

Second Session – Forty-First Legislature  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
**and**  
**PROCEEDINGS**

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

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The Honourable Myrna Driedger  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Forty-First Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
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, Hon.	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	Ind.
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
<i>Vacant</i>	Point Douglas	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 23, 2017

*The House met at 1:30 p.m.*

**Madam Speaker:** Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

**Madam Speaker:** Introduction of bills? Committee reports? Tabling of reports? Ministerial Statements?

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### German Society of Winnipeg

**Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Crown Services):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize this milestone of the German Society of Winnipeg in serving Manitoba for 125 years.

The German Society of Winnipeg was established in January 9th, 1892, thanks to the dedication of nine German immigrants. They wanted to create a place where other immigrants could come together, support each other and ultimately sustain their German language and customs.

Since that time, the German Society of Winnipeg has been instrumental in the building of a diverse, inclusive and welcoming Manitoba. German culture, traditions and language continue to contribute significantly to Manitoba's ethnic mosaic and make our community a better place.

In Canada, the German-speaking community is the third largest heritage group and represents about 20 per cent of the population here in Manitoba. Since 1998, over 11,000 Germans have immigrated to our great province. They call Manitoba their home and they contribute tremendously to the essential fabric of our life and culture.

The German Society of Winnipeg is located at 121 Charles St. in Winnipeg and welcomes people from all faiths and walks of life by providing a wide range of fun activities and educational events for all ages, from folk dancing, performing arts, to German programming in schools and institutions. Events such as Folklorama, Oktoberfest, The Great Sausage Contest and Christkindlmarkt all show the rich heritage of German culture. The great programs through the University of Manitoba's German and Slavic studies department help to preserve the German language and customs.

Germans and German-speaking people from all corners of the world have chosen Manitoba as their home. It's undeniable that German culture and, specifically, the German Society of Winnipeg have evolved to become a part of Manitoba's multicultural identity. I stand here to recognize the many cultural and economic contributions that the German community has made to Manitoba.

Please join me in commemorating the 125th anniversary of the German Society of Winnipeg. May God continue to bless German Canadians living in Manitoba and the great things they have done for our communities.

Danke schön. [*Thank you very much.*]

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable Minister for Crown Services.

**Mr. Schuler:** Madam Speaker, I ask leave if we could have, as part of the record, the members that are visiting today from the German Society of Winnipeg.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to include the names of the members here—that are here today, in Hansard? [*Agreed*]

*Carola Lange, president of the German Canadian Congress; Frank Unger, former vice-president and treasurer of the German Society of Winnipeg; Mike Jackman, Madeleine Kunzler, Siegfried Kunzler, Hans Wieland, Anneliese Hartfiel, Heinz Petsch, Angela McCulloch*

**Madam Speaker:** Private members' statements—the honourable Minister of Agriculture.

#### Dorothy Irwin

**Hon. Ralph Eichler (Minister of Agriculture):** American comedian George Burns once said, you can't help getting older, but you don't have to get old. This quote perfectly sums up Dorothy Irwin, who celebrated her 100th birthday on November the 22nd this past year. Therefore, I'd like to take this opportunity to speak in the House today about this very special resident of Stonewall.

Ms. Irwin was born in England, and when she was two and a half years old, she moved across the

ocean to Chater, Manitoba. One year later, she moved with her parents to a farm near Warren. For most of her life, Dorothy lived in the Warren area with her parents, as well, her older sister and younger brother. After graduating, she headed to Winnipeg to find work. After a while in Winnipeg, she eventually returned to Warren to find odd jobs that would bring her closer to home.

At 23 years of age, she married Bob Irwin from Grassmere, and the couple raised three sons. Dorothy has a remarkable family, including five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren.

At 100 years of age, she keeps busy by reading, doing puzzles and visiting with her family. Ms. Irwin's secret to living a long life is hard work so you never have time to get sick.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Dorothy Irwin on this noteworthy birthday and wishing her all the best in the years to come.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### **Donna Miller**

**Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface):** On behalf of the NDP caucus and of all Manitobans, I would like to thank the Clerk of the Executive Council, Donna Miller, for her tireless dedication as a public servant to our province.

Over her impressive career, Donna displayed the best qualities of a devoted public servant: commitment, competency and honour. As the first woman to become Manitoba's top civil servant she has championed a governing system which truly reflects and protects the people it serves.

Donna demonstrated leadership and a keen intellect over the course of her impressive career. Before being appointed as Clerk of the Executive Council, she excelled as a constitutional lawyer until becoming the head of the federal Justice Department for Manitoba, and then associate deputy minister, and later the deputy minister and deputy attorney general for Manitoba Justice.

In these roles Donna worked to make real contributions to her province and as clerk she set out to create inclusive improvements to the public service sector. Donna followed her career path looking to make a difference, contribute to Manitoba and to create inclusive improvements to the public service sector. I am confident in saying that she most certainly accomplished these goals.

Donna steered Manitoba's public service through two different premierships, a new federal government and several provincial and federal budgets. She worked diligently to break down the silos between government departments, foster strong intergovernmental relations and proved herself to be an innovative liaison between the government and the public.

Thank you, Ms. Miller, for your years of service to Manitoba and its governments, as well as your immeasurable contributions to Manitoba's justice system and public service.

### **Recognizing Social Work**

**Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River):** It is my pleasure to rise in the Chamber today to speak to my colleagues about the importance of social work in our province as March is National Social Work Month in Canada.

Social work is concerned with helping individuals, families, groups and communities to enhance their individual and collective well-being. It focuses on helping people develop their skills and ability to use their own resources and those of the community to resolve problems. It addresses individual problems as well as the broader social issues contributing to these problems such as poverty, unemployment and domestic violence. Human rights and social justice are the bedrock of social work.

Academically, social work is a diverse multidisciplinary area of study that has the potential to affect all areas of our community. In our province, social workers help individuals overcome challenges and effect positive changes in many areas including schools, child-welfare agencies, hospitals and clinics, the justice system, domestic abuse shelters and in government and universities.

The theme adopted by the Canadian Association of Social Workers Board for the 2017 National Social Work Month celebrations is: Social Work: The Power to Empower. According to the CASW, social workers' greatest strength and greatest responsibility is the power to empower. From helping communities organize and move through change, to planning and delivering social programs, as well as responding to crisis on the front lines, social workers promote mental health, support families and engage with communities for a better Canada.

I am proud to be a part of a party that supports social workers and the work they do to empower individuals in our province.

Thank you.

### Federal Budget

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, it is important that we as a Chamber recognize the measures present in the federal Liberal budget yesterday which will make an important contribution to life in Manitoba.

I will begin with funding for Lake Winnipeg, our great lake. This lake is very important to our province and to all of us. I want to recognize in particular the work of Member of Parliament Terry Duguid in promoting the importance of Lake Winnipeg and in pushing for this funding.

Next, I will mention the funding for indigenous people in Manitoba for their housing, for education, for social and green infrastructure, for health care and for protecting, preserving and revitalizing indigenous languages and for the Métis National Council and for supporting indigenous youth and sport.

I want to thank all the Liberal members of Parliament from Manitoba and our interim leader here for their efforts in this respect, most particularly, of course, Robert-Falcon Ouellette and Dan Vandal. And I also want to thank MaryAnn Mihychuk and her work on funding for Aboriginal skills and employment and training.

\* (13:40)

Next, I will mention the funding for clean technology for early stage mining exploration. Thanks are due to my Member of Parliament Jim Carr for his support in this area and, again, to MaryAnn Mihychuk for years of experience as a woman in mining in Manitoba.

Next, is the funding for health care and, in particular, the additional funds for mental and brain health, for home care and for indigenous health. I want to thank Doctor and Member of Parliament Doug Eyolfson for his tremendous work on this file.

I want to recognize Member of Parliament Kevin Lamoureux for his contributions to many of these files and for his contributions, together with the other Manitoba Liberal members of Parliament, in ensuring that Manitoba received the largest increase in federal transfers in many years: \$148 million this

year. This is comprised of an increase in \$85 million in equalization, an increase in \$46 million in the—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Order please.

Prior to oral questions, there are some guests in the Speaker's Gallery today that I would like to introduce to you.

Seated in our gallery is the wife of our retiring Sergeant-at-Arms, Barbara Dunn, also Mr. Dunn's daughter, Jacqueline Brisley, and son-in-law, Ian Brisley.

On behalf of all members here we welcome you.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Provincial Negotiations Government Strategy

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition):** In an interview when the Premier (Mr. Pallister) became leader of his party, he described himself as both excessively partisan and a heckler with a lot of anger. Unquote. Madam Speaker, it doesn't look much has changed.

In a recent article one analyst points out that he is, quote, indiscriminately picking fights, unquote. We see this behaviour over and over again. He picks fights with students, picks fights with educators. He picks fights with nurses and doctors. He picks fights with public sector workers. He picks fights with other provinces and he picks fights with the federal government.

Madam Speaker, when will the Premier and his government start working with the people instead of picking fights?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Deputy Premier):** Just before I respond to the member's comments, I just want to say that, on behalf of our government and all Manitobans, our thoughts and prayers are—go out to the families of the victims from the horrific attack in London yesterday. It's times like this, Madam Speaker, that remind us of how precious life truly is. So, again, our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and their families.

In response to the member's question, our Premier has worked harder in his first 11 months than members opposite did in 17 years when they

were in government. They had an opportunity at that time to make a—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order

**Mrs. Stefanson:** —big difference in Manitoba—to Manitobans lives—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** —yet they chose not to. They left us dead last in health care, dead last in education, and the list goes on, Madam Speaker. That is the legacy of the previous NDP government.

We're here to fix the finances, repair the services and rebuild our economy, and that's what Manitobans elected us to do and that's exactly what we're going to do.

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

**Ms. Marcelino:** While the Premier (Mr. Pallister) was campaigning he promised he would protect front-line services such as health care and education. He also promised to protect the teachers, nurses, doctors and others who supply those services. But once in government, Madam Speaker, the Premier has dropped the gloves. He cancels personal-care homes, health-care centres and schools. It seems he's also going to axe emergency rooms.

Madam Speaker, the Premier also says he's ready to lay off front-line workers who supply the services families rely on.

Madam Speaker, will the Premier and this government commit again to keep their promise and not lay off workers? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** I'm not sure where to begin with the litany of false accusations and assertions that the member opposite brought forward in her line of questioning.

We know after a decade of debt, decay and decline that Manitobans elected us to fix the finances of the Province, repair those services that the member opposite is talking about and that Manitobans are expecting, and we're going to rebuild our economy. That's what they elected us to do. That's exactly—to clean up the mess from members opposite, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

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

**Ms. Marcelino:** The Deputy Premier and this government continue to refuse to answer questions, but we continue to hope that this government will reverse its ways and learn to accept responsibility for its actions.

For example, Madam Speaker, we would urge the government to get back to the negotiating table with the federal government and get a good deal for Manitobans on health-care funding. There's no point in trying to save face by constantly fighting and shifting positions; that just delays getting a better deal for families. They deserve better.

Madam Speaker, I ask again: Will this government stop picking indiscriminate fights with everyone and start governing for all Manitobans?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Our Premier and members of this government stand up for Manitobans each and every day that we are in office.

Now, I would encourage the member opposite and members opposite that rather than picking fights, that we join together and we join together to do what is in the best interests of Manitobans. We can't do this divided. We ask members opposite to please join us in doing what is in the best interests of all Manitobans.

### **Health-Care Funding Federal Negotiations**

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Madam Speaker, it's time the Premier took ownership for his failed negotiations with Ottawa.

At the same time that New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI and Newfoundland were getting the best deals that they could for their provinces—*[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Wiebe:** —the Premier's own press secretary admitted that the Premier was on vacation, that he was out of touch and that he was in Costa Rica.

The question is: Did the Health Minister have the authority to negotiate with Ottawa while the Premier was away, or did he have to wait for the Premier to come back from the beach before he could start fighting for the health-care that Manitobans count on?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I look forward to the day where I can welcome the member back from the low road, perhaps, to the high road,

because he should visit the high road. The high road is about ensuring that we stand up for the needs of Manitobans when it comes to health care to look for a fair funding agreement from Ottawa. The high road involves ensuring that Manitobans are getting the health care they're need, but with a supportive federal government there for a long-term sustainable system. That is the high road.

When he's done visiting after eight weeks on the low road, maybe he can come to the high road, Madam Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, while the Premier (Mr. Pallister) was asking Manitobans for all hands on deck, he missed the boat.

The Health Minister said in this House that the Premier hadn't had a meeting with the federal government since the deal was first proposed. Instead of doing the work to sit at the table with the Prime Minister, the Premier is cancelling major health-care projects like CancerCare, community clinics, PCHs. He's demanding massive cuts from the RHAs, and now he's even threatening to close emergency rooms and trying to blame the Prime Minister.

Will he stop grandstanding and get Manitobans the deal that they deserve?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Madam Speaker, the last time a boat was talked about in this House it was the former member for Flin Flon talking about the Titanic, and he referred to the NDP as being the Titanic headed for a disaster.

I know that the former member for Flin Flon, who I have great respect for, was talking about the disaster that would be happening within the NDP party. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

\* (13:50)

**Mr. Goertzen:** But there was a broader disaster, the disaster of increasing debt as a result of unsustainable spending and a terrible deficit. That is the kind of boat that the member should be thinking about: the Titanic.

We're correcting the course and heading for safer shores.

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

**Mr. Wiebe:** Madam Speaker, in the same way that the Prime Minister has walked away from his commitments to fund health care, this Premier has walked away from his obligation to get the best deal for this province.

It seems the only interest that the Premier has in this fight is to build his bulldog reputation on the national stage, not strengthen the health-care system that Manitoba families depend on. He was out of the country while other provinces were putting health care first and making deals.

If the Health Minister is now prepared to speak on behalf of the Premier, will he apologize for his failed negotiations with Ottawa?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, Madam Speaker, we have a breakthrough. The member started off his questions saying that the Prime Minister had walked away from his commitments on health care.

