

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

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
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	Ind.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SELINGER, Greg	St. Boniface	NDP
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
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, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 26, 2017

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Good afternoon. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Madam Speaker: Introduction of bills?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Tenth Report

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the Tenth Report on the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs—

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS presents the following as its Tenth Report.

Meetings

Your Committee met on October 25, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- *Bill (No. 23) – The Fisheries Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche*
- *Bill (No. 27) – The Elections Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi électorale*

Committee Membership

- MR. ALTEMEYER
- MS. FONTAINE
- MRS. GUILLEMARD (CHAIRPERSON)
- MR. LAGIMODIERE
- MR. JOHNSON (INTERLAKE)
- HON. MR. GERRARD
- MS. LATHLIN
- MR. NESBITT
- HON. MS. SQUIRES
- HON. MRS. STEFANSON
- MR. WOWCHUK

Your Committee elected Mr. Lagimodiere as the Vice-Chairperson

Substitutions received during committee proceedings:

- *Mr. Selinger for Ms. Lathlin*

Public Presentations

Your Committee heard the following 12 presentations on Bill (No. 23) – The Fisheries Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche:

Amanda Stevenson, WMM Fisheries Co-op

Frank Kenyon, Private Citizen

Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Sam Murdock, Fisher River Cree Nation

Langford Saunder, Norway House Fisherman's Co-op

Clinton Whiteway, Matheson Island Marketing Co-op

Tom Nevakshonoff, Private Citizen

David Mackay, Southeast Resource Development Council

Donald Salkeld, Private Citizen

Paul McKie, UNIFOR

Marianne Hladun, Public Service Alliance of Canada

Darrell Rankin, Communist Party of Canada - Manitoba

Your Committee heard the following three presentations on Bill (No. 27) – The Elections Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi électorale:

Kevin Rebeck, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Malcolm Bird, Private Citizen

Ellen Smirl, Private Citizen

Bills Considered and Reported

- *Bill (No. 23) – The Fisheries Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche*

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill with the following amendments:

THAT Clause 8 of the Bill be amended by adding the following after the proposed clause 11(c.1):

(c.2) restricting or prohibiting the marketing of a specified part of a specified species of fish;

THAT Clause 15(1) of the Bill be struck out.

THAT Clause 16 of the Bill be amended by striking out "July 1, 2017" and substituting "December 1, 2017".

- **Bill (No. 27) – The Elections Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi électorale**

Your Committee agreed to report this Bill with the following amendments:

THAT Clause 3 of the Bill be amended

(a) in the proposed clause 2(1)(b), by striking out everything after "the person's name"; and

(b) in the proposed subsection 2(3), by adding ", one of which must be the voter information card under section 76.1" at the end.

THAT Clause 8 of the Bill be amended by replacing the proposed subsection 28.1(4) with the following:

Proposal to Standing Committee

28.1(4) Before directing a modification to the voting process under this section, the chief electoral officer must submit a written proposal to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs describing the proposed modification. The Standing Committee must begin considering the proposal within 60 days after it is submitted.

Approval of Standing Committee

28.1(4.1) If the Standing Committee approves the proposal, with or without changes, the chief electoral officer may direct that the voting process be modified in accordance with the approval.

Modification does not apply for 90 days

28.1(4.2) A modification may not apply to an election called within 90 days after approval by the Standing Committee.

THAT Clause 20 of the Bill be amended in the proposed subsection 63.8(1) by adding "beginning in 2019" after "in each year".

Mrs. Guillemard: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Bindle), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Infrastructure, and I would indicate that the required

90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

Snow-Clearing Services

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, as many Manitobans became all too aware of this morning, winter is on its way back to our province for another year. And while many of us may welcome the change of seasons, winter signals the beginning of Manitoba Infrastructure's annual effort to keep our roads and highways clear of ice and snow.

Whenever there's adverse weather like today, a team of approximately 500 dedicated employees from across our great province work together to keep our roads and highways safe for motorists.

Manitoba Infrastructure operates a fleet of truck plows, motor graders and wheel loaders to clear 19,000 kilometres of provincial roads.

Some of these dedicated employees are up and working as early as 4 a.m. when a storm hits, working to clear the highway lanes of snow and make the roads safe to drive. Within eight hours of a weather event, these workers will have plowed all major routes in this province. Primary roads are completed within four hours.

Of course, that's just the beginning of the exceptional work these employees do as they fan out quickly across the province to clean up the mess left behind by a winter storm. They deserve our gratitude and thanks for the efforts they put in to keep our roads safe for all, and we must remember that we, too, must help them stay safe as they do their jobs.

We can stay back of snow-clearing equipment, slow down when passing approaching snowplows and avoid trying to pass a plow in operation from behind.

We can also help ourselves by checking road conditions before we head out, whether it's by calling 511, checking manitoba511.ca, or downloading the Manitoba 511 app.

We can carry emergency supplies in the trunks of our vehicles when heading out onto the highway. We can all slow down and drive to conditions. It's much less important that we get wherever we're heading on time than it is just to get there, period.

And perhaps, most importantly, we need to realize that sometimes we're better off staying at home altogether when weather is really bad.

If we do all these things, Madam Speaker, then we will all have done what we can do to ensure this is a safe winter for drivers on Manitoba roads.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): Today is a reminder of how quickly weather can change in our province. Winter is upon us, another season of snowy and icy weather making driving conditions more dangerous both in municipalities and out on the highways.

Ice, slippery conditions and low visibility all increase the chance for accidents. In order to stay safe, I encourage people to slow down, put on winter tires, check weather forecasts and driving conditions before going out and leave extra time in case there's problems on the road. These simple steps have the potential to save lives this winter.

Many of Canada's northern and rural communities are already dealing with snowy conditions, but some suffer from poorly maintained roads. Northern communities deserve reliable, all-year access to the rest of Manitoba, and we need to continue to develop and maintain that infrastructure that they rely on.

Snow-clearing services are essential. Manitoba relies on snow-clearing crews, and I encourage the government to do their part to ensure Manitoba roads are cleared regularly, and I want to thank the crews that do go out in bad conditions and do their best to make sure our roads are properly cleared.

