutions to make campuses a safer place for all students with policies to prevent and respond to sexual violence and sexual harassment; and
 - (t) commit to mixed-use housing for students with partners like Brandon University and the University of Winnipeg; and
 - (u) commit to increasing the number of women apprentices in the skilled trades; and
 - (v) commit to partnering with the University College of the North to build a new trades training centre to help students take advantage of the good jobs created by Manitoba Hydro; and
 - (w) commit to an expansion of the Women's Health Clinic, more access to midwives and an expansion of the Fertility Treatment Tax Credit; and
 - (x) commit to enhancing funding to senior centres and working with partners to develop more seniors housing and improve palliative-care services; and
 - (y) commit to relocating the rails that divide our city and free up the land for developments that will create jobs, housing and other opportunities; and
 - (z) commit to implementing the recommendations from the Task Force on Education Outcomes for Children in Care.

As a consequence of these and many other failings, the provincial government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba and this House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

I declare the amendment lost.

Recorded Vote

An Honourable Member: Recorded vote.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Ms. Marcelino), that is, the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

Allum, Altemeyer, Chief, Fontaine, Kinew, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Selinger, Swan, Wiebe.

Nays

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Klassen, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Lamoureux, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Clerk: Yeas, 14; Nays, 40

Madam Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

Madam Speaker: The question now before the House is the motion of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the motion read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: I believe I heard a yes.

THAT the following address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Her Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this First Session of the 41st Legislature of Manitoba.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it. I declare the motion carried—oh, sorry. Sorry, what? Oh—I think there must be a Speaker rookie mistake being made here.

I knew the first time was going to be a little tougher than the other ones.

An Honourable Member: We like it.

Madam Speaker: You like it?

But it was a Speaker error, so can we just look at this again, then. And maybe the Clerk can point out exactly where I should be starting here.

So all those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Recorded Vote

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): So there is no uncertainty, a recorded vote, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (16:50)

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Reyes), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé,

Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Chief, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Selinger, Swan, Wiebe.

Clerk: Yeas 37, Nays 17.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I believe if you canvass the House, you'll find there is a will to call it 5 o'clock.

Madam Speaker: Is there the will to call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

This House is then adjourned and—the time being 5 o'clock, this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 26, 2016

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