The member is absolutely right—the member is absolutely right. I'm glad that he has seen the light that the Prime Minister broke a promise that he made in the federal election to go to the premiers and to sit down and have a real discussion about health care, about the long-term sustainability of health care. That is the promise that the Prime Minister had made. I'm disappointed that it's taken a year for the member opposite to finally recognize that, but hopeful that he'll now stand with us in this discussion with Ottawa to have a real long-term discussion on health care, Madam Speaker.

#### Water Supply Safety Frequency of Inspections

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Yesterday, I pointed out that this government's Bill 24 is drastically weakening the future health of water infrastructure in our province.

The minister replied by saying I should go reread the legislation, which I did. And, wouldn't you know it, I have it right here, and it says: The frequency with which public water suppliers must do an assessment of their infrastructure may be reduced from once every five years to once every 10 years.

How come the minister doesn't know what her own legislation says? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** Thanks to the member opposite.

This bill is about safe water. There is no change with regard to the amount of water testing that will be done, it's with regard to valves and pipes and infrastructure.

We are going to protect Manitoba's water system and Manitoba's water.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Wolseley, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Well, Madam Speaker, I think we found a really big source of the problem. The Walkerton inquiry, which followed the death of seven people, tragically, in that community when their water system became contaminated, when their infrastructure was not inspected on a regular basis. The recommendation of the Walkerton inquiry: every five years the pipes, the valves—our case, the aqueduct—everything needs to be inspected every five years.

Why is this minister and this government weakening crucial safety legislation for all Manitobans?

**Mrs. Cox:** Thanks to the member opposite.

He is false in his assertions and he's very irresponsible in making that type of a correlation. That is fear mongering and it really is unfortunate. There is no impact to our water systems.

And I would just like to read that, in fact, when he refers to Ontario, recently, schedule 20 revoked engineering assessments of municipal systems not required through legislation.

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

**Mr. Altemeyer:** What Manitobans deserve to know, Madam Speaker, is that inspections are going to be conducted on all water systems. This government's claim that they're bringing in this legislation to only apply to small operators or only to apply to campgrounds is clearly not the case, because nowhere does that appear in their own legislation. The minister is not being honest with Manitobans, she's not being clear—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order. Order, please.

I heard, from the member asking the question, something that is deemed to be unparliamentary in

this House, and I would ask the member to retract that part of his question.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** I do retract that. If I may continue?

**Madam Speaker:** You may continue.

**Mr. Altemeyer:** Thank you very much.

What this minister is clearly not doing is looking after the long-term health of water infrastructure clear across the province. I don't know what I need to do. Do I have to table a copy of her own legislation so she can see in black and white that what she is claiming is not accurate?

**Mrs. Cox:** Thanks to the member opposite.

This puts us in line with the water standards of other provinces throughout Manitoba. There is no change to what we will do with regard to testing. That testing will still remain, and we will, in fact, ensure that Manitobans have safe, quality drinking water throughout the entire province.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

#### **Drainage and Flood Protection Request for List of Capital Investments**

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** My question is to the Premier (Mr. Pallister) and concerns the flood infrastructure situation in Manitoba.

Flood season's upon us. It's important that the government has been making investments in drainage and permanent flood protection to shore up any areas they think might be flood-affected. I'm wondering if the minister could provide us today with a list of capital investments they've made this year in anticipation of a possible flood.

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Acting Minister of Infrastructure):** I appreciate the question from the member. It's a very important question as we get closer to spring and the weather hopefully improving, hopefully improving slowly though, in moderation.

Certainly, we have had staff out on the ground having discussions with municipalities in areas which could be impacted by flooding this year, and I think we're having some very positive dialogue with those municipalities. Certainly, they're taking actions that may be required. I can tell—advise the member

that certainly in Brandon, that community, work is being completed on dikes to protect that community.

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

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, Madam Speaker, I didn't hear a commitment from the government to inform Manitobans about a specific list of investments that they'd made so far or planning to make concerning the flood situation.

Last week's Public Accounts revealed the government is projected to underspend its investments in drainage and permanent flood protection by more than 10 per cent.

So, I ask again, will the minister provide a full and complete list of capital projects that they've invested on in this year?

**Mr. Cullen:** What I can reassure the House is this government is committed to strategic investment in infrastructure. This will be an ongoing process within government. We've committed to \$1 billion a year of infrastructure investment. We will certainly put out early tenders, opening tendering processes as well. Contrary to what the government did in the past, we will be open and transparent with the tendering process.

Certainly, the—this government has taken measures to acquire materials that may be needed for flood fighting—flood fighting this spring. We're taking steps to put people in place to make sure that all communities are going to be safe.

\* (14:00)

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

**Mr. Maloway:** I asked for specifics and all I got was vague generalities. I didn't hear any commitment from the government to inform the public about their flood investments.

In the third quarter reports released last week, the government revealed that they've underspent capital spending on drainage and permanent flood protection by more than 10 per cent.

Given that the flood season is upon us, why is the government not doing everything they can to make investments to protect Manitobans? Why won't they give us the list and when will they provide that list?

**Mr. Cullen:** Certainly, I know opposition members were holding up our interim supply bill. We were finally able to get that bill passed in this last couple of days.

So, certainly, that bill will provide financing to make sure that we have the materials, we have the people—*[interjection]*—in place to protect Manitoba municipalities and Manitoba communities.

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cullen:** We will not, on this side of the House, undertake something like the East Side Road Authority where so much money was spent and so many—*[interjection]*—very few roads were actually built on the east side of Manitoba.

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

**Madam Speaker:** The—*[interjection]*—order, please. Order. Order.

#### Infrastructure Spending Impact on the Economy

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It appears to be a kind of an unruly mob on the other side of the House and we'll try to settle them down.

The government's third quarter report indicates that total strategic infrastructure spending is down by a whopping \$165 million already this year. Those investments create good jobs, new facilities and the opportunity to grow the economy.

The Finance Minister says he's taking us to a safer shore.

Will he just admit he's driving the Manitoba economy onto a rocky shoal and heading right over the fiscal cliff?

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Acting Minister of Infrastructure):** Yes, speaking of getting settled down, Madam Speaker.

We know what's happened in the past under the previous government. They underspent their infrastructure budget pretty well every single year while in government, except the year of an election. If they will look back on the numbers, it's black and white: underfund, overspend during the election.

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

**Mr. Allum:** It's quite ironic that the minister would complain constantly about overspending and then

suddenly defends underspending. That's terrible for the economy of Manitoba. It's terrible for the people of Manitoba and it's terrible for the future of Manitobans.

So I'm asking the Finance Minister today: Will he reverse course and not take Manitoba down this terrible, terrible path?

**Mr. Cullen:** Well, Madam Speaker, what the business community are asking us is for consistent funding for infrastructure. We provided that funding to the tune of \$1 billion a year over the next several years.

This will be an early tendering process. It will be an open, transparent process and will actually provide taxpayers with more value for their money than we had in the last 17 years. There would be no more untendered Tiger Dam contracts like there was in the past.

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

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Madam Speaker, that's a bit rich. This is a government that spent \$4.2 million to Boston Consulting company—untendered contract. Like, who are they kidding?

Now, \$165 million of underexpenditures on capital infrastructure; \$87 million on education; \$78 million on health care: Why, Madam Speaker, why would the government do the very things that is going to torpedo the economy at the very time they need to invest in the economy, create jobs and send Manitoba to the very shore they want us to get to?

**Mr. Cullen:** I'll tell the members opposite what is rich. Rich is giving their own buddies \$10 million for untendered contracts. That's rich, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, we've made the commitment to strategic investment in infrastructure in Manitoba to the tune of \$1 billion a year over each of the next several years. We think that's the right thing to do. Manitobans have asked us to do that. We're going to deliver on that.

The other thing, Madam Speaker, in terms of jobs, Manitoba businesses are the most optimistic in all of Canada. They are going to deliver on jobs for Manitobans.

### Federal Transfers to Manitoba Government Intentions

**Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows):** In yesterday's federal budget, equalization transfers to Manitoba

were increased by a very large margin. Compared to last year, there was an increase of \$85 million in equalization transfers, \$46 million in Canada Health Transfers and \$17 million in the Canada Social Transfer, resulting in an overall increase of \$148 million in federal direct transfers to Manitoba this coming year.

Madam Speaker, there's nothing wrong with admitting when you've made a mistake. In fact, I'd find it quite admirable.

Will the Premier (Mr. Pallister) stand in the House today to correct the record and admit that he was incorrect on Tuesday when he said that the federal government was going to reduce transfers?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** Well, that member should know that the transfer payments of which she speaks are not significantly changed from the assumptions that we held in December when the Finance ministers' meeting was convened.

But that member will also understand that the evidence points out that on a five-year rolling average, she will understand and recognize that when it comes to transfers from the federal government to Manitoba, those transfers have actually been less significant than in other provinces.

Now, if that member really wanted to stand up for Manitoba, she would be standing up for health care and getting a better deal for all Manitobans. We're standing up for health care. Why is she sitting on her hands?

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Burrows, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Lamoureux:** I'd like to assure the minister that I do understand.

Madam Speaker, an additional \$148 million was transferred to Manitoba. And, like many Manitobans, this Premier will now have to work with what he has been given.

With this new money, is the Premier going to reinstate any projects or programs that he has cut so far?

**Mr. Friesen:** The member should also understand that the transfer payments for a lot of these various envelopes also depends on population, and so as our population in Manitoba goes up, that effect is also reflected. So, as Manitoba's population is growing, so thus also is the transfer payment.

What the member seeks to skirt around, though, is the fundamental challenge that is facing our province in respect of expenditures. And it's the expenditure growth over the last 17 years, left unchecked by the members opposite, the NDP government, that creates the real challenging conditions that all of us now as Manitobans must acknowledge and deal with.

We are dealing with that. We are on a road to recovery. We have much more work to do.

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

**Ms. Lamoureux:** The federal budget allocates new spending in important areas such as mental and brain health, home care, research and innovation, indigenous housing, agriculture, clean technology, child care, education and health care.

With all of this new funding on the table, Madam Speaker, is the Premier (Mr. Pallister) going to start working with the rest of Canada and get to work on these important files? *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, I understand that that member wants to be a cheerleader for Ottawa. She seems actually at times more enthusiastic than Mr. Morneau was yesterday in his delivery.

\* (14:10)

Madam Speaker, I think that really what we've said is that we're willing and ready to work with the federal government to understand more of the particulars when it comes to yesterday's budget. I think she will hear from the experts saying today, and ordinary Canadians, that much more needs to be revealed to understand how the monies will flow, what was allocated this year, what is new, what is repeated from last year.

We need to understand these things. But we also need to understand allocations and how these allocations will be made to Manitoba. We invite that conversation with the federal government and hope that it will ensue quickly.

#### Manitoba Cultural Sector New Cultural Review

**Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James):** Excuse me. In 1992, when all the members in the House were teenagers, the original Winnipeg Jets were playing in the old arena, email and the Internet barely existed and no one was watching Netflix at that time. A lot

has changed in the cultural world since 1992, which was the last time the Province of Manitoba undertook a cultural review.

Can the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage please explain the need to launch a new culture review in Manitoba?

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage):** I'm very honoured to finally get a question regarding this very vital sector in our province, and I would thank the member from St. James for that question.

Manitoba's cultural sector is one of the fastest growing industries in Manitoba and contributes nearly 4 per cent to the provincial GDP, and yet, the policy that we're working on is nearly 25 years old. And so I'm really looking forward to launching a review to hear from Manitobans throughout the province on how to modernize this very vital sector and how we can really become the envy of all of the nation in terms of how we do culture in the province of Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

#### New Cannabis Legislation Consultation with Medicinal Users

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Madam Speaker, many Manitobans use cannabis or cannabis products for their physical and mental health, for example, to relieve pain and suffering, to prevent seizures or to reduce nausea.

These Manitobans are hopeful that changes to Criminal Code promised by the federal government will make it easier and safer to obtain and use medicine they need for their quality of life.

Why has this Minister of Justice introduced legislation that ignores the needs of Manitobans who use and who will use medical cannabis?

**Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I'm very proud to have introduced Bill 25, The Cannabis Harm Prevention Act to the Manitoba Legislature. This is a bill that will bring safety and security and health issues that will be addressed in this bill when it comes to cannabis use.

Of course, we know right now that the federal government is going to be bringing in legislation, but prior to that coming in—when that does come into effect, we need to ensure that we have the laws in place to ensure the safety and health of all Manitobans. That's exactly what this bill is going to do.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Minto, on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Swan:** Madam Speaker, neither Bill 25, The Cannabis Harm Prevention Act, or bill 15, the court security act, contain allowances or exceptions for medical cannabis.

I recognize the government and these ministers may have some stereotypes about Manitobans who need medical cannabis, but they should listen and they should learn. These Manitobans are cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, veterans with PTSD, children with conditions such as Dravet syndrome and many others who need cannabis or cannabis products for their health and well-being. Yet, the minister told CBC Radio yesterday she did not consult with any users of medical cannabis before introducing this bill.

I ask the minister: Why not?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Of course, we are awaiting the federal government to bring in legislation that will provide direction when it comes to medical marijuana, when it comes to all cannabis, and so we are waiting for the federal government on that. In the meantime, Bill 25 is very important for all Manitobans, for the safety and health of all Manitobans.

I met with many, many stakeholders about this, and those—we heard loud and clear from those stakeholders that we need to ensure the safety and health, in particular, of our young people. That's exactly what this bill is going to do.

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

**Mr. Swan:** Well, Madam Speaker, like this government, we appreciate the need for safety and security, but unlike this government we also appreciate the need for Manitobans to be able to access and use needed medical cannabis, and we believe their concerns should be met with respect and dignity. And I would sincerely hope the minister would be open to listening to affected Manitobans

and consider their views about making government bills better.