We need to make sure there's snow-clearing equipment and personnel available when storms happen so that drivers can trust that the roads will be cleared in a timely fashion.

I'd like to thank MPI and our police for promoting awareness through signage, responding professionally to accidents and increasing safety by working hard to reduce risks on the road.

Manitoba's fatality and injury rates due to motor vehicle accidents have reduced dramatically over the last three decades and we need to keep working to keep our loved ones safe. Together, I hope that we will all be able to stay safe on the roads during this upcoming winter season.

Thank you.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to speak in response to the ministerial statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, Manitoba is home to some of the most pristine stretches of roads and highways, all of which can be exposed to weather extremes like the ones we're seeing across the province today.

As we say farewell to fall and head into the winter months, we must remind ourselves to be extra diligent, cautious and more alert when we encounter winter driving conditions.

Here in Manitoba, 42 per cent of accidents happen during the winter, and last year 21 people died, while over 4,000 people were injured on our roads.

Madam Speaker, one life lost on our roads is one life too many.

When winter weather conditions hit our province, which we know is inevitable, we must pay extra attention to weather watches, warnings and road condition reports.

We must take extra precautions, whether that be installing winter tires or giving yourself extra time to get to your destination.

Madam Speaker, let's all enjoy the winter.

Thank you.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Robert Shankland

Mr. Nic Curry (Kildonan): I rise today to commemorate the legacy of Robert Shankland, VC, DCM.

Today marks the 100th anniversary of the actions that resulted in Lieutenant Shankland receiving the Victoria Cross for valour. Many are familiar with the story of Pine Street in the West End of Winnipeg, the only street in the world where three Victoria Cross recipients had lived. Robert Shankland was one of those men and a member of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada. It is in his honour—it is in their honour that we now call Pine Street, Valour Road.

Robert Shankland was born in Scotland and immigrated to Winnipeg in 1911. When the Great

War began he joined the 43rd Battalion, Cameron Highlanders of Canada. He enlisted as a private, rose to the rank of regimental sergeant major and earned the Distinguished Conduct Medal at Sanctuary Wood in June 1916. In the fall that year he was commissioned on the battlefields of the Somme.

In the fall of 1917, the Canadian corps was given the task of capturing the town of Passchendaele. On October 26th, 1917, on the first day of the Canadian corps' assault, Lieutenant Shankland left-lead a platoon in the capture of the rising ground of the Bellevue Spur on the approach to Passchendaele.

As flanking units fell back, Shankland's platoon held the line. Throughout withering attacks and counterattacks, Shankland courageously led his men and others in action that won the day. His citation reads: for most 'conspicuous' bravery and resource in action under critical and adverse conditions.

Having gained a position, he rallied the remnant of his own platoon and men of other companies, disposed them to command the ground in front and inflicted heavy casualties upon the retreating enemy. Later, he dispensed a counterattack, thus enabling supporting troops to come up unmolested.

His courage and splendid example inspired all ranks and, coupled with his gallantry and skill, undoubtedly saved a very critical situation.

Madam Speaker, I ask the Legislature join me in marking this tremendous anniversary in Winnipeg's proud military history and honouring the memory of Robert Shankland, VC, DCM.

* (13:40)

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Kildonan.

Mr. Curry: Madam Speaker, I'm joined with family of the regiment of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada. I request leave to enter their names in Hansard.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to enter those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Josh Fordham, Al Lancaster, Matt Lumsden, Alex Mortimer, Mike Nickerson, Bob Vandewater, Bill Worden

Gord Downie

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Courage; Bobcaygeon; At the Hundredth Meridian. These words and phrases mean

something special in Canada because of Gord Downie. We've heard his music at socials, in the dressing room before hockey games and in the drive-through lineup at Timmy's.

There was that night last summer of his farewell concert where it seemed to be playing on every car radio, on every TV, and with thousands of Manitobans singing along at Assiniboine Park.

I've been very lucky to call Gord a friend these past few years. He loved to go to art galleries to find inspiration for his music. Without a hint of shame he would say I love you to those he knew. He would kiss his family, and increasingly in recent years, even his friends.

On September 30 I emailed him and didn't hear back. Now we know why.

As much as Gord Downie made the soundtrack for Canadian life, he also sought to change this country. He introduced many of us to Chanie Wenjack, a boy who died trying to escape Cecilia Jeffrey residential school. Everyone who listens to Secret Path hears the unfairness of what happened to that little boy, little Charlie Wenjack. It's remarkable.

In his final year this country's poet laureate sang about one of our country's darkest hours. Why? Gord told me, and I quote: I want change. The only way around it, is through it. End quote.

And that seems to be the way that he dealt with his cancer as well. He didn't look for a way around it, he lived right on through it.

He showed us we don't have to run from our past. He showed us it's ok to love one other. He showed us that even when cancer robs us of our wit, our strength and our time, that we don't have to be ashamed.

What a remarkable example of courage.

Miigwech, Gord.

Icelandic National Football Team

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): Well, thank you very much and good afternoon Madam Speaker.

We all cheer on the Winnipeg Jets, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Heck, we have the Manitoba Moose and the Winnipeg Goldeyes and, of course, my favourite, the Brandon Wheat Kings. Now, imagine for a moment a tiny little nation of Iceland battling its way to a place in the world's second largest sporting event, the World Cup of soccer.

Today is a special day as I stand here before my colleagues and congratulate achievements so well done that they will be talked about forever.

Now, Madam Speaker, I am very proud of my Icelandic heritage, as you can tell. But many of you may be asking, why am I standing in Manitoba, talking about amazing results from a team from Iceland, from a isolated volcanic island in the North Atlantic where they have secured one of only 32 spots for the summer games—or the summer World Cup in Russia?

Well, Madam Speaker, not only do I share a heritage with these great folk, you see, there's a little bit more that I share. The core of Iceland's squad has been together for more than a decade, Madam Speaker, but they've been there longer in my family tree. I'm very proud to say that 19 of these young athletes are my relatives.