Will this Minister of Justice commit to meeting Manitobans who need and use medical cannabis before this bill is sent off to a legislative committee?

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, in fact, Madam Speaker, if the member opposite cares and appreciates safety and security and health of all Manitobans, then he should support Bill 25 because that's exactly what it does.

So I encourage members opposite to read the bill, to understand that this is about the safety and health of our young people in Manitoba, and it's about the safety and health of, indeed, all Manitobans. So I encourage members opposite to get on board; support this bill.

#### **Freshwater Fish Legislation Consultation with Indigenous Fishers**

**Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas):** Fishing is a critical part of the culture of northern First Nations people, people in Norway House, people in Wabowden, people who weren't consulted about this government's decision to leave the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

Can the Minister for Sustainable Development tell me why they only met with a select group before they cut and run from the FFMC?

**Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sustainable Development):** Thanks to the member opposite.

We—in fact, our fishing envoy has met, I believe, with over 32 commercial fishers throughout the entire province. It's been a broad consultation process and not one that only deals with one sector of the commercial fishing area.

I'm proud of what we've done, and I think we have a world-class product and Manitoba's fishers deserve to get the most money they can for their product. *[interjection]*

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

The honourable member for The Pas, on a supplementary question.

**Ms. Lathlin:** Hundreds of fishers in northern Manitoba are supporting their families on what they can make from fishing. They don't have the resources to distribute or market their product on their own. It's not certain that they'll be able to maintain their way of life without the FFMC.

Instead of accusing us of fear mongering, will the Minister for Sustainable Development accept that these are the real fears of northern Manitobans?

**Mrs. Cox:** As a matter of fact, I was out at Playgreen Lake this past fall, actually visited with commercial fishers in Norway House and talked to them and listened to them and talked to, actually, Chief Evans, and he told me personally that they were in favour of open, flexible marketing for fisheries.

So, you know what, we will do our part. We will make sure that fishermen retain more of their money and keep it on their kitchen table.

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

#### Need for First Nations Consultations

**Ms. Lathlin:** This government maintained the NDP commitment to eco-certify fisheries on Manitoba lakes, but withdrawing from the FFMC is going to make it much more difficult. It's just another sign that this government wants to go it alone, making it harder to improve the lives of Manitobans, because they refuse to co-operate.

Will the Minister for Sustainable Development make the right choice for Manitoba fishers and Manitoba lakes, stick with what works and stick with the FFMC?

**Mrs. Cox:** Thanks to the member opposite.

I know that the members opposite don't believe in change; however, you know, loud and clear, we heard in—on April 19th, just recently, Manitobans wanted change. So I'm very proud of what we're doing.

Actually, with regard to eco-certification, we have, you know, 18 other lakes that we are looking at for eco-certification.

So it's something that we're moving towards. We're not standing still. We're not the old government on the opposite side. We're moving forward. We'll get it done, Madam Speaker.

\* (14:20)

#### Support for Small Business Government Initiatives

**Mr. Jeff Wharton (Gimli):** I must admit it is a little lonely over here today.

Madam Speaker, in recent weeks, a Canadian Federation of Independent Business survey said that

small-business confidence in Manitoba is the highest amongst all provinces. In comparison, the NDP got a failing grade from local business owners.

Could the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade update the House on the steps our government is taking to help job creators, especially small businesses, in Manitoba?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Cliff Cullen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade):** I do appreciate the question from the member. Certainly, our government is taking many positive steps to improve business climate in our province and it's encouraging that entrepreneurs and small-business owners are taking notice. We are certainly focused on creating a positive foundation to attract investment here in Manitoba and grow our economy.

As many members know, we joined the New West Partnership. We're optimistic that particular bill will move through the process and we will have that ratified in the near future.

Clearly, this is very important for moving goods and services across the jurisdictions in Canada. Also, we've announced the red tape reduction, which is really a positive—very positive, as it will eliminate barriers to doing business here in Manitoba—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

The time for oral questions has expired.

#### PETITIONS

##### Neighbourhoods Alive! Funding

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Since 2011, the Neighbourhoods Alive! program has supported stronger neighbourhoods and communities in Manitoba.

(2) Neighbourhoods Alive! uses a community-led development model that partners with neighbourhood renewal corporations on projects that aim to revitalize communities.

(3) Neighbourhoods Alive! and the neighbourhood renewal corporations it supports have played a vital and important role in revitalizing many neighbourhoods in Manitoba through community-driven solutions, including: employment and

training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention, and housing and physical improvements.

(4) Neighbourhoods Alive! now serves 13 neighbourhood renewal corporations across Manitoba which have developed expertise in engaging with their local residents and determining the priorities of their communities.

(5) The provincial government's previous investments into Neighbourhoods Alive! have been bolstered by community and corporate donations as well as essential support from community volunteers, small businesses and local agencies.

(6) Late in 2016, the minister responsible for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program said new funding for initiatives was paused, and that the future of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program was being reviewed, bringing hundreds of community projects to a standstill.

(7) Neighbourhood renewal corporations and their communities are concerned this funding freeze is the first step in a slow phase-out of the Neighbourhoods Alive! grant program, which would have severe negative impacts on families and communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the Neighbourhoods Alive! program and the communities served by neighbourhood renewal corporations by continuing to provide consistent core funding for existing neighbourhood renewal corporations and enhancing the public funding available for specific initiatives.

Madam Speaker, this petition is signed by many Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** In accordance with our rule 133(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Since 2001, the Neighbourhoods Alive! program has supported stronger neighbourhoods and communities in Manitoba.

Point No. 2: Neighbourhoods Alive! uses a community-led development model that partners

with neighbourhood renewal corporations on projects that aim to revitalize communities.

Point No. 3: Neighbourhoods Alive! and the neighbourhood renewal corporations it supports have played a vital and important role in revitalizing many neighbourhoods in Manitoba through community-driven solutions, including: employment and training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention, and housing and physical improvements.

Point No. 4: Neighbourhoods Alive! now serves 13 neighbourhood renewal corporations across Manitoba which have developed expertise in engaging with their local residents and determining the priorities of their communities.

Point No. 5: The provincial government's previous investments into Neighbourhoods Alive! have been bolstered by community and corporate donations as well as essential support from community volunteers, small businesses and local agencies.

Point No. 6: Late in 2016, the minister responsible for the—*[interjection]*—just a petition—for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program said new funding for initiatives was, quote, paused, end quote, and that the future of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program was being, quote, reviewed, end quote, bringing hundreds of community projects to a standstill.

Point No. 7: Neighbourhood renewal corporations and their communities are concerned this funding freeze is the first step in a slow phase-out of the Neighbourhoods Alive! grant program, which would have severe negative impacts on families and communities.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the Neighbourhoods Alive! program and the communities served by neighbourhood renewal corporations by continuing to provide consistent core funding for existing neighbourhood renewal corporations and enhancing the public funding available for specific initiatives.

This petition is signed by Pat Stewart, Susan White and Rey Sangalang, and many other Manitobans.

### Kelvin High School Gymnasium and Wellness Centre

**Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this position is as follows:

(1) Manitobans recognize how important it is to provide young people with quality learning spaces to succeed in school.

(2) Sport, recreation and the spaces to engage in them are critical to the health and welfare of all students.

(3) All forms of educational infrastructure, including gymnasiums and recreation centres in general, represent an incredible value-for-money investment whereby the return is improved physical and psychological health and wellness.

(4) Kelvin High School is one of the largest high schools in the province with over 1,200 students.

(5) Kelvin High School has spent several years raising almost \$1.2 million towards the construction of a new gymnasium and wellness centre.

(6) Some Kelvin students currently have to pay to use outside facilities to obtain their mandatory physical education credit.

(7) The provincial government, in a regressive and short-sighted move, cancelled funding to the Kelvin gym and wellness centre for political reasons despite the extensive community support, fundraising and engagement.

(8) It is wasteful and disrespectful to the dedicated efforts of students, staff and the community in general to simply lay their goals aside without consultation.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the need for excellent recreation facilities in all Manitoba schools, to reverse this regressive cut and to provide Kelvin High School with the funding necessary to complete a new gymnasium and wellness centre.

And this has been signed by Jason Schreyer, Tracy Schmidt, Rachelle Schott, Abe Araya.

### Dakota Collegiate Sports Complex

**Mr. Wab Kinew (Fort Rouge):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitobans recognize how important it is to provide young people with quality learning spaces to succeed in school.

(2) Sport recreation and the spaces to engage in them are critical to the physical, mental and social welfare of students.

(3) All forms of educational infrastructure, including gymnasiums and recreation centres in general, represent an incredible value-for-money investment, whereby the return is the improved physical and psychological health and well-being of students.

(4) Dakota Collegiate spent several years raising money toward the construction of the Louis Riel School Division sports complex to replace the poor condition of its playing field.

\* (14:30)

(5) Dakota's varsity teams have been forced to play elsewhere because of the poor condition of its playing field.

(6) Dakota Collegiate must put the project out to tender and break ground in a matter of months for the field to be completed in time for this coming school year.

(7) The provincial government, in a regressive and short-sighted move, cancelled funding for this project for political reasons despite the extensive community support, fundraising and engagement.

(8) It is shorts—it is a short-sighted move on the part of the provincial government to undercut the dedicated efforts of students, staff and the community in general.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the tireless efforts of the Dakota Collegiate, its students, parents, staff and the surrounding community; to recognize the need for excellent recreational facilities in all Manitoba schools; to reverse this regressive cut; and to provide the

funding necessary to complete the Louis Riel School Division sports complex.

Signed by many great Manitobans.

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitobans recognize how important it is to provide young people with quality learning spaces to succeed in school.

Sport, recreation and the spaces to engage in them are critical to the physical, mental and social welfare of students.

All forms of educational infrastructure, including gymnasiums and recreation centres in general, represent an incredible value-for-money investment, whereby the return is the improved physical and psychological health and well-being of students.

Dakota college spent several years raising money towards construction of the Louis Riel School Division sports complex to replace the poor condition of its playing field.

Dakota's varsity teams have been forced to play elsewhere because of the poor condition of its playing field.

Dakota college must put the project out to tender and break ground in a matter of months for the field to be completed in time for this coming school year.

The provincial government, in a regressive and short-sighted move, cancelled funding for this project for political reasons despite the extensive community fundraising and engagement.

It is short-sighted move on the part of the provincial government to undercut the dedicated efforts of students, staff and the community in general.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the tireless efforts of Dakota Collegiate, its students, parents, staff and the surrounding community; to recognize the need for excellent recreation facilities in all Manitoba schools; to reverse this regressive cut; and to provide the funding necessary to complete the Louis Riel School Division sports complex.

### Neighbourhoods Alive! Funding

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background of the petition is as follows:

(1) Since 2001, the Neighbourhoods Alive! program has supported stronger neighbourhoods and communities in Manitoba.

(2) Neighbourhoods Alive! uses a community-led development model that partners with neighbourhood renewal corporations on projects that aim to revitalize communities.

(3) Neighbourhoods Alive! and the neighbourhood renewal corporations it supports have played a vital and important role in revitalizing many neighbourhoods in Manitoba through community-driven solutions, including: employment and training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention, and housing and physical improvements.

(4) Neighbourhoods Alive! now serves 13 neighbourhood renewal corporations across Manitoba which have developed expertise in engaging it with local residents and determining the priorities of their communities.

(5) The provincial government's previous investments into Neighbourhoods Alive! have been bolstered by community and corporate donations as well as essential support from community volunteers, small businesses and local agencies.

(6) Late in 2016, the minister responsible for the Neighbourhoods Alive! program said that new funding for the initiatives was paused, and that the future of Neighbourhoods Alive! program was being reviewed, bringing hundreds of community projects to a standstill.

(7) Neighbourhood renewal corporations and their communities are concerned this funding freeze is the first step to a slow phase-out of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program—grant program, which would have given severe negative impacts on families and Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba be urged to support the Neighbourhoods Alive! program and the communities served by neighbourhood renewal corporations by continuing to provide consistent core funding for existing neighbourhood

renewal corporations and enhancing the public funding available for specific initiatives.

This petition is signed by many Manitobans.

### Provincial Nominee Program

**Ms. Flor Marcelino (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows.

The provincial government has proposed regressive changes to the Provincial Nominee Program that create financial and social barriers for newcomers.

(2) Starting this year, successful provincial nominees must pay a \$500 fee as part of their application, adding to the financial burden of applicants.

(3) While the provincial government's stated justification for the fee is that it will be reinvested into language-support programs, the PNP already requires nominees to have proven English- or French-language skills.

(4) The provincial government is also changing its criteria from selecting nominees with family and community connections in Manitoba to an employer-driven focus that will only select nominees with approved job offers from established employers.

(5) The shift in focus jeopardizes the PNP's successful 86 per cent retention rate as, without family or community ties, nominees will move to other provinces with larger job markets.

(6) The change provides employers with an incentive to select newcomers based on reduced cost, leaving nominees vulnerable to exploitation.

(7) The business community and the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce have made it clear that the PNP is a successful program, driving the economy with skilled workers.

(8) According to a report in 2014, 94 to 98 per cent of nominees reported employment earnings within their first year of arriving in Manitoba and had the second lowest unemployment rate among immigrants in Canada.

(9) Despite the wealth of economic and social benefits that newcomers bring to the province, the Premier cruelly portrayed them as a burden to

society by inaccurately linking provincial nominees to high unemployment rates and social assistance.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to maintain the PNP nomination criteria, to remove the \$500 fee and to continue to invest in newcomers who build the province, drive the economy and promote diversity and inclusion in Manitoba.

Signed: Richard Booth, Roy Romanow [*phonetic*], Alanna Jones and many, many other Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### High School Recreation Facilities

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly. The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitobans recognize how important it is to provide young people with quality learning spaces to succeed in school.

(2) Sport, recreation and the spaces to engage in them are critical to the physical, mental and social welfare of students.