Madam Speaker, many people say that a Cinderella story in 2016 is when the Icelandic national football team qualified. Well, I dare say, they were just warming up.

So this is a great time for Icelanders everywhere, Madam Speaker, and I ask all of my colleagues to please join me in welcoming Þórður Bjarni Guðjónsson, the consul general for Iceland, who is here to celebrate this achievement with us all.

United Grain Growers Grain Elevator

Mr. Greg Nesbitt (Riding Mountain): I'm sure many people in this Chamber have visited the Inglis Grain Elevators National Historic Site in Inglis, Manitoba.

The five wooden grain elevators were officially recognized in 1996 as a unique and enduring architectural symbol, representing one of the most important periods in the development of Canada's grain industry from 1900 to 1930.

These sentinels of the prairies are one of only a few elevator rows to survive, and that's only due to the perseverance of a local committee and a dedicated base of volunteers.

That was evident this summer when a group of volunteers descended on the community to paint the United Grain Growers elevator.

It all started when Stu Brecken read in the Winnipeg Free Press that Inglis needed help preserving its historic row of prairie giants. He made a phone call to a friend suggesting they paint an

elevator. It mushroomed after Stu did a radio interview and volunteers started calling.

The 11-person crew, including two people who had painted elevators before, came from Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, the United States and of course the local area. The youngest was 66 and the oldest was 87-year-old Don Rowat of Russell, who quipped the only qualification for joining was that you had to be older than dirt.

Stu's daughter Jocie, who is a paramedic and doubled as painter, said the men all joked about needing a medic and that some of the wives felt much safer with her there.

The chair of the Inglis Area Heritage Committee, Judy Bauereiss, initially thought the offer was too good to be true but quickly became a believer.

Thanks to the volunteers and the generous donation of supplies from local businesses, the new coat of paint cost \$10,000, much less than the \$80,000 the committee is paying a contractor to paint another of the elevators.

The volunteer effort caught the attention of comedian Rick Mercer, and he showed up one day to help the crew paint and film a segment for his popular CBC show.

The result was a freshly painted elevator for the community and a week the volunteers, whose slogan was make elevators great again, won't soon forget.

Madam Speaker, I would ask for leave to have the names of the volunteers and members of the Inglis heritage committee recorded in Hansard.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to record those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Inglis Area Heritage Committee: Chair Judy Bauereiss, Vice-Chair Bert Marshall, Secretary Darlene Jackson, Treasurer Lori Schlachter, Gerald Gorda, Marjorie McNeill.

Volunteers: Bob Brecken, Jocie Brecken, Maureen Brecken, Stu Brecken, Bryan Garnham, Sandy Gibb, Dale Holaday, Arn Hoffman, Linda Hoffman, Debbie Kiez, Ron Muir, Norman Notley, Don Rawat, Del Stadyk.

Leadership Campaign–Volunteer Appreciation

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Let me start off by congratulating Dougald Lamont, our newly

elected Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party, and wish him well.

The last number of months has been a wonderful experience for me personally, and I know there are a few individuals in these chambers who have gone through very similar experiences.

These past months, I had the opportunity to hear and learn from Manitobans all over Winnipeg, Brandon and rural Manitoba.

I learned a lot and am extremely grateful not only for the experience, but more importantly for the amazing and hard-working individuals that got involved.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank those who helped make this past weekend what it was, and I especially want to thank those individuals who contributed to my campaign.

I always like to say that in politics there are many highs and lows, but what a life in politics really comes down to are the people around you. And, Madam Speaker, I could not have a more amazing, thoughtful and hard-working team.

The volunteers on my team went out of their way time and time again. We had so much fun at our weekly pool and politics. My comms team developed relationships within that I truly believe will be carried out into the future. The donors, phoners and commuters, as I like to call them, enforces my belief that humans are inherently good.

Madam Speaker, I say this with full confidence, that I know that those who volunteered on my campaign are the best volunteers, and I will be properly showing my appreciation for them over the next few weeks. But for now let me just say thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Madam Speaker, democracy is a wonderful thing and I am so grateful to be in these chambers and to have the honour to serve the constituents of Burrows.

Thank you.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Medical Assistance in Dying Legislation Request for Additional Health Services

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, few issues touch us with as much depth, pain and meaning as care for those at the end of life. Above all, we should treat those at the end of life with dignity. And we must

respect, at the same time, the rights of health-care professionals to treat patients in a manner that respects their conscience. That's why our caucus will support the government's Bill 34, which protects the religious freedoms of medical practitioners.

But we also want to say that more needs to be done. The patient should also be of sound mind, so we should have investments in mental health. The patient should be free from pain, so we need investments in palliative care. Access to pharmaceuticals is needed too. And when an appropriate request is made, a patient should have access to medical assistance in dying if they so choose.

* (13:50)

Will the Premier commit to investing in mental health supports, expanding palliative-care services and ensuring access to medical assistance in dying?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I appreciate the question from the member. I appreciate his earlier comments in respect of Gord Downie as well.

I wanted to say, Madam Speaker, on a personal note, that this past year has given our family a greater appreciation than we've ever had for the importance of palliative care. And so, in respect of that service, as with all our services in health care, we place tremendous pride and faith in the people that are in those occupations that are such caring occupations.

It is our belief as a government that the No. 1 priority for Manitobans is quality health care and access to it, Madam Speaker. That is why we are tremendously pleased to say today that our emergency room waits, year over year, are 28 per cent less than they were last year.

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

Mr. Kinew: I've been remiss in not offering condolences earlier to the Premier and to his wife for their loss earlier this year. I have walked a similar road, though we all experience it in our own way.

I was there for my father at the end of his life, and he was a man who fought residential school, segregation, oppression—never gave up, and yet, after struggling with pancreatic cancer for almost a year, he told me, I'm not saying I want to do it, but now I understand why some might look for a way out. And it was in that moment that I began to understand that sometimes being compassionate means offering an end to suffering for some people in our society,

and I think that's why we have to grapple with the tough issues: respecting the religious freedoms of practitioners, but also the Charter rights of those who may seek medical assistance in dying.