(3) Kelvin High School and Dakota Collegiate have both spent several years raising money towards the construction of a new gymnasium and wellness centre and a new sports field, respectively.

(4) Kelvin High School is one of the largest high schools in the province, with over 1,200 students.

(5) Some Kelvin students currently have to pay to use outside facilities to obtain their mandatory physical education credit.

(6) Likewise, Dakota's varsity teams have been forced to play elsewhere because of the negative condition of its playing field.

(7) Football and soccer teams at Dakota Collegiate must put the project out to tender and break ground in a matter of months for the field to be completed for this coming school year.

(8) The provincial government, in a regressive and short-sighted move, cancelled funding for both projects for political reasons despite the extensive community support, fundraising and engagement.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the tireless efforts of Kelvin High School and Dakota Collegiate, to recognize the need for excellent recreation facilities in all Manitoba schools, to reverse this regressive cut to Manitoba schools, and to provide both schools with the funding necessary to complete the new Kelvin High School gymnasium and the Dakota college-collegiate field of dreams.

This petition was signed by many Manitobans.

### St. Boniface QuickCare Clinic

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly. And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) QuickCare clinics support the health-care system by offering important front-line service-health-care services that help seniors and families.

(2) The six QuickCare clinics in Winnipeg are accessible, located within communities and have extended hours so that families and seniors can access high-quality primary health care quickly close to home.

(3) QuickCare clinics are staffed by the—by registered nurses and nurse practitioners who are able to diagnose and treat non-urgent care needs, as well as perform procedures and interpret diagnostic tests.

(4) The bilingual St. Boniface QuickCare clinic actively offers an essential health-care service in French to Winnipeg's Franco-Manitoban community.

(5) Having access to bilingual services is essential to ensuring the ongoing vitality of the Franco-Manitoban community.

(6) The provincial government have announced the closing of St. Boniface QuickCare clinic, on January 27th, 2017, leaving St. Boniface and St. Vital seniors and families without access to community health care.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to both recognize the importance of bilingual health-care services in Manitoba and reverse their decision to close the St. Boniface QuickCare clinic.

And this petition is signed by many, many Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** Any further petitions?

Grievances?

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

*(Continued)*

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, we would like to call, in the following order for this afternoon, bills 2, 3, 13 and 14.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the following bills will be considered this afternoon and in this order: bills 2, 3, 13 and 14.

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill 2—The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement)

**Madam Speaker:** Proceeding, then, as agreed upon, second reading of Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement).

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade, that Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les valeurs mobilières (exécution réciproque), now be read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been advised of the bill, and I table the message.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance, seconded by the honourable Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade, that Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased this afternoon to bring this bill to second reading in the Legislature and present this legislation, which would essentially be a bill that would propose amendments to The Securities Act. The Manitoba Securities Commission administers The Securities Act, which is the legislative framework for overseeing the operations of the securities' markets in Manitoba. This includes the practices and the conduct of firms and individuals who are engaged in the marketing and selling of securities in our province.

The Securities Commission ensures fair and transparent markets in Manitoba and protects investors. This is essential to The Securities Act. The amendments that this bill proposes are intended to streamline activities within our province and actually increase co-operation between Manitoba and other Canadian securities' regulators.

Currently, under the legislation, if an individual in any jurisdiction is found to have breached laws in another province, then Manitoba is required to conduct its own hearings in order to separately adjudicate the charge against an individual or I should say the conviction, whatever charge was brought and then whatever decision was reached, and this is highly inefficient. It's costly; it's time-consuming; it eats up resources, and every year, to give some indication of the size of the problem, Manitoba would implement between 25 and 30 reciprocal orders, as they are called, through this hearing-type of process.

So the proposed amendments that we are bringing would allow Manitoba the automatic reciprocation of enforcement orders and settlements that are made in other provinces without the requirement of holding our own hearing. So that would help prevent members or individuals who are in the profession. They've been disciplined for their conduct in other areas where they were selling products, and now they're trying to set up in Manitoba.

One could also see that this would have the important effect of tightening up the time, so if someone has received a penalty, there's been a conviction, a charge, and a conviction against them in another jurisdiction, nothing right now would prevent that person from going to a different province. They could come, in essence, to Manitoba, set up shop—because there's been no hearing; there's been no reciprocal order because we don't have a provision for such—and they could basically continue to sell these registered products to individuals who would be none the wiser and would not understand that this individual has been disciplined in another jurisdiction.

By acknowledging those penalties from other jurisdictions, we tighten up the process, and it would be good for consumers. So, essentially, I would characterize this legislation as a consumer protection mechanism. Certainly, it has elements to it which would speak to the reduction of red tape. Certainly, it introduces efficiencies, and certainly, it also does

reflect best practice, but perhaps most of all it is about consumer protection.

On that subject, though, of what other jurisdictions do, I would note for all the members of this House that similar legislation to Bill 2, as we're speaking to this afternoon, has already been passed in Alberta, in Nova Scotia, in New Brunswick, in Quebec.

Similar legislation has been proposed in Ontario and BC, and so we would not be the first, certainly, but by passing this legislation, we would, as many other provinces have done already, be able to have that framework in place to immediately curtail the use of hearings and simply respect and receive those orders as they've been passed in other jurisdictions.

\* (14:50)

We stated, Madam Speaker, in our government's Speech from the Throne in November that we are committed to protecting investors and consumers through the strengthening of securities legislation. The current applicable sections, sections 148.4(1) and (2) are being retained and an additional six sections are being added to streamline the reciprocation of these extra provincial orders and settlement agreements while continuing to provide safeguards for the rights of affected parties.

This includes the non-reciprocation of fines and costs assessed by the originating jurisdiction. There is no need for us to penalize. Again, this is not about increasing revenue to the Minister of Finance. Penalties will have been assessed in the province or jurisdiction in which the charge was brought. This does not extend privileges to Manitoba to jump on or to piggyback and issue our own charges.

Additionally, the right of the affected party or the director of the entity will be able to seek a hearing in Manitoba in the event that there is a question about the appropriateness of reciprocation.

So we've created this safeguard and said any group or any individual has the ability to make that appeal for whatever issue. I couldn't hypothesize in this place, but, for whatever issue they felt that the charge or the penalty against them did not require reciprocation, they could bring that evidence and it would be heard in this jurisdiction.

This is a fair measure. It would strengthen and improve our system. It improves markets, it improves investors, it will make a process of protecting investors more efficient or cost-effective

and it will contribute to harmonizing security laws and regulations across Canada.

I look forward to the debate this afternoon, and I hope to see this bill passed and going on within this Legislature for the reasons that I've stated.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Questions

**Madam Speaker:** A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate, subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties, subsequent questions asked by each independent member, remaining questions asked by any opposition members, and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I thought that minister was filibustering his own bill there. Man, that was a long speech.

The minister made quite a statement about—yes, this bill being in the interests of consumer protection. I don't necessarily disagree with him on that. But could he tell us: What consumer protection organizations did he consult before he tabled this bill?

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** The member should know that these changes were actually recommended through a process in which the Manitoba Securities Commission participates in an ongoing way with industry and other jurisdictions, so you get that alignment between jurisdictions. I assure him that Manitoba Securities Commission takes these issues very seriously, but, of course, when we've seen that four other jurisdictions have already adopted and two are in the process of adopting these things, this is best practice and that's why we bring the bill.

**Mr. Allum:** Madam Speaker, I didn't hear one consumer protection organization listed there. The—for a minister who makes a lot of talk about out-there consulting, in fact, it sounds like he's only listening to himself.

Can he tell us how this bill will make Manitoba's securities market more efficient?

**Mr. Friesen:** If the member was listening to my remarks, which I remind him were limited to about five minutes, so, if he was listening to that, he would

have heard all the reasons for why this is an efficient measure, reducing exactly the time it would take to issue our own orders and have the hearings. We do away with those provisions, and I would assure him that any time we can do away with those provisions and allow that reciprocal order simply to be entered here in this jurisdiction, that will not only save time, money and staff resources, it additionally collapses the time period in which an individual could have been selling products here before that hearing had taken place. All of those things present good protections for the consumer.

**Mr. Allum:** So, Madam Speaker, following that, then, if the minister could tell us how will this bill help protect Manitoba families and consumers?

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, I believe I just did, but, if he would like me to elaborate, I could say that anyone, then, who is choosing, who is seeking these products from a registered dealer will have these protections in place. It collapses the time period, because before, until this time, there would have had to have been that hearing take place in this jurisdiction, even though an order had already been made in another jurisdiction. And I would say this simplifies the process.

Before, previously, an individual would actually have to hunt through the orders in other jurisdictions to see if charges had been laid. In this case, the process is accelerated by these reciprocal orders.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Can the minister clarify one area, when there is a problem that has arisen and somebody has, as it were, a black mark from one jurisdiction and that is carried over and then put in Manitoba, what is the process for an individual, who has a black mark, to clear their name if there has been a mistake made, and what is the process for correcting that, should that happen?

**Mr. Friesen:** That's a very good question.

The bill, as other jurisdictions have included also in their legislation, includes provisions whereby the individual who has had an order made against them must always return to the province in which the original order was made. In that province, in that jurisdiction, if that individual would then seek that appeal process that's in place, and then whatever—if there is any overturning of the original penalty, then that is also recognized and made whole in the other jurisdictions who are participating in this inter-jurisdictional exchange.

**Mr. Allum:** Can the minister tell us, are there any sanctions or conditions or restrictions or requirements that would not be included in this amendment?

**Mr. Friesen:** So the bill spells out these kinds of reciprocal orders for anyone for whom there have been imposed sanctions, conditions, restrictions or other requirements, and these things are all spelled out by definition. The language we have used for the purpose of this legislation reflects language that has been used in the other jurisdictions where the—where this legislation has already been adopted. That includes Alberta, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and then Ontario and BC; that legislation is still in process.

**Mr. Allum:** Has the government taken a position on a national securities commission?

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, that question is clearly out of scope for the purposes of this discussion, but if I can just—well, in the brief time to me, I would say to him, he knows the process that has gotten us here, where the federal government first brought a proposal to have a central regulator. That was not an 'itea'—idea that received large favour by the provinces. And subsequently there's been a process whereby the idea of a co-operative regulator has been put forward. Manitoba is still a member of the passport system, but we continue to study the issue from all angles.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, let me ask the question a different way then, Madam Speaker. And I would advise the minister that we'll ask the questions; he won't rule on whether it's out of scope or not.

So I would ask him, does he support the passport system then, or maybe even passport plus?

**Mr. Friesen:** Well, the bill before us this afternoon, Madam Speaker, is a bill that contains a modest measure that would bring consumer protection to Manitobans through a reciprocal enforcement order mechanism that has been adopted in four other provinces, and two more are considering it.

He wants to ask broad policy questions about the—Manitoba's use of the co-operative or passport systems. I would suggest to him that we'd be able to have a more fulsome conversation in the process of the Committee of Supply. These question-and-answer formats simply won't allow for that.

\* (15:00)

**Mr. Allum:** Well, Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is, we're talking about the Securities Commission right now, how it affects Manitoba and

how it operates across the country. It's only a matter of course that we should be able to understand what the government's position is on a national securities commission, whether the Finance Minister supports the current passport system or passports plus.

I'll ask him again: does he support a national securities commission or not?

**Mr. Friesen:** The member's question actually reveals some ignorance of the issue, because he does not recognize that the change that we are proposing is within exactly the parameters of the passport system.

So Manitoba is a member of those provinces that have the passport system, and that is a system, of course, that has sought, over time, to strengthen the relationships between jurisdictions. And this is exactly one type of strengthening that would be provided for should the bill be successful.

And so the status quo is that Manitoba continues to be a member of the passport system of the securities regulation in Canada.

**Mr. Allum:** Well, I guess, Madam Speaker, we'll take this up with the Finance Minister at another time. He seems unable, unwilling or just not capable of answering very simple questions.

If a ruling is made in favour of an affected market participant, will this ruling hold across other provinces as well?

**Mr. Friesen:** So that's asked and answered, Madam Speaker. The exact, you know, language of the bill says that when a ruling is made in another jurisdiction, it is then recognized here. And there is no need to undergo a separate hearing so that it would be a separate process. Essentially, the recommendation of one jurisdiction is acknowledged; the order is made whole in this jurisdiction.

**Mr. Allum:** The minister purports—suggests that this bill is to protect consumers and yet we have questions about his commitment to protecting consumers, whether it's Bell, MTS or any other deal, sometimes consumers have been sold out by this government.

Can he tell us, again, at this time, maybe provide the list of consumer organizations and individuals that he's talked to about this bill?

**Mr. Friesen:** The member can be assured that our stakeholder relations are very strong. We meet regularly with members from the investment community, in Manitoba—we meet. I have regular

meetings with the Manitoba Securities Commission, of course. But, also, within the industry, these changes have been acknowledged. When the bill was put on the order table, I was actually contacted by members of the community, the stakeholder community, who acknowledged this and said this would strengthen our system. So I think he can be reassured that this has the support of industry.

As a matter of fact, I would add that when it comes to the passport system, we have 95 per cent of our rules already harmonized. What we're working on is the 5 per cent of rules that are not already in complete alignment.

**Madam Speaker:** If there are no further questions, the debate is open.

### Debate

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I want to say at the outset of this debate on Bill 2, amending that provides The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement), I don't think that we, on this side of the House, have any great objections to the particular legislation that's been tabled by the Finance Minister.

Let's remember that is was our government and, in particular, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) who was instrumental in creating the passport system that has provided a national component to securities trading in this country—at the same time, protecting Manitoba's profound interest in that particular industry.

Now we're troubled, of course, that the Finance Minister fails to tell us what consumer organizations that he's consulted with. We know that he talks, quite regularly, to his few friends in the financial industry, and I'm glad that he does. But it would be better if he would come to the House with a more fuller explanation of just who he's consulted with in the consumer protection, whether there aren't other suggestions that are coming from people who work with actual consumers as opposed to just working with those in the financial industry.

We know that there have been examples of fraud that have happened, from time to time, in this particular industry; it's important that there's a national will to address that. And, if this is a more efficient method for doing so, then we don't particularly object. But we are concerned—we are concerned—that the Finance Minister isn't answering questions either—not only the—on consumer 'protection' aspects or this bill but on the

larger questions relating to a national securities commission, what the government's position is on that. Are they in? Or are they going to stand up for Manitoba in that regard and ensure that a very, very important industry in our province that employs many people, has many benefits for the people of Manitoba, will be protected right here? And he's left that an open question, and that's unfortunate.

The Finance Minister makes a point of advising members as to whether their questions are relevant or irrelevant, whether they're in scope or out of scope. We were looking for a more fuller debate on issues relating to the securities industry for the simple fact that this bill is actually quite thin. But as I said, Madam Speaker, there's no objections to this side sending it to—on for second reading. Let's see—send it to committee—let's see what actual consumers and the public has to say about it, and then we'll go from there.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I want to just say a few words on—about this particular bill.

This bill will enable a quicker action in Manitoba when somebody who's in the securities industry has been found to be in a situation where they have been providing wrong information or other matters, so that if they are subject to sanctions, conditions, restrictions or requirements imposed by another Canadian securities regulator, that notice would automatically come into play and come into effect in Manitoba, that those conditions and sanctions would come into play here, as well.

I think this is actually quite a sensible move, that we have seen a number of cases—I have had people come to me who have lost a lot of their savings because of their—what happened with them and their dealings with individuals in the securities industry. Now, happily, that is a rare event, and the vast, vast majority of people in the securities industry do a great service for people in Manitoba. And that certainly should be noted. But where there is a problem which has been identified in another jurisdiction in Canada, then we should act, and act right away, instead of having to wait here, so that our citizens, Manitobans, can be protected, just like they are in other provinces, without having to wait.

And so this is a sensible measure. And from the answer to my question, if there is a problem when the sanctions are put on and that is appealed and

overturned, that overturning then can also be changed very quickly in Manitoba. And so I think this is a sensible way of using our resources optimally, of notifying the consumers very quickly in Manitoba of what is happening with individuals across Canada, not just in Manitoba.

So, as a Liberal caucus, we're ready to support this measure. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question—the honourable member for Kildonan.

**Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan):** I want to thank all of my colleagues. We're joining together. It seems like there's support across all three parties we have in this House—so wonderful.

Want to begin by thanking, of course, good people of Kildonan for choosing me to speak for them on this matter today. All the way people from Riverbend, Rivergrove, down Kildonan Parkway, down through Margaret Park and Templeton-Sinclair, past Garden City mall where I live in Garden City, and such a wonderful community.

We're so excited. We're—we are hosting the western Canadian Ringette Championship this year in Garden City. I was there last night at the opening ceremonies. I had a wonderful opportunity to speak to the incredible people in our community. We have many people, young families. We have many new Canadians. And we have many people who are retired. And all of these people are investing in their communities; they're investing in their families, but they're investing in general. They're investing; they're using the securities markets.

\* (15:10)

And many of them talked to me. They've very concerned about what things have been for many years. They're concerned about the lack of clarity, lack of co-operation.

We have passed some legislation connecting us to the New West Partnership. We've passed legislation that is making it clear and transparent of what our government's doing. And this is something that we're very excited to have happen. We were able to pass legislation that is able to make rules in the securities world—this is in our country—far more harmonized with other provinces where, if someone is committing afoul of someone who's causing problems in the security market, this is something where we no longer have, essentially, red tape that is interrupting that. People in my neighbourhoods,

they're happy about that. They do not want further and further confusion, further and further ways where people can give, you know, false representation to many things, not just securities markets, many things in their own communities where no one wants to hear that knock at the door, that person who's coming to check your water meter with nothing on their attire to indicate if they're uniform, if they're on the job; there's nothing saying that they're not there to try to steal from you or they're not trying to cause you harm in some way. And so we have ways that we can identify things that—to protect consumers, protect customers of businesses. We have these ways that we can have it so it's easier for people to feel at home, to feel comfortable where they are.

We've many people where, for them, their home is their castle. And I know my colleagues agree with me on this, that they're very dedicated to making it more comfortable for people so that they don't have to worry about if someone's knocking on their door, trying to harm them; they don't have to worry if someone's committing some kind of securities issue in Saskatchewan, that they're going to come to Manitoba and slip through the cracks. We don't need to be worried about those kinds of things. And in many respects, that's why I know that my colleague's very happy to join us and pass this legislation, which is, again, great. It's a makes-sense piece of legislation that we know is going to gain support from many people, and this is something where sometimes we can get heated in this Chamber. Thursdays sometimes feel like a Friday, but I think we're joining together this Thursday for a break weekend—week, excuse me. We have the weekend upon us and people can return to their constituencies, can go to people and say, look at all the accomplishments we've made in this last week.

We've had a couple weeks of just—feels like maybe not much was as productive for some people. Maybe people were concerned about the legislative agenda we had, not this week, but the weeks past. And maybe this is something where we're happy we can join together and tell people, look at all these pieces of legislation that we passed. And maybe not everyone's very excited about securities markets. Maybe people call this thin legislation; it's not even, maybe, worth all this time to talk about. But, again, I'm so proud and honoured that the good people of Kildonan want me here for them on their behalf because this is something where we must address these things that, for some people, seems routine; for

some people, it seems like just another stroke of the pen.

But this takes, sometimes, legislation where we can make sure that people can stay protected in various markets, such as securities markets, where we don't have people that are taking some kind of hazard in their profession and bringing it over here in Manitoba. Suddenly, it becomes a lot easier for people to stay in a clear market with securities, and this is something that all retired people of Kildonan, from the young families investing in their future, this is something that they are very concerned that they know that their money is being cared for when they trust it to financial advisers and that we have rules that govern that ability for them to keep trusted advisers. And I'm so glad that we've been able to extend that trust further, make people bit more comfortable and when they're investing in their children's education, their retirement or their homes themselves. I'm so happy that we're able to debate this and come together and join in some great legislation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement).

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

I declare the motion carried.

## DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

### Bill 3—The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act

**Madam Speaker:** As previously agreed, we will now move on to Bill 3, resuming debate on second reading of Bill 3, which has three minutes remaining in its question period.

#### Questions

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** It's been a while since we've had a chance to talk about Bill 2 or Bill 3, so I want to ask the Finance Minister: Can he tell us what obligations employers have under this particular piece of legislation.

**Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance):** Yes, the member is actually correct about something

today; it has been a while since we talked about this bill.

But we had a chat some weeks back; he's right about PRPPs, and we talked about what it would mean for Manitobans for saving, what it would mean for the industry as a new product that would be available here to people, and what it would mean as well for employers and employees within an organization.

And so, simply, there's been a number of different approaches when it comes to this. In some provinces, it's been a decision to make it mandatory to have these products; in other provinces, it's been about making it optional and we are taking a balanced approach that reflects the approach of other jurisdictions.

**Mr. Allum:** It's just a matter of clarification because I didn't quite hear what the minister said there. It sounds like in some provinces it's mandatory, other places it's optional. To my understanding, it's that employers' obligations under this bill are optional. Could he just confirm that for us, please?

**Mr. Friesen:** So the employer in this case—he was asking about the role of the employer—and the employer would establish the PRPP for its employees and then be responsible for selecting a registered administrator on behalf of its employees. The individual who wishes to establish a PRPP would be responsible for selecting the registered administrator, so there is not a requirement for an employer to additionally contribute to this fund.

That is different than in other jurisdictions. In some jurisdictions, the employer must also be a contributor. In our jurisdiction, the employer would have a responsibility to make available to those individuals in companies where there is not a plan.

**Mr. Allum:** Because it has been a while, could the Finance Minister tell the House what success these particular pooled registered pension plans have had in other jurisdictions? Have they been successful or unsuccessful?

**Mr. Friesen:** PRPPs have some—have had some success in other jurisdictions. It's a changing landscape, to be sure.

It would be a different conversation we would be having today had there not been a decision of the federal government to drive a conversation forward about CPP enhancement, of course, because CPP was originally designed in the late 1960s so that

individuals would save throughout their working life and have available to them upon retirement about 25 per cent of proceeds returned to them in their retirement as what they were receiving beforehand.

So, now, we have an enhanced CPP coming to Canadians. PRPPs will be an important additional tool for Manitobans to have. It's important for all Manitobans to be saving adequately for retirement.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for this question period has ended.

### Debate

**Madam Speaker:** The floor is now open for debate.

**Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview):** I'm pleased to get up and speak to Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act.

The minister ended off question-the question and answer session by saying it's another tool for individuals who otherwise don't have a-don't have pensionable benefits. In that, we would agree. Of course he knows, and he knows full well, that they have not been successful in other jurisdictions.

We know, for example, that Scott Anderson, vice-president of retirement at HUB International STRATA Benefits Consulting in Winnipeg, says that in other provinces where this has been implemented, quote, truthfully, it's had a lot of whimper in other provinces, by making it voluntary it's had no traction, end quote.

So the minister ought to have been more forthcoming in his answer in explaining that this has had minimal to no impact in other jurisdictions. And so he puts it on the table here for us to consider as though this is something important, something revolutionary, something that's going to actually make a difference in the lives of working families and we know, in fact, that it's had very, very little uptake.

And the reason that it has very little uptake, Madam Speaker, is quite simply—it's because more often than not, with the exception of Quebec, employers have been left to make it a voluntary whether they would contribute or not.

\* (15:20)

*Mrs. Colleen Mayer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

And—Madam Deputy Speaker, welcome in to the Chair.

So it's not—it has to—we want to make clear that while this particular bill has no objections and we're willing to see it go through to committee, we also know that this has not been a very successful tool, as Paul Moist, who is an acknowledged expert on pensions, makes clear, whenever employers don't have skin in the game, these kinds of plans are not successful.

And, frankly, that's not the deal that Canadians have been struck with their employers for—from the exemption of the creation of pension plans in this country, there was a understanding that this was a mutual obligation between employer and employee to ensure that after a lifetime of hard work, they would be well kept in their retirement. But, when employers don't have to participate, when they're given the opportunity to not support their employees, 99 times out of 100, that's exactly what employers are going to do.

So we want to be clear that while it's not exactly earth-shattering legislation that we have in front of us, it's also fair to say that we have no objections seeing it go forward. But we also know, and we put it on the record, that these have not been successful.

This was, in fact, a—this legislation is modelled on previous legislation tabled by the Harper government, so that probably tells you all you need to know. It's one of the great ironies for us on this side of the House, of course, is that it was the Harper government that cut funding from 6 to 3.3 per cent on the health-care thing. The Premier (Mr. Pallister) is now wrapping himself in the flag, but otherwise tying himself in a knot on that particular issue, something Harper guides do on the one hand with—related to pensions. The Finance Minister's there and ready, but when it comes to health care, of course, they have a different story altogether.

Our primary concern is not, Madam Speaker, with this particular piece of legislation, but what the government, and in particular, what the Premier and the Finance Minister have in store for pensions in general across this province. We know very well that they don't support pensions; they never have and never will.

And so, we're quite concerned about the cuts and undermining pensionable benefits for Manitobans that they—the Manitoba—working Manitobans have been paying into for a long time. In public sector for—by and large, those are defined benefit plans. They make—they provide that certainty in a retirement as to what somebody will have,

whereas defined contribution, of course, which the government likely prefers and will do everything in their power to impose, we're sure in the next year or so, that they're a different order. They don't provide any predictability; they don't provide any kind of certainty for hard-working Manitobans who've paid into these pension plans as a negotiated collective bargaining agreement with their employer.

So, we'll be putting the government on notice today that while we have no problems seeing Bill 2 go—Bill 3 go forward on pooled registered pension plans, go to committee, see what the public has to say—we are putting the government on notice. We'll be watching very carefully if there's any attack on pensions in this province, and we'll be standing with the working men and women of this province to protect public pensions in this province and ensure that after a lifetime of paying into a pension plan, those individuals, those families, receive the full benefits that they've paid into and not be undermined by a government that has no interest in protecting the well-being of Manitobans.

Thank you.

**Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson):** It's my pleasure to put a few words on the record today in regards to this bill regarding pooled registered pension plans.

As many of you may recall, I spoke to this House about financial literacy and about the needs for—the need for Manitobans to be more aware of their financial situation and more in control of the financial outcomes that they're faced with in the future. They need to be good managers of their money. They need to be able to budget and track their finances and they need to be able to save.

You know, I appreciate—we very much, I think, all in this House do appreciate the role that the CPP and OAS and Guaranteed Income Supplement can have in providing sufficient retirement income for our seniors. But I think it's also important to recognize that for most Manitobans, they're not going to be able to enjoy the benefits of a registered pension plan through, you know, their employer, such as the one that the government employees do get to enjoy and as we, as MLAs, get to enjoy. Most Manitobans don't have that benefit, and so they, like so many others in the private sector, are required to set aside some additional funds through various savings vehicles whether that's TFSAs or quite commonly RRSPs.

And what I like about this pooled retirement pension plan offering is that it allows people who might not normally be able to access a defined benefit pension, the kinds that many government employees get to get benefit from. It allows private-sector workers and others, even self-employed individuals potentially, to be able to set aside money for themselves into the future in a way that they're going to be able to have an additional income stream that's going to benefit them during their retirement period.

We made a commitment to this in our Throne Speech. We talked about the need to increase financial literacy and we talked about how CPP is a key pillar but that it isn't the entire solution. And so this plan will offer a new deferred income plan, and it'll provide retirement benefits for employees and self-employed individuals who just cannot access those workplace-based defined pension—defined benefit pensions that many government employees and other employees in large organizations get to enjoy.