And so, I would ask the First Minister if he can commit to strong palliative care, strong mental health services and, for those who do request it, access to medical assistance in dying.

Mr. Pallister: I appreciate the question very much and I appreciate the tone of the question as well, and I appreciate the fact that this gives me the opportunity to point out to all members of this House that one thing we certainly share is our humanity. And we share that, and we share the pain that each of us goes through when family members and loved ones are afflicted with illness.

It is also very true, therefore, that we are all in this together when it comes to making a health-care system that has been underserving the needs of Manitobans for some time and worsening in its ability to deal compassionately with the situations such as the member raises, such as he experienced with his dad, as I did with my dad.

This is something we need to face together. I love the quote: the only way around it is through it. That's brilliant, and we must face the challenges of change. We should do that together.

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

Mr. Kinew: I appreciate the Premier's words, and we are willing to work together as our willingness to support this bill that I mentioned previously indicates.

We read about Mr. Cheppudira Gopalkrishna earlier today, who's a patient at Misericordia, and the concern that I have is that it seems that he may have had some challenges accessing medical assistance in dying. Again, we need to balance the conscience rights of medical professionals with the Charter rights of those patients who may seek an end to their suffering. These are not easy questions, but they are the sort of issues that we have been elected here to try and grapple with.

Mr. Gopalkrishna's experience raises questions. If a patient like him has exhausted all other alternatives and meets the legal criteria for medical assistance in dying, he should be able to access it.

Can the Premier assure Manitobans that access, information and services, such as those that

Mr. Gopalkrishna has intended to seek, will be available to everyone across the province?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the official Leader of the Opposition for his support of Bill 34. I also appreciate him raising this question in the dignified way that he has.

When I learned of the details as they've been reported about this particular case, I certainly sought more information.

We think that in Manitoba we have struck the right balance when it comes to medical assistance in dying and protecting those health professionals who do not want to participate in those facilities, who do not want to have the procedure done in their facility, but ensuring that there is access as the court demands.

So we—our heart goes out to the individual; that is No. 1. But I have sought more information because, as the facts are presented, this is something that should not happen.

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

Advanced Education Act Request to Withdraw

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I'd just say briefly that I appreciate the Health Minister's response and I look forward to whatever updates he can provide the House in the future.

On a new question, on another matter: students from across the province were in this House last night raising their voices against Bill 31, the Premier's plan to raise tuitions by some 7 per cent a year plus perhaps course fees on top of that.

The president of Brandon University Students' Union said this is the worst attack on students in 20 years. The UMSU president, Tanjit Nagra, said the impact of Bill 31 will be far harder on lower income students. But we didn't hear much in the way of response from this government in their willingness to respond to these concerns that the students were raising.

Will the Premier commit to abandoning Bill 31 and instead making investments in post-secondary so that we can have education for all Manitobans?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): So the fiscal challenges are real, shouldn't be ignored, because we have to put the decisions that we must make here in the same context, I think, as we would put them in our own homes or in our own businesses. There isn't a money tree, and the fact is that we were left with a billion-dollar deficit, annual deficit, and a provincial debt that had doubled in the previous six years. That, it should be said is, of course, a burden on students today. When they enter the workforce later they will be required not only to service the interest on that massive debt, a doubling of our provincial debt in six years, but also to repay it someday. So we have to get to sustainability, and students associations have said that and understand it, and I do too.

Madam Speaker, I have tremendous sympathy as a person who had to put myself through school, and did. With the help of scholarships at times, well needed, and part-time work—thank you to those small businesses that took a risk on hiring me—I was able to put myself through. But I know the costs are real, and I'm very, very concerned about making sure we keep the barriers to post-secondary education and training low.

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

Mr. Kinew: Merci, Madame la présidente. On écoute aux étudiants qui nous dit à haute voix et toute solidarité qu'ils sont contre le Projet de loi 31. Les étudiants et leurs familles disent non au plan du premier ministre de hausser les frais de scolarité par des milliers de dollars.

Les étudiants et leurs familles disent non au plan du premier ministre de couper les crédits d'impôt pour des diplômés récents. Les étudiants et leurs familles disent non au plan du premier ministre qui met l'éducation hors de la portée des Manitobains et Manitobaines.

Madame la présidente, les étudiants font connaître leurs demandes. Ils sont venus hier soir au commission et ils sont venus au palais aujourd'hui dans la neige, dans le vent pour que le Premier ministre puisse entendre et les écouter.

Est-ce que le Premier ministre va écouter aux étudiants? Est-ce qu'il va abandonner le Projet de loi 31?

Translation

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are listening to the students who are raising their voices in solidarity to

say that they are against Bill 31. Students and their families are saying no to the Premier's plan to raise tuition fees by thousands of dollars.

Students and their families are saying no to the Premier's plan to cut the tax credits for recent graduates. Students and their families are saying no to the Premier's plan that puts education out of the reach of Manitobans.

Madam Speaker, students are making their demands known. They came yesterday to the committee and they came today to the Legislative Building, in the wind and the snow, so that the Premier could hear them and listen to them.

Will the Premier listen to the students? Will he give up on Bill 31?

Mr. Pallister: Madame la présidente, nous recevons le grand défi après le gestion—le mauvaise gestion le NDP—le gouvernement NDP précédent nous devons accepter le grand défi, nous devons fixer les finances et nous devons réparer les services, et nous devons augmenter l'économie.

Translation

Madam Speaker, we were given a great challenge following the management, the poor management of the NDP government that preceded us. We have to accept this great challenge, we have to fix the finances, we have to repair services and we have to build up the economy.

English

It is critical for us, Madam Speaker, that we accept these challenges. We are accepting them. The challenges that were left to us were enormous and we accept them graciously, but they are real.

The member opposite should accept the responsibility for the problem. We will accept responsibility for repairing the problem.

* (14:00)

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

Mr. Kinew: It's been a difficult week for some Manitobans.

Earlier, we learned of the prospect of more than 1,000 jobs being lost across northern Manitoba. Manitobans have learned more about the cuts to their health-care system, particularly the cuts to physiotherapy and outpatient occupational therapy services. And we've heard the government is also

failing to raise enough money to keep the promise that they made to students about scholarships and bursaries—all this after the Premier cut some \$60 million in supports for recent grads and now plans to pass Bill 31, which will hike tuition by up to 7 per cent plus fees.

Will the Premier stop these cuts, stop raising tuition and instead make real investments in our post-secondary education system so that we can have what the students on the steps of the Legislature were asking for today: education for all?

Mr. Pallister: I believe, Madam Speaker, that the beneficiaries—greatest beneficiaries of our education system and the investments we make in it, quite frankly, are not the students, but are the people—their fellow citizens who benefit from the skills the students develop. And so what we need to do is make sure that the students are given the opportunity to develop those skills as much as is possible, in well-funded secondary, post-secondary, institutions.

Now, our funding over the first two budgets ranks third in Canada of all Canadian provinces. We have made the commitment—very real commitment to assist with post-secondary scholarships and bursaries to the tune of five times as much funding being available by the end of this fiscal year as was available under the previous administration.

Madam Speaker, this commitment is real. We will assist those students who have the financial needs, to go to post-secondary institutions, where the previous government failed. The numbers were declining. The percentages of graduates who came from lower socioeconomic circumstances were dropping. And the fact is, we must reverse that trend.

This is the great equalizer. It was for me, Madam Speaker, and I believe it is for young people in our province today as well.

Advanced Education Act Impact on Students

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): This government is dead set on balancing its budget on the backs of students. And students and new graduates have lost \$60 million in supports and are facing rapidly increasing tuition costs, and yet the minister and the Premier (Mr. Pallister) don't seem to care.

Yesterday, we learned that the government spent tens of thousands of dollars, in fact, on an ad campaign trying to convince students that a higher tuition won't be a barrier for them. Well, students

aren't fooled. Students are on the march. Students are here today to send a message.

Will this minister listen to students?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): Yes, we certainly will listen to students, and we—as we listen to all Manitobans.

We've had a record consultation, one that the previous government never had anything even remotely close to. And they seem to be very critical of the fact that we are trying to get the message out there to students that there is additional funding available through scholarships and bursaries. In fact, to date, we have 1,000 additional applications over this time last year.

I don't understand why they're against students understanding that there is additional funding and additional help available to help them get a good post-secondary education.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Well, the minister thought that he could get away with cutting the \$60 million in supports from students and hiking tuition by relying on the private sector to fill part of the hole that he dug for himself.

The ad campaign that said, quote, there has never been more money available to help you get an education as there is today, is just not true. The government's own documents show that there isn't more money for students. What is there? There's cuts and increasing tuition and less supports for students.

So will this minister listen to students and withdraw Bill 31?

Mr. Wishart: I really—reluctant to give the member opposite a lesson of economics, but the donors that are very generous in the past and will continue to be so now usually make the decision on the amount that they will donate towards charitable causes, like the donations towards helping with tuition, make that decision in the last quarter.

We're not anywhere near the last quarter. In fact, we're just barely halfway through the year. And to judge the success of the program on half a year, if 'they'dle' done that when they were in government, they never would've been happy with their budgets because they were always off their budget.

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

Mr. Wiebe: Students and young people are—they're just not fooled by this government's regressive moves. They know that lost supports and rising tuition will make it more difficult to get a diploma or a degree. But the minister and the Premier (Mr. Pallister), they just don't seem to care. Students see right through this minister's attempts to spin the truth about the impact that higher tuition and less supports will have.

We have another night in committee tonight, Madam Speaker, and the students who are coming to committee have been loud and clear with their message.

Will this minister listen and will he withdraw Bill 31?

Mr. Wishart: This government is committed to working on behalf of post-secondary students, with the post-secondary institutions, make sure that we have a long-term sustainable program. We're pleased to work with private industry to improve the amount of money that is available and target it to those that are in need, something the previous government never did.

And, in fact, while they were in government, they actually cut the amount of money that was available to Scholarship and Bursary Initiative. That's really not helping Manitoba students in any way.

Advanced Education Act Impact on Northern Students

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): Thousands of students have attended the University College of the North and gone on to build successful northern lives. Now future students are looking north at the actions of this government, wondering if they'll be able to afford post-secondary education.

Will the Minister of Education commit to keeping education affordable for northern Manitobans and drop Bill 31?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): This government is very pleased to work with all post-secondary institutions, whether they be colleges or universities, to make sure that we have good access in all parts of the province.

In fact, I was able to join the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen) this morning to make a good announcement about industry that is looking—aerospace industry—is looking at locating in The Pas and using the training

capabilities of University College of the North, which we know are second to none, to help train Manitoba students in new and successful careers.

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

Ms. Lathlin: Raising tuition fees and making life less affordable is far more harmful to northern students who have to pay \$10 for a jug of milk. Raising tuition rates in Manitoba means that low-income students in the North will have to think twice about whether they can afford post-secondary education when they want to be pursuing a future in northern Manitoba.

Will the Minister for Education commit to keeping education affordable across Manitoba and drop Bill 31?

Mr. Wishart: This government is very committed to affordability in education and particularly in post-secondary education. We have been—we have worked very closely with private industry and the universities to generate additional funds through scholarships and bursaries that we—that is targeted to help those in need.

Manitobans have told us that we want good education for those that don't have the opportunities, and we are helping making that happen.

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

Ms. Lathlin: Affordable education in the North means that people can stay and raise their families in the North. Northerners do not want their future to depend on the price of 'commonities.' They want to grow small businesses. They need the means to do it, and the means are education and training.

* (14:10)

Will the Minister for Education drop Bill 31 and take a creative approach to expanding educational opportunities in the North?

Mr. Wishart: As I said earlier, I was pleased to be joined by the Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade to make an announcement about training and potential for new industry in The Pas, Manitoba, very pleased to work with the aerospace industry through our sector council partners and to make sure that there's opportunities for really good quality jobs in the communities in the North.

We're pleased to work with our partners, and we will work with our partners to make things—make business happen in the North. Certainly our government is far more friendly to small business than the previous government ever was.