Some of you may recall that prior to entering this House, I worked at a financial planning software company. I developed software that would do financial planning modelling that would model the outcomes of various investments, RRSPs, TFSAs, money purchase registered pension plans, as well as plans much like this one. Historically, I think Manitoba also offered an LRIF. I don't believe we do that anymore, and so it's good to offer choice and flexibility.

I think one of the key things that we have to take away from this too, after we pass this legislation—which I hope we can do shortly and move it on to committee—but when we pass this legislation, it's to ensure that we're working with financial providers, people who are offering services to Manitobans, and they too are partners with us in improving the financial literacy of Manitobans and that they are going to be able to offer meaningful products that individual Manitobans can take advantage of.

So I'll keep my words brief, but that is what I wanted to put on the record today. I thank you very much.

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, a few comments on Bill 3. I think it is good that there are additional options and that this is one. Many people in reviewing pension plans are looking

very carefully at management costs, and this option to pool pensions makes sense because it has the potential in pooling to decrease the management costs and therefore increase their returns to individuals to give them a better pension.

I am concerned, however, that the uptake on this pension may be low on this sort of pension and, if that is the case, then it will not be a success. And, clearly, one of the things that needs to be done is to look very carefully in two or three years after this bill, should it pass, be implemented, to see if there are changes that can be made that would increase the uptake in this type of pension.

Perhaps, indeed, at committee stage we will hear from individuals who will have suggestions as to how the uptake of people who are working in using this type of pension could be increased. And so I would suggest that we should be listening very carefully and asking questions at committee stage now rather than passing legislation which would potentially not be, in fact, all that functional because it doesn't have very many people using it.

So, Madam Speaker, with those words, I will pass it on to other colleagues. Thank you, merci, miigwich.

\* (15:30)

**Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James):** I am pleased to rise and speak in favour of Bill 3, the pooled registered pension plan, and I certainly appreciate comments from my colleagues as well as certain members of the opposition who appear to be in support of this initiative.

First, let me compliment the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) on having the vision to ensure that the people of Manitoba are provided with the same opportunity as many other Canadians. Bill 3 provides the legal framework for a pension plan to be open to employees and self-employed persons in Manitoba who are engaged in work that falls within the legislative authority of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, in the November 17th, 2016 Throne Speech, our government indicated our pooled retirement pension plans will offer a new deferred income plan designated to provide retirement benefits for employees and self-employed individuals who do not currently have access to workplace pension. We continue to work towards satisfying the needs of Manitobans and continuing down the road of recovery.

So what is a pooled retired registered pension plan? A pooled pension plan is basically a group of pension plan offering to Manitobans, as well as Canadians in some other jurisdictions, the opportunity to have an alternative to access pension through their employer. One could also compare it to a co-op concept. With many small businesses unable to participate in the average pension programs, this alternative allows workers and their employees an opportunity to work together towards a mutual goal.

Employees and self-employed business owners are able to use their RRSP room to invest in an alternate choice. The Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act provides a legal framework for registration, administration and regulatory supervision of the pension plan. That goal, Madam Speaker, is to further create a plan of retirement prosperity.

Who does this affect? Well, basically, the PRPP offers a pension to those who don't have access to a pension. As you can appreciate, Madam Speaker, the value of long-term planning is considered essential in today's society. Manitoba has one of the highest private sector registered pension plan coverage in Manitoba. However, it is 'revelant'—relevant to point out that two thirds of Manitoba workers do not have access to a plan.

Madam Speaker, I have experience as a self-employed small business owner. It is very challenging to be able to offer similar pension benefits to many employees—that many employees take for granted. This is an option for employers that don't have the means to administer a pension plan on their own. As much as many small businesses wish to offer pension services, it just may not be feasible under the current system. This initiative can offer an opportunity to satisfy a need.

Madam Speaker, when you consider that all the challenges that small business is up against these days, it's refreshing to see this type of initiative to help both small business, self-employed people, and employees working together to try to establish a common goal and a mutual benefit.

Yes, is it the end-all? No, I don't think it's the end-all. Is it an option? Yes, it's an option. The pressures that small businesses are under these days is incredible. You know, just the fact of having to come to terms with the GST is quite a substantial undertaking which, my point is, takes an awful lot of resources on small business, and avenues to be able

to enhance the operation such as this certainly would be appreciated.

As well as red tape, for example, there's something also, too, that small business has to deal with, and certainly compliments to my colleague the member for Morris (Mr. Martin) who is heading the committee on red tape.

Where is this happening? Well, all provinces and territories are moving towards PRPPs—Quebec, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia all have multilateral agreements with the federal government. Ontario's currently drafting legislation.

Madam Speaker, 90 per cent of Canadians have access to PRPPs. I am pleased to support legislation that will allow Manitobans to have the same privilege. Why should Manitoba do this? Well, the main reason I am supporting this bill is that it will encourage more Manitobans to seek opportunities to save for the future. We hear of many examples of people finding themselves unprepared for the realities of retirement. People are living so much longer now. With living longer, it creates unforeseen health demands and expenses. Costs of services and essentials are constantly rising. In order to reach expectations of living lifestyles planned is not an option but is essential.

PRPPs offer an alternative to the traditional RRSPs, so why wouldn't we as a government allow individuals the right to exercise the option? It allows all workers and employees to access the benefits of group pensions, the opportunity to consider the options that federal licensed providers can offer. It makes offering a pension for small business and employers more feasible. The expertise of the provider is now able to address the needs of self-employed individuals as well as employees. The professionalism and resources a provider would offer to a small business and limited employees would be of significant value.

Providers provide educational resources which can further familiarize both employees and employers of future mutual benefits. It could offer structure and service to the average individual to help manage their savings. It creates a security as well as a plan to realize a satisfactory retirement. The PRPP is at the discretion of the employee and employer to make contributions.

There is familiarity and credibility with RRSPs; the PRPPs are different, however, do offer some fundamental similarities.

Federal legislation under the approach taken by the federal government in all participating provinces, participation in PRPPs is voluntary. The Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act framework was developed by the federal, provincial and territorial finance ministers based on consultations with pension industry and other stakeholders. *[interjection]* You want me to *[inaudible]*. Okay.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this bill. I look forward to members of the House offering support.

I thank you for your time.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act.

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

### House Business

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on House business, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement); and Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider the following: Bill 2, The Securities Amendment Act (Reciprocal Enforcement); and Bill 3, The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Manitoba) Act.

**Mr. Micklefield:** On House business, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, at 10 a.m., to consider the recommendation for the appointment of the Children's Advocate.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, at 10 a.m., to consider the recommendation for the appointment of the Children's Advocate.

\* (15:40)

## SECOND READINGS

*(Continued)*

### Bill 13—The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act

**Madam Speaker:** As previously determined, we will now move to Bill 13, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act, second reading.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), that Bill 13, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Goertzen:** This bill amends The Regulated Health Professions Act in three areas. The act currently prohibits information relating to a disciplined member's health or addiction from being made generally available to the public by the way of the Internet. At the same time, this information is contained on the register of the health profession college and must be made available to a member of the public upon request to the college.

An amendment will enable health profession regulators—colleges—to be exempted from this limitation by regulation. This exemption will allow them to publish information regarding disciplinary matters relating to an ailment, emotional disturbance, or addiction of a member of a college or members of a college are eligible to submit claims for payment for their services under the Manitoba Health Services Insurance Plan or a significant number of members of their profession charge Manitobans a professional fee for their services.

The proposed change is intended to provide for greater transparency by ensuring that the public has access of the necessary information when choosing a health-care provider. This will support members of the public in making an informed decision when seeking health care from these professionals.

This change will apply to professions that bill for their services, including professions such as physicians, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, psychologists and psychotherapists. At the same time, the existing prohibition will continue to apply to those professions where members are generally employed in settings where the client or patient generally does not have the ability to choose who

provides the care. This would include such professions as nurses and laboratory technicians.

Other amendments will enable colleges to publish information about censures and voluntary surrenders of registration or licensure that involved a member's ailment, emotional disturbance or addiction while still prohibiting the publication of information about the ailment, disturbance, or addiction. Currently under the act, a college is not able to indicate that a censure or surrender has been made regarding such a member. This change provides for increased transparency for the public.

A third change will allow a health profession college to incorporate a standards of practice document created by a college itself into the college's regulations. The act currently provides that a 'counse' of a college must establish standards of practice by regulation to regulate the quality of its members. It cannot, however, incorporate by reference any standards documented—created by the college itself. This includes standards regarding the planning and provision of care, safety, and quality of the premises where a member practices, how patient records are kept, and how the profession interacts with other health professionals.

The current provision does not allow a college the flexibility to make changes to its standards of profession practice, changes without the requirement of changing the regulation itself. The proposed amendment will provide flexibility in this regard, consistent with other Manitoba and Canadian legislations providing for self-regulation of a profession while still enabling core standards of practice of a profession to be established by regulation.

I am pleased to recommend this legislation to the House and I look forward to the questions that will follow my speech, Madam Speaker.

#### Questions

**Madam Speaker:** A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: First question by the official opposition critic or designate, subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties, subsequent questions asked by each independent member, remaining questions asked by any opposition members and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** Could the minister once again read in to the record which health

professions will be impacted by the changes to this act?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I can. And I would advise the member, and I thank him for the question, that this is generally intended to apply to those services that are provided on a fee-for-service basis. And so the examples that would be included would be physicians, which would be the largest number of fee-for-service providers in the province, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, psychologists and psychotherapists.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Am I to understand, then, from the minister, that this is not an exhaustive list but merely meant as a number of examples of those who would be affected?

**Mr. Goertzen:** The member is correct. There might, of course, be changes at times in terms of how fees are provided for different professions. I neither can predict nor contemplate what those might be, but it is intended, by criteria, to allow for those professions where there is a significant number of individuals providing fee-for-service profession. So it wouldn't be conclusive or exhaustive, because things can certainly change in terms of provisions.

The rationale for this—I know the member is aware—that doctors, in particular, in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, currently provides for information to be 'publised' on the Internet in relation to their members. When they transition into the—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Well, and the minister opposite can probably guess where I'm going next in my line of questioning, and that is just to simply ask for some information on consultations that were undertaken. Obviously, nurse—as he mentioned, nurses and doctors are a big part of this legislation, but, obviously, with so many other professional bodies impacted, I'm wondering, what kind of consultations did he undertake with those groups?

**Mr. Goertzen:** There's been extensive consultation with a variety of different professions but, in particular, the College of Physicians and Surgeons. I've also spoken with Doctors Manitoba about the change to assure them that, for them, it'll essentially be standard-business as usual, as it currently is.

The concern from nurses, when The Regulated Health Professions Act went to committee, was that

they didn't want certain things disclosed, because they are different in terms of how their services are selected. So this is intended to provide a balance between ensuring that the concerns raised by the nurses are adhered to, but also the transparency concerns about the doctors and other professions are adhered to.

**Mr. Wiebe:** What specific responsibilities, then, would the minister have for oversight to ensure that this self-regulation continues to work well?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, within the act, the minister still remains—has responsibility in terms of providing the overall framework for self-regulation. But the member understands that self-regulation provides a great deal of responsibility for the individual professions. It's why certain professions apply for self-regulations in terms of being able to set their own standards.

If he's referring to the portion about allowing certain professional standards to be incorporated by reference, that is for flexibility so that not everything that has changed within a health profession has to go through a regulatory change, which is cumbersome and slow. It can simply be referred to, by reference, within a regulation without a specific regulation change.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** I would ask the minister a couple of points.

The division between professions which have largely fee-for-service and other professions is, to some extent, artificial. I don't think that the minister is concerned that one profession versus another is more likely to have problems with individuals, and so maybe the minister can explain a little more detail why this separation of professions.

And the second one is: when will the minister move to allow positive things, as well as negative things, to be on the Web so that people in the general population can see the positive things that individuals and health professionals have achieved and not just the negative censures?

\* (15:50)

**Mr. Goertzen:** The point that the member raises about why there's a distinction between professions, is—it's basically how they operate within the health-care profession. So, the professions that I listed, in those cases, generally, an individual has the opportunity to select that health-care provider. For example, when you're in a hospital, you don't

generally select your nurse in terms of how—who's providing that care, so it is a different kind of interaction with the health-care profession and individuals.

The point that he raises is about positive things about health professions. Quite frankly, it's not something that I've considered, but it doesn't sound like an unreasonable thing to ask. I'd be happy to have those discussions with the college. I'm not sure if he's envisioning sort of a rate-your-teacher kind of a website where you can post good things, but I do hear many good things about health professions, and I'd be open to suggestions on that, because it doesn't sound like an unworthy idea.

**Mr. Wiebe:** I'm just wondering if the minister would care to comment on how this particular act may have impacted on chiropractors, who just recently were having some questions about conduct of certain members of their professional association and certain information that was disseminated through them, and whether this act would have a direct impact on that association.

**Mr. Goertzen:** It would only impact, from my understanding—I don't know all the different scenarios that were raised around the chiropractors. Certainly, I did hear some of them and some of the concerns that were raised, but, obviously, if an independent college or register found that in—a member of their college or association was acting inappropriately, they could certainly take action on that individual and publish that information, but that is the case today as it already exists. This is really keeping the status quo so that when these professions transfer into The Regulated Health Professions Act, which has the restriction, that they are not able—or that they are still able to provide the information on the Internet. It's about transparency, which—

**Madam Speaker:** The minister's time has expired.

### Debate

**Madam Speaker:** If there are no further questions, debate is open.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I thank my colleagues for the warm welcome this afternoon, and I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak ever so briefly to Bill 13 and just to speak, as I said, very briefly on the bill before us and the issues that it raises.

You know, we understand, and certainly on this side of the House, support the open and transparent

self-regulation on the part of professional bodies and have a lot of respect for the work that they do in continuing to communicate with their members, ensure that the practices that the members of these associations undertake is in accordance with the rules of their professional body and, ultimately, that the regulations and the rules that are imposed and undertaken by their members benefit the health and well-being of Manitobans.