Advanced Education Act Impact on Indigenous Students

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Statistics Canada released data indicating Winnipeg is home to the largest indigenous population across Canada, nearly 100,000 people, certainly something to celebrate and be proud of, and in that we have a responsibility to make education accessible for indigenous youth. Indigenous youth need affordable, quality education to obtain good jobs.

The minister's regressive bill will put post-secondary further out of reach for indigenous students, entrenching a cycle of minimum wage employment and precarious work.

Will the minister scrap Bill 31?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): The member should be paying attention to the announcements that come out fairly regularly. Today we were at Neeginan centre in North End Winnipeg, where we train a number of urban Aboriginal students, and certainly many of them are benefiting from the programs that we have put in place, including programs with the aerospace industry here in Winnipeg and now in The Pas, Manitoba, as well.

We're happy to work with our partners to make sure that there is opportunities for Manitoba youth.

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

Ms. Fontaine: Last night I had the opportunity to sit in another committee hearing, hearing presentations by indigenous fishers protesting Bill 23 and the government's decision, without consultation, to affect the way indigenous fishers sell their fish.

I couldn't help but see the connection between both the Bill 30 and Bill 31 standing committees. In one, indigenous fishers shared on the precarious nature of First Nations economy, and in the other, indigenous students shared how university is actually transformative in their life. For indigenous students coming from First Nations, post-secondary degrees allow them to return home and apply their skills and build a better future for everyone.

Will the minister scrap Bill 31?

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

We're very pleased to work with communities, both rurally and remote, to make sure that there is better access to post-secondary education, whether it's through University College of the North or through the other college system. In fact, we're busy doing a review of the colleges in Manitoba to make sure that access has improved, something that their government was supposed to get done 10 years ago and never got around to.

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

Ms. Fontaine: For many indigenous youth, university is a luxury. For those already struggling to meet their basic needs, a higher tuition will completely eliminate post-secondary as an option for indigenous single parents, particularly single mothers. Financial realities mean that going back to university having a child is nearly impossible.

Certainly the minister knows that in an era of reconciliation we have an opportunity and a responsibility to lift up and support indigenous people's access to education, not create barriers in thwarting that education.

Will the minister stand up for indigenous students and stop Bill 31?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Let's talk facts, Madam Speaker. Financial barriers are what were imposed on young people in our province, in particular, indigenous people as well, under the previous administration. Let's talk about the increase in taxes that was imposed on young people and all people across the province in terms of the PST broadening, in terms of benefits at work, the reductions of part-time work, additional taxes on beer, additional taxes on rental properties and home insurance, additional taxes on haircuts—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: What was the result? And the PST itself, Madam Speaker, affecting hundreds of items that young people and indigenous people need to purchase, especially young single mothers, as the member cites.

So when the member speaks about the challenges of financial barriers, she needs to be speaking about direct challenges posed on those very people by the previous administration. The result of

all this was a reduction in enrolments by indigenous people, a reduction in graduation rates, a reduction in educational attainment.

Madam Speaker, these are the facts of the previous administration's approach to helping indigenous young people. Those facts will change under this administration as we assist indigenous young people in uplifting their lives through higher education and better training opportunities in this province.

Government Health-Care Plan Peachey Report Recommendations

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Madam Speaker, March 31st, 2015, when in opposition, the Premier published an op-ed in the Sou'wester community newspaper of Manitoba: A plan is in the works.

The Tory plan for health care, as it turned out, was the one being developed and planned under the NDP, the Peachey report, prepared by a consultant from outside Manitoba who will never be affected by the changes.

Given the NDP's 17 years of mismanagement of Manitoba's health-care system, why would the PCs embrace, endorse and implement an NDP plan?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The member asks a fair question, Madam Speaker. Why would we be influenced by someone from outside of Manitoba? I have to ask the member: why does every position he takes reflect exactly, precisely, the position taken by the federal Liberal government and ignore the needs of Manitobans? Why does every position he takes and advocates for emanate from Ottawa, not from Manitoba, Brandon, Neepawa, Dauphin or any other community of our fair province?

Madam Speaker, the previous government asked for help. They knew there was a problem then; they fail to recognize it now. But Manitobans know there's a problem with their health-care system, and they want a government with the courage to fix the problem. And they have one.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, April 12th, 2013, the former NDP minister of Health, Theresa Oswald, announced the closure of more than a dozen ambulance stations in rural Manitoba.

The current Health Minister dusted off this NDP report and put a PC sticker on the front of it. The government says the changes may take 10 years. Since the data goes back to 2008, decisions will be based on information nearly 20 years old.

Will the government continue with a failed NDP plan, or will they go back to the drawing board with fresh data, not garbage Internet polls, to make better decisions?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, the member oft asks about plans, and—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Goertzen: —I don't know what his future plans are, Madam Speaker, and I won't ask him what his future plans are. We certainly did follow the plan that was brought forward by Dr. Peachey. He's renowned across not only Canada, but North America in terms of the work that he does. We've been working with that plan for over a year.

It is early days. There's much, much work to do. We were pleased, however, to see that emergency room wait times have been reduced over the last year by 28 per cent. It is early. Of course there's much, much, much, much more work to do, but that improvement is something that never happened under the former government, so we will continue on with the plan that is having improvements in our system, Madam Speaker.

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

Addiction and Mental Health Services Request for Government Plan

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, there's an explosion in crystal meth's use in Winnipeg with devastating effects on young people, on families and on children in child welfare.

In opposition, the current Minister of Health toured Manitoba and pronounced crystal meth a very, very significant issue, as I table.

Recent credible reports indicate that people with meth addictions are being told to get arrested because they'll get help faster in jail than in the health-care system.

* (14:20)

Why, given the Health Minister's knowledge of this issue, has he, in a year and a half, failed to

implement a plan to tackle addictions and mental illness, not a plan to put people in jail, or—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, there's a bit of a contradiction in those questions, Madam Speaker. I think the member recognizes that. And this is the danger of asking ghost-written questions.

The fact is the member started his preamble by suggesting we should not listen to anyone outside of Manitoba, continually espouses positions developed in Ottawa or in the gallery now, Madam Speaker. The fact is, he also labelled a sincere exercise that was participated in by over 30,000 Manitobans as garbage. And he should be ashamed of himself for that assertion.

Deliberative democracy should engage Manitobans, and we should encourage all Manitobans to feel this place is their place, that they have the chance to come here and express their views, whether we agree with them or not. And the fact of the matter is deliberative democracy and civic engagement are very important to this government. If they are not to that member, then that is a shame, Madam Speaker. But they are important to us, and we do not call the active participation of over 30,000 Manitobans in our prebudget consultation, we do not call that garbage here.

Arts and Culture in Manitoba New Cultural Policy Review

Mr. Andrew Smith (Southdale): Manitoba's last culture review was completed over 27 years ago. The NDP didn't bother to undertake one throughout their 17 years in government while other provinces acted, leaving Manitoba behind.

The cultural sector has undergone significant change in that time, however. Can the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage tell us what she is doing to address this very important issue?

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): I'd like to thank my colleague for that excellent question today.

I am so proud of our government's commitment to Manitoba's vibrant arts and cultural community. The last cultural policy review was taken by—was undertaken by Minister Bonnie Mitchelson back in 1990. It predates email, household Internet and certainly social media.

The members opposite had nearly a generation to update the policy to reflect technical—technological advances and evolving arts and culture community, Madam Speaker, but our government is the one who took on the challenge, and we are very proud of that.

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Advanced Education Act Impact on New Manitobans

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): Last night at committee, we heard from dozens of presenters opposed to this government's attempts to make it harder for students to obtain an education. I was deeply touched, and I know my colleagues were too, by the presenters' statements on the negative impacts the government's changes are having on newcomers to our province. We need to do more for students, not make it harder.

Will the minister stand up for newcomer students and withdraw Bill 31?

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): Certainly, our government is very pleased to work on improving access for post-secondary education, whether it be for newcomers, whether it be for existing Manitobans or historical Manitobans that have many generations here in this province.

In fact, the program that we put out on social media to make people more aware—students more aware of the Scholarship and Bursary Initiative not only encouraged 1,000 new applications for support for post-secondary education, but it more than doubled the numbers that came from First Nations.

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

Ms. Marcelino: Many newcomers have left family and careers to pursue a better life in this great province and gladly give back to their communities as well. A degree or diploma is their path to do so.

Our Manitoba advantage for so many years was encouraging newcomers to settle here and our affordability, including affordable education. Madam Speaker, last night at committee, members were deeply concerned that this is at risk for newcomers.

Will the minister listen to these voices, these passionate voices echoing that education is a sound investment and scrap Bill 31?

Mr. Wishart: Well, I would encourage the member to reach back in her memory and remember what we did with Manitoba's Provincial Nominee Program. We came into government, we had a waiting list of up to four years. We've eliminated that waiting list and put special programs in that encourage, directly, students to go to Manitoba schools—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wishart: —and get good Manitoba jobs now and into the future.

We have made this easier for people to come to the province and get good educations. I think she should support that.

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

Ms. Marcelino: I would also like to remind the minister that when we were in government the Provincial Nominee Program was responsible for the—150,000 or so new immigrants to this province. [interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, order.

Ms. Marcelino: Madam Speaker, the character of this government is revealed not by its words—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Ms. Marcelino: —but how it treats our newcomers. A head tax and, now, unaffordable tuition demonstrates a government that is simply out of touch with the reality that newcomers face.

The minister has a choice. Will he choose to listen and withdraw Bill 31?

Mr. Wishart: And I would like to take the opportunity to remind the member opposite and all her colleagues that it was actually Bonnie Mitchelson, former member of this Legislature from River East, that developed the Provincial Nominee Program, and this program has become a pilot for provinces across Canada. We continue to make improvements—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wishart: —on this program, provide better access for foreign students here in Manitoba post-secondaries and a pathway forward to become Manitobans and be successful here in Manitoba and join the economy. Our growth in population exceeds theirs on an annual basis.

Advanced Education Act Request to Withdraw

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): Madam Speaker, last night in committee we heard students talk about the hardships that they have to face in order to get an education and pull themselves out of poverty.

This government is continuing to make it harder for students by raising tuition and fees while cutting supports to post-secondary institutions, which means that good quality education will be out of reach for most families and many, many Manitobans.

This is the wrong direction, Madam Speaker. We need a more affordable, not less affordable, education.

Will the minister hear the voices of our students and scrap Bill 31?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Well, Madam Speaker, the members opposite fail to give our young people and our students credit for being able to do research and our young people have that capacity, they have that ability. And they will know who made life less affordable for them and their families over the last number of years. They will know which party and which government—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —jacked up the costs on their families. They will know—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —who raised the taxes more than every other provincial government, and it was that bunch over there, Madam Speaker.

Now, where I come from, education's the best investment—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —a family gets to make and the state has an obligation to help and we are doing everything we can to help. And we will continue to do that, Madam Speaker, because we value education; we want it accessible; we want it available, and we will make sure that, just as we have since we came in a year and a half ago, we continue to emphasize education as a key priority for this government.

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Speaker's Ruling

Madam Speaker: I have a ruling for the House.

* (14:30)

At the start of routine proceedings on October 10th, 2017, the honourable member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) raised a matter of privilege regarding the emergency building evacuation which occurred on October 5th, 2017, the difficulties he encountered as he was exiting the building and related security matters. He concluded his remarks by moving that the Speaker, LAMC and independent MLAs form a committee to deal with the aforementioned issues of interference and obstruction that go beyond the memorandum of understanding announced on October 5th, 2017. The Government House Leader (Mr. Cullen) and the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) spoke to the matter before I took it under advisement.

I thank all members for their contributions to this important discussion. Matters of privilege remain the most significant means by which a member may raise concerns about issues relating to his or her duties as an elected representative. They ought to be carefully considered and respectfully presented in the House. Accordingly, I treat matters of privilege with the respect they deserve.

There are two conditions that must be satisfied in order for the matter raised to be ruled in order as a prima facie case of privilege. First, was the issue raised at the earliest opportunity? And second, has sufficient evidence been provided to demonstrate that the privileges of the House or the member have been breached in order to warrant putting the matter to the House?

Regarding the first condition, the honourable member for Assiniboia raised this matter on October 10th, 2017, the first sitting day after the building evacuation. And I would determine that this was indeed his earliest opportunity to raise the matter. I would note for the reference of all members that the member for Assiniboia raised this at 1:30 rather than 10 a.m., which I would assert was the most appropriate time to do so, as private members' business does not present a suitable moment to raise such concerns.

Regarding the second condition, whether there is sufficient evidence that the privileges of the House or the member have been breached, I must make a determination as to whether or not the actions

described by the member constituted a breach of privilege.

On this second issue, there are a number of factors to consider. In order for a breach of privilege to have occurred, Joseph Maingot advises on page 222 of the second edition of Parliamentary Privilege in Canada that the activity in question must involve a proceeding of Parliament. This concept is supported by rulings from Speaker Rocan in 1988 and 1991, Speaker Hickes in 2003 and 2008, as well as Speaker Reid in 2013. As has been noted by these Speakers, debate in the Chamber constitutes a proceeding of Parliament, but events taking place outside of the Chamber, including a building evacuation, do not fall within that scope. Maingot additionally advises on page 14 of the second edition of Parliamentary Privilege in Canada that to, and I quote, to constitute privilege generally, there must be some improper obstruction to the member in performing his parliamentary work in either a direct or constructive way. End quote.

The honourable member for Assiniboia tabled references to two House of Commons rulings during his submission on this matter, yet neither of them is directly applicable to this instance. His reference from February 1997 dealt with difficulties members faced accessing their offices during a picket, while the reference from 2004 addressed similar access difficulties during a state visit. The evacuation of our building on October 5th is not analogous to either of these incidents.

In consideration of all of these factors, I must rule that the member for Assiniboia did not present a prima facie case of privilege. He did, however, have a good point, and I will have more to say on this in a moment. First, though, I would advise the House that issues such as this do not require a matter of privilege or a motion moved in the House to be addressed. Issues and concerns like this could be raised directly with the Speaker and House leaders. Further, I would urge caution about comments placed on the record when raising such issues, as they could unintentionally share information that could be detrimental, such as noting the location of certain members while the security sweep was taking place. The security of MLAs, staff and visitors to this building is a primary concern of mine as your Speaker.

The member referenced the recently signed memorandum of understanding between the Assembly and the Department of Justice. He was

correct in noting the importance of this agreement. The MOU provides a platform on which we can build a more secure, safe and open environment for the crucial work of the Assembly. This work will be ongoing, with many lessons to be learned along the way. Many lessons were, in fact, learned on October 5th, and I can assure the members in the House that steps will be taken to address the issues he identified and many other issues as well.

In relation to one specific and understandably personal issue raised by the member, I can inform the House that contingency measures are in place to ensure the functionality of the elevators during an emergency and this information will be shared with all MLAs and staff in this building. Further to that point, I can also assure the House that as enhanced measures such as evacuation plans are further developed and refined, information and training sessions will be provided to all building occupants.

We intend to be exhaustive, both in our efforts to improve safety measures, as well as in educating the population of this building about those measures.

PETITIONS

Transit Funding

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017, section 88(8) repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states, quote, "The municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular or rapid public transit system a transit operating grant in an amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue," end quote.

(2) Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing the carbon footprint.

(3) Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal transit agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aging road infrastructure and addressing climate change.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Kinew: —for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017.

This petition is signed by Scott Entz, John Friesen, Gurmukh Roopra and many other Manitobans.

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

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017, section 88(8) repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states, quote: The municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular or a rapid public transit system a transit operating grant in an amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue, end quote.

(2) Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing the carbon footprint.

(3) Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal transit agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aging road infrastructure and addressing climate change.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017.

This petition is signed by many Manitobans.

* (14:40)

Northern Patient Transfer Program

Ms. Amanda Lathlin (The Pas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitobans recognize that everyone deserves quality accessible health care.

(2) The people of northern Manitoba face unique challenges when accessing health care, including inclement weather, remote communities and seasonal roads.

(3) The provincial government has already unwisely cancelled northern health investments, including clinics in The Pas and Thompson.

(4) Furthermore, the provincial government has taken a course that will discourage doctors from practising in the North, namely, their decision to cut a grant program designed to bring more doctors to rural Manitoba.

(5) The provincial government has also substantially cut investments in roads and highways, which will make it more difficult for northerners to access health care.

(6) The provincial government's 'austerity' approach is now threatening to cut funding for essential programs such as the Northern Patient Transportation Program, which was designed to help some of the most vulnerable people in the province.

(7) The provincial government has already—has recently announced it would cancel the airfare subsidy for patient escorts who fly to Winnipeg for medical treatment, which will be devastating for patients with mobility issues, dementia, or who are elderly and need assistance getting to the city.

(8) The challenges that northerners face will only be overcome if the provincial government respects, improves and adequately funds quality programs that were designed to help northerners, such as the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the absolute necessity of maintaining and improving the Northern Patient Transportation Program by continuing to respect Northern Patient Transfer

agreements and funding these services in accordance with the needs of northern Manitobans.

This petition was signed by many, many Manitobans. Thank you.

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Manitobans recognize that everyone deserves quality accessible health care.

(2) The people of northern Manitoba face unique challenges when accessing health care, including inclement weather, remote communities and seasonal roads.

(3) The provincial government has already unwisely cancelled northern health investments, including clinics in The Pas and Thompson.

(4) Furthermore, the provincial government has taken a course that will discourage doctors from practising in the North, namely, their decision to cut a grant program designed to bring more doctors to rural Manitoba.

(5) The provincial government has also substantially cut investments in roads and highways, which will make it more difficult for northerners to access health care.

(6) The provincial government's austerity approach is now threatening to cut funding for essential programs such as the Northern Patient Transportation Program, which is designed to help some of the most vulnerable people in the province.

The provincial