We understand how important it is for those professional bodies to be accountable to their members, but we also understand and appreciate the move to make these bodies as accountable and transparent as well to the public. And so, we certainly support, you know, any move towards published, identifiable information that can ultimately positively improve patient care.

We also, though, do recognize, Madam Speaker, that there needs to be a balance between letting people have the information about their service provider and their health-care provider, having that information as widely disseminated as possible and as transparent as possible so that they can choose their provider as wisely as they can, while at the same time protecting those care providers from any kind of unnecessary disclosure that would be unwarranted in terms of their professional conduct.

Again, we support self-regulation. We support the fact that it should be the nurses, it should be other professions, who are in the best place to determine and to have input into how they are regulated, how—the impact that they can have in terms of safe health-care provisions in our province, and this is where we think that there's a lot of ability to improve and to continue to make this more accountable to the people of Manitoba.

I would like to very briefly put on the record just some of the things that the previous government brought in with The Regulated Health Professions Act and just put on the record just some of the moves that have already been made to impose a structure for self-regulation in our province.

So The Regulated Health Professions Act replaced 21 acts that govern Manitoba's 22 self-regulating health professions with one uniform act. Colleges will come into—under the act as regulations are developed in coming years. And the act was designed to improve patient safety by regulating a broader scope of clinical procedures that may prevent a risk of harm if performed by someone

who's not adequately trained. It will increase labour mobility.

The act put a positive onus on the health professions to comply with the requirements of the labour mobility chapter of the agreement on internal trade, and these provisions will also improve credentialing by putting a positive onus on regulatory bodies under the registration provisions to register practitioners from other Canadian jurisdictions.

This act also improved credentialing, which established a registration appeal process for all health professions, and anyone who applied for the registration and was denied will have access to clear and transparent appeal processes and also requires that regulatory bodies adopt a fair, transparent, objective and impartial registration practices for this particular act.

So I could go on, Madam Speaker, but ultimately I appreciate the opportunity to put some words on the record to welcome the move of this piece of legislation here in the House and to move it along to second reading.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Yes, Madam Speaker—

**Madam Speaker:** Oh, pardon me, I never noticed the member for Selkirk—the honourable member for Selkirk.

**Mr. Alan Lagimodiere (Selkirk):** Thank you Madam Speaker, for allowing the opportunity to rise in the House today and put a few words on the record regarding Bill 13, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act, where the purpose of the bill is to amend The Regulated Health Professions Act whereby the minister may exempt a health profession from the statutory prohibition on the online publication of certain health information about disciplined members.

Madam Speaker, the original Regulated Health Professions Act became law in 2009, and the law is intended to ensure all health professions are governed by consistent and uniform regulations with the focus on patient safety and accountability.

Currently, if a complaint is made against a registered health professional, a very detailed investigation follows, and once all information is obtained and assessed, the investigative committee may refer the complaint to an enquiry committee, decide no further action is needed, refer the matter to mediation, censure the investigated member, accept a

voluntary surrender of the member's registration for a certificate to practice, or recommend that the member has conditions placed on their practice, recommend remedial training, recommend monitoring or supervision, recommend assessment of the professional's ability to practise, or recommend counselling or treatment.

So, at the end of a very involved process, currently the results of the investigation are left uncirculated, because currently The Regulated Health Professions Act prohibits certain information relating to a disciplined member's health or addiction from being made generally available to the public by way of the Internet. It also prohibits the publication of information about censures and voluntary surrenders of registration or licensure involving a member's health or addiction while at the same time this information is contained on the register of a health profession college and is to be made available to a member of the public upon request from the college.

\* (16:00)

The proposed amendments to the RHPA are intended to provide a greater transparency and necessary information to the public particularly when they are seeking information to choose a health care provider. The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act provides that the council of a college must, by regulation, establish standards to practice—to regulate the quality of practice of its members. It cannot incorporate, by reference, any document created by the college itself. Providing flexibility to colleges would be consistent with other Manitoba and Canadian legislation providing for self-regulation of professionals.

The following amendments are proposed to the Regulated Health Professions Act: (1) to allow health professions regulators, colleges, to publish information regarding disciplinary matters relating to an ailment, emotional disturbance or addiction of a member of the college; to enable the college to publish information about censures and voluntary surrenders of registration licensure involving an ailment or emotional disturbance or addiction that impairs a member's ability to practise the regulated health profession while still prohibiting publication of specific information about the ailment, emotional disturbance or the addiction.

It also allows the health profession the regulative ability to incorporate reference standards of practice created by the college itself, as these would be

outside of the regulation without having to amend the regulation.

The amendments presented, respecting the publication of disciplinary information, are intended to address concerns raised by certain colleges. Madam Speaker, these amendments to the registered health profession act are designed to increase transparency; to promote accountability; and to allow regulatory colleges to publish information regarding disciplinary matters, censures and voluntary surrender of licences.

The change is intended to provide greater transparency by ensuring that the public has access to necessary information when choosing a health-care provider. Allowing for Manitobans to make an informed decision when seeking care of these professionals, these changes will apply to physicians, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, psychologists and physiotherapists.

These amendments will enable these colleges to publish information about the censure and voluntary surrender of registration or licensure that involve a member's ailment, emotional disturbance or addiction while still prohibiting the publication of the specific information. Their prohibition will continue to apply to professions whose members are generally employed, whereas clients or patients who cannot choose who their care provider is will not be published, for example, nurses and lab techs.

The legislation will allow for health profession colleges to incorporate a standard of practice, a document created by the college itself, into the college regulations. Madam Speaker, these amendments will go a long way in allowing the transparency of information all Manitobans need in making an informed decision when choosing a health-care provider-provider.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Madam Speaker, I want to say about this legislation that I think it is a reasonable bill to come forward. Indeed, I would say it's a necessary bill.

When the initial health-Regulated Health Professions Act was brought forward, it was viewed at the time that you could have one bill without much in the way of changes that would apply to all regulated health professions. It's become increasingly apparent that there are significant differences among and between professions and that these differences need to be recognized in the act itself.

And this is an example of the practice of physicians, for quite some time, in making public on website information about doctors. And that practice is quite different from the practice of other professions and-as has been discussed here-on. There are some reasons for this in terms of fee-for-service professionals having a different and a longer term relationship-not to say that nurses don't actually develop a significant relationship, for example, with their patients. But there is enough of a difference that, in this case, it is reasonable to make this change.

If we get, at some point, into professions where there are a minority of people who are doing fee-for-service the question will, of course, come up, should those minority of people be also treated in the same way. I think, for the moment, this bill is a reasonable one in that it classifies all professions—all members of a single profession in the same group.

That being said, the point that I raised earlier on, and that is that it's about time that we have a recognition of the positive achievements of physicians and other health professionals. If a family physician is recognized as a family physician of the year by all family physicians in Manitoba, if there is a physician who has got a specialized degree or specialized training in a particular area, and that also could merit recognition, and it would be available for people who are looking for a health professional to look after them to see whichever health professional that may be.

So I would urge the minister to look further into this approach, to recognize the positive as well as the negative issues around physicians and hope that we can move on that at some point in the future.

With those words, I will wind up my remarks so others can speak.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Merci, miigwech.

**Madam Speaker:** Are there any further members to debate?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question for the House is second reading of Bill 13, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act.

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

I declare the motion carried.

## House Business

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on House business, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 13, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 13, The Regulated Health Professions Amendment Act.

### Bill 14—The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act

**Madam Speaker:** As previously agreed, the House will now consider second reading of Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act.

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Culture, that Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Goertzen:** This bill amends The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Act. The act is outdated and does not reflect the current structure for the funding and delivery of emergency medical response services, including the role of regional health authorities and the medical director of provincial emergency medical response services.

In addition, the act does not include a mechanism to support the ongoing implementation of a standardized fee and land ambulance services.

\* (16:10)

This bill will enable the ongoing implementation of a standardized fee structure for land ambulance services to be continued under the act and the monitoring of fees charged patients. This has begun with the first fee reduction as of January 1st and a subsequent fee reduction coming soon.

Formally—it also formally establishes the responsibilities and authorities of the medical director of provincial emergency medical response services consistent with the recommendations made in the 2013 Manitoba EMS review. These responsibilities of the provincial medical director include providing general oversight of the medical care provided by emergency medical response systems and establishing medical quality assurance program requirements for these systems.

It also supports the transition of paramedics to self-regulation by enabling the transition of responsibility for licensure of paramedics from the department to a new regulatory college. It reflects the role of regional health authorities in the funding and delivery of emergency medical response services. Manitoba's five regional health authorities are responsible for all land ambulance service delivery and are delivered either directly by the regional health authority or through contracts with other agents.

The amendments will require that RHAs be consulted if new land ambulance services are being considered for licensure to provide services to their health regions. They will also require that RHAs must enter into a written agreement that meets specified requirements in order to provide funding to an agency in respect of the provision of the emergency medical response services and it will discontinue the use of the term technician to describe emergency medical response service providers. This is an outdated terminology and has been raised as a concern in the past by paramedics.

## Questions

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for—oh.

A question period of up to 15 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the minister by any member in the following sequence: first question by the official opposition critic or designate; subsequent questions asked by critics or designates from other recognized opposition parties; subsequent questions asked by each independent member; remaining questions asked by any opposition members; and no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** I'd like to begin my line of questioning by asking, I think, a question that's become somewhat routine in this House, but

what groups—can the minister outline which groups were consulted prior to drafting of this legislation?

**Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living):** I appreciate the question. It's a good question. There have been discussions with the Paramedic Association of Manitoba, but the member will know that a number of these suggestions come out of the 2013 emergency medical services review, and as part of that review, there were consultations across the province with a number of organizations.

**Mr. Wiebe:** I understand that under the proposed legislation, power would be—would rest in the minister's hands with regard to setting ambulance fees and having potentially more influence over those fees. I'm not quite sure, I guess what I'm asking is: Does this minister currently need this legislation to fulfill their election promise by reducing ambulance fees to 50 per cent immediately?

**Mr. Goertzen:** That's also a good question. We were able to make the initial step on the reduction of fees through regulation, but that's a difficult and clumsy way to do it. Under The Regional Health Authorities Act, one of the challenges that we had was that a number of different RHAs were charging additional fees in addition to the base amount of the cost of an ambulance ride, so it now got reset so that everybody is starting at the same level, and then we can start to move down from there so that the reductions are consistent across the province.

**Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon):** Could the minister explain to me how this will make it equitable for people in the North through Northern Patient Transfer?

**Mr. Goertzen:** It is a good question, and certainly Manitoba's unique in the vastness of the province and the distance that many of our citizens live from certain acute care services and other services that they require. I know the member has talked extensively and, I think, rightly so about northern transport and how that operates. There are many challenges around that. This, of course, is specific to ambulance—land ambulance—transport and reducing those fees as was committed to during the campaign, but there are a number of other issues around transporting patients from the North, often by airplanes. We've engaged with the federal government because we know they owe us about \$39 million on that bill, but there are a number of outstanding issues around that.

**Mr. Lindsey:** I realize there's a number of outstanding issues around northern patient transfer. The one thing that really—I have had concerns expressed from people, say, in Lynn Lake, that have no way to get from Lynn Lake to a hospital in Thompson.

Could the member explain how this or any other piece of legislation they've contemplated introducing is going to help those folks get from point A to point B?

**Mr. Goertzen:** I do appreciate the member raising the question regarding local issues that they're having in northern communities. This act, of course, doesn't address that specific issue that he raises, but it does require more consultations with the regional health authorities in terms of licences for land ambulance. And so certainly, down the road, that could extend different services.

But I recognize that there are challenges in transporting patients between different communities—not exclusively in the North—but that that is a specific concern.

**Mr. Lindsey:** How does this apply to patients that require transfer by air? Not necessarily by air ambulance, but by air, particularly from the North to southern facilities?

**Mr. Goertzen:** There are long-standing policies in place for—where individuals can receive support and perhaps individuals to go along with individuals who need medical treatment to receive support—to come from the North to centres most often in Winnipeg for the support. This act doesn't change that.

The member knows that those policies have been in place probably close to 25 years now. They can always, of course, be reviewed and reconsidered. But those are long-standing policies, but aren't addressed specifically in the issue here, other than the fact that, you know, there might be advice that we provided by a provincial medical director on some of those issues.

**Mr. Lindsey:** I understand there's been some long-standing policies. In fact, the only policy that's down in writing, to my understanding, was written in 1995, although there has been multiple changes made to it to accommodate people. There was a committee in place for northern patient transfer; that's been scrapped. The recommendations made by the committee have been scrapped, and cuts have already been seen in Northern Patient Transfer.

Can the minister explain how making ambulance fees more equitable to everyone else will make access to health care in the North more equitable for those folks?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, I don't intend to get into a partisan debate with the member at this particular point. I respect the member, and he does raise issues passionately on behalf of his constituents and others. And I appreciate that. It's certainly an important role. And as a new member, I think he's undertaking that well, Madam Speaker. I have no problem complimenting members on the work that they do, regardless of which party they come from.

I would say though that the policy that he refers to in 1995, it wasn't changed by the NDP. If it was not adhered to or not applied, I'd be 'hopen'-open to hear information. But the policy hasn't changed, didn't change under the NDP there for 17 years.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Just to reply to that, absolutely, the policy didn't change, however the application of it did change dramatically over the years as people became aware that they needed to access health care. And if you had both hips replaced, it wasn't covered under the existing policy, but common sense would dictate that you should fly as opposed to sitting on a bus for 16 hours or so.

So, while we're reviewing costs for medical transportation, certainly medical transportation for people in the North should be reviewed as well, but the only review we've seen so far is towards cutting the opportunity for people to transfer to medical care, not just in the south, but between northern communities as well. So, could the minister tell me, is there a plan to—

**Madam Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

\* (16:20)

**Mr. Goertzen:** I had a little bit of a hard time hearing the member; it's almost so quiet in here that it's hard to hear, which is an unusual circumstance. But if I did hear him correctly, I think he indicated that during the previous 17 years under the NDP government, the former government didn't follow the policy that is in place. He acknowledged that it didn't change but that they didn't follow the policy.

Now I'm not sure if he's suggesting that there is some legal issues there, that the former government operated outside of existing policy, that they maybe operated inequitably for people. I would certainly, in my department, be willing to take a look at any legal

concerns that he might want to raise against the former government. There might be an avenue to consider that if he has evidence that the former government acted outside of government policy; I'd like to hear that—

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable minister's time has expired.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** My question to the minister is this, he wants to move a standardized approach for land ambulances for fees. And, when we're looking at the use of land ambulances, the distance varies dramatically; the time may vary dramatically because of waits or if there's a lot of traffic in Winnipeg versus no traffic outside; and sometimes the circumstances can vary significantly with cases on occasion being very acute and requiring a lot of almost like an emergency room in the ambulance on the way.

So my question is this, is the minister planning to standardize the fees based on distance, based on time, or based on severity of the case, or—how will he standardize fees?

**Mr. Goertzen:** I thank the member for the question. I mean, it's being standardized essentially based on use, but not on the acuity of the use or that—the specific variation of the use.

And I, while I appreciate the member's comments about the fact that not every ambulance call or every ambulance transport is exactly the same, I can imagine great difficulty and a great deal of bureaucracy in terms of trying to determine how to break off variations of ambulance rides.

So this is setting a standard, recognizing that many people told us during the election, and before the election, that ambulance fees were too high. We would obviously like to move them lower more quickly, but we've taken an initial step, we'll take another step soon, we're moving in the right direction. I'm open to suggestions, but that one seems like a difficult and complex one.

**Madam Speaker:** It is my understanding that independent members are only allocated one question for this question period.

Does the member have leave to ask a follow-up question? [Agreed]

**Mr. Gerrard:** The question I ask was not just based on severity but based on distance. Is the ambulance fee going to be standardized: the same whether it's two blocks or whether it's 300 miles, or is it going to

be varied based on distance? Is it going to be the same whether it's 15 minutes or whether it's, you know, 18 hours? What's the basis for the standardization?

**Mr. Goertzen:** I think we'll try to avoid the 18-hour ambulance rides, Madam Speaker, but I do take the question as important. The direction that we've given is to standardize the fees. There were many different additional fees that were added in different regional health authorities, it caused complexity and uncertainty for patients for knowing what the fee was or how it was derived at. So recognizing that not every ambulance ride is exactly the same, we thought it was important for consistency for Manitobans to know within their region what their costs would be and not have to try to make a calculation based on factors that they might not have known or been aware of.

**Mr. Lindsey:** Just to clarify any misconception or miscommunication that the minister had with my last series of questions, I was not once suggesting that there was any legal action pending. What I said that he missed was that there was a policy, but it set out a guideline, and the guideline changed over the years based on committee recommendations and doctor recommendations. This government has walked all that back, now back to what it was originally in 1995.

Will the minister recognize the fact that the world has changed since 1995 and people need access to medical care that wasn't necessarily even available in 1995?

**Mr. Goertzen:** I think, Madam Speaker, in law, we would refer to that as a distinction without a difference. The member says that the policies remain the same, but the application of those policies somehow varied. I certainly have heard from those who are working in northern communities that often there was great variation. And we've heard concerns from people living in the same community, with virtually the same medical concern, and they were treated differently, because, for some reason, the policies weren't particularly well followed under the NDP. And that may have worked well for some but not worked particularly well for others, and I think people deserve to have consistency.

So I won't launch an investigation if the member says it's not warranted, but it certainly does give me cause for concern in terms of his response.

**Madam Speaker:** Are there any further questions?

If there are no further questions, the floor is open for debate.

### Debate

**Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia):** What a fitting way to conclude debate here this afternoon, in the House, than to be debating Bill 14, and, as the minister has laid out, I think, quite well, many of the changes here are administrative in nature. But I think it does speak to an issue that, I think, almost every member of this House would've heard on the doorstep, and that is the high cost of ambulance fees in our province.

And I do want to note, again, for the record, that all political parties in the last election campaign made this an issue that they were passionate about addressing. They were—had ideas, and sometimes quite different ideas, about how they would address this particular issue, but they—but each political party put on the record what they thought would be the best approach to deal with high ambulance fees in our province.

And, you know, we'll note that the members opposite, during the campaign, made this one of the centrepieces of their campaign. Again, not too many policy ideas were put forward by the members opposite in—during the election campaign, but this was one of them, that they [*inaudible*] very proudly and said this is an issue, that we hear you; we want to address—I think the Premier (Mr. Pallister) said, again, his words were, not five years, not eight years, not 10 years, down the road, but now we want to address this.

And here we are, Madam Speaker, where there's a real opportunity for the government to make a bold move on ambulance fees, and, in the last budget and in their first mandate—first year of their mandate here in this House, reduced ambulance fees by a mere 5 per cent, which really just doesn't cut it for Manitobans.

So that's something I wanted to address here this afternoon, to say that this is an issue that, certainly, our caucus continues to be passionate about—understanding that transportation fees across the province need to be addressed. I appreciate the passion with which my colleague from Flin Flon brought forward northern concerns. And I know we've had an opportunity to chat multiple times about the Northern Patient Transfer agreements and the issues that individuals have had with that particular program, the challenges and the cuts that they are fearful are coming their way, because of,

you know, short-sighted decisions by this government to hack and slash at our health-care system and on the services that Manitobans count on. And it's felt most acutely, I think, in the North, because, of course, distances are so great. But, also, there are demographic issues and factors that play into a real need for a robust health-care system and support system in the North, that not only is in the communities in which they need the services but, then, also, has that additional safety net where those patients who do need to come to Winnipeg, or to Brandon, or to other medical centres, have the ability to travel there—that that's covered and that's included in the health care that they deserve and are owed.

\* (16:30)

So I appreciate the opportunity that he—that the member from Flin Flon had to put his passionate words on the record. And I do believe that he's bringing those forward as a passionate defender of health care in the North. And I know that we have many other members here that—who feel equally as passionate about health care in their own communities. And it's always encouraging to have an opportunity when they can put on—those words on the record and they can make those thoughts known to their constituents and to the members opposite.

But, as I said, this is a great opportunity where we can come together on a—I almost said a Friday afternoon, it feels like a Friday afternoon—the Thursday before our spring break to put some meaningful words on the record about ambulance fees in our province, about ways that we can address it. And again, not waiting—not waiting five years, not waiting 10 years to get that done, but to get it done now. The—it's in the minister's power to get that done, to actually make that move.

And I'd be remiss, Madam Speaker, if I didn't also address one particular issue of transportation that isn't captured in this bill, but I think speaks to the larger concern that Manitobans have, and that is parking fees at the hospitals that they need to visit, whether it be at CancerCare, whether it be at community hospitals or other health-care facilities throughout the city of Winnipeg or anywhere else. You know, as I said, this isn't captured in the bill. This isn't, you know, particularly, you know, related to this bill, but it does speak to the overall transportation costs that Manitobans face. And any kind of barrier that they have between accessing quality health care is—needs to be addressed and needs to be looked at in a thoughtful way.

So I do urge that the government move as quickly as possible to address these concerns, that they undertake meaningful consultation with the—all the groups that are impacted by this legislation. I do understand we'll have an opportunity at second reading—or sorry—when we proceed past second reading to committee stage to welcome the public in. I'm sure we'll hear more passionate input from community groups, from first responders, from those who are impacted by this bill. I welcome those discussions and I welcome their input.

And, with those few words, Madam Speaker, I will cede the floor to others who may want to put words on the record.

**Mr. Rick Wowchuk (Swan River):** I'm pleased today to put a few very important words on the record regarding Bill 14, which is long overdue.

It was our government that committed in reducing ambulance fees by half over the four years. And this legislation will help us further that commitment, as it'll enable the ongoing implementation of a standardized fee structure for land emergency medical response services.

And I want to share a story on Dustin Harder. Unfortunately, decisions like this are all too common, where Winnipeg musician Dustin Harder felt the sting of an unwelcome ambulance bill. Harder told CBC news when he was assaulted by a stranger and knocked unconscious in 2012, and someone else called the ambulance, he said he didn't want to go by ambulance but was taken away: I said, no, I don't want the ambulance bill; I can't afford it. And this is what we've heard from many people out there, over the many years where no action was taken to reduce these fees. And Harder explained he was struggling financially at the time.

In Harder's case, he was told the—our Province's Victim Services branch could help him, and, however, after several calls, he was unable to get the help he needed. He never paid the bill, and the City of Winnipeg eventually set a collection agency after him. And this agency—because of ambulance ride that I didn't choose to take—and he said, people shouldn't be put into a position of having to decide whether or they not can afford an ambulance. All too often we have people—should I take the taxi? And those matter of minutes can be a matter of life and death just because they couldn't afford the particular bill that they would be—pounded upon them.

And, unfortunately, Harder is not alone, far from that, with unpaid ambulance bills that we see right here in Winnipeg. In 2014, the City billed patients for 45,500 emergency trips at a total of \$22.2 million. A city spokesperson said there's currently 13,500 of these invoices that are passed the 90-day overdue date, adding up to \$6.4 million, so this is just a terrible, terrible burden. It causes a lot of stress upon the people who require these services.

The changes proposed are consistent and furthers with recommendations made through a review of emergency medical services completed in 2013. Proposed changes would help reduce costs for patients and will strengthen service standards, ensuring Manitobans receive the best possible care before they get to a hospital, formalize the responsibilities and authority of the provincial medical director and regional medical directors to provide medical oversights for paramedics, and it also enables the provincial medical director to establish standards, requirements related to drugs, diagnostic services and clinical-care devices to be carried by emergency medical response vehicles and their use by emergency medical response personnel. This bill also enables the Province to stop licensing paramedics when the profession transitions to self-regulation under The Regulated Health Professions Act.

Under the previous NDP government, Manitoba has had the highest ambulance fees in the country, paying an average of \$500 for an ambulance service, where most charge \$200 per trip. This cost has created undue anxiety, stress—and I think we all agree that—and compromise health care for Manitobans. Yes, this is kind of a legacy that has been left by the previous NDP government, that they should not be proud of. No free ride, ambulance bills, highest in Canada. In some cases, family members were forced to drive members of family to the hospital because they couldn't afford an ambulance. This amounts to a two-tier health-care system in Manitoba.

In concluding here, our government has begun the hard work required to repair the damage and correct the course and move toward balance in sustainable—in a sustainable way. We're really focused on fixing those finances and repairing our services and rebuilding the economy, and I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, when I read this bill and looked at what was in the bill, it seemed like a sensible thing to move

toward standardization of ambulance fees, but after having had the opportunity to ask the Minister of Health how ambulance fees are going to be standardized, whether there will be any consideration of time or distance, I didn't get a clear answer. Oh, I would suggest it's going to be very difficult to support this legislation, given the fact that the Minister of Health wasn't able to tell us how he's going to standardize ambulance fees.

That's not acceptable here. I would suggest that we need to, you know, have the Minister of Health go back to the drawing board and make sure that he knows what he's doing in terms of standardizing ambulance fees. I have no idea whether he's somebody who may have an ambulance that goes 800 kilometres, which occasionally happens. There have been ambulances which take 18 hours, and a lot of that is actually waiting in an emergency room. In particular, if you have an ambulance which comes from Swan River and then has to wait in an emergency room for some time in the city of Winnipeg and then go back to Swan River, that can be a pretty long ambulance ride. And in fact, you know, we had an ambulance in such a ride which got into an accident because people were tired.

\* (16:40)

And, you know—so, I'm at a loss to understand precisely how the minister is actually going to do the standardization, because he was most unclear. And add to this, you know, we've had a government which has promised that it was going to decrease ambulance fees by half and has only done so by 5 per cent, and in some cases, you know, that's so small it really doesn't make much of a difference and certainly is not what people expected.

So, Madam Speaker, I think that whereas I came in ready to support this legislation, now I think that there's not a good basis to support this legislation quite frankly, and that we should not support this legislation until we've had better information on how the ambulance fees will be standardized and until we have better information from the government that it's actually going to do something more than 5 per cent on ambulance fees.

So, from a Liberal caucus perspective, Madam Speaker, we'll be voting against this legislation because it's not good enough.

**Madam Speaker:** Are there any further members for debate?

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act.

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

**Hon. Andrew Micklefield (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I'd like to request a recorded vote and also canvass the House so that we could not adjourn until I've had a chance to read a script after that vote.

**Madam Speaker:** A recorded vote having been called—the honourable Government House Leader has asked for leave to not see the clock until we have the vote and until he is able to bring forward further House business.

Is there leave of the House to allow us not to see the clock until all business is concluded?

**An Honourable Member:** No, Madam Speaker.

#### Recorded Vote

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

Order, please.

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act.

#### Division

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

#### Yea

Allum, Altemeyer, Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Guillemand, Johnson, Johnston, Kinew, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Martin, Mayer, Michalewski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Reyes, Saran, Schuler, Selinger, Smith, Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Swan, Wharton, Wiebe, Wishart, Wowchuk, Yakimoski.

#### Nay

Gerrard, Klassen, Lamoureux.

**Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk):** Yeas 41, Nays 3.

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

#### House Business

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, on House business, I would like to announce in addition to the bill previously referred, that Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act, will also be considered at the April 3rd, 2017 meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs at 6 p.m.

**Madam Speaker:** It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that in addition to the bill previously referred, that Bill 14, The Emergency Medical Response and Stretcher Transportation Amendment Act, will also be considered at the April 3rd, 2017 meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs at 6 p.m.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Micklefield:** Madam Speaker, I'm wondering if you could canvass the House to call it 5 p.m.?

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave of the House to call it 5 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until Monday, April 3rd, at 1:30 p.m.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

**Thursday, March 23, 2017**

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**<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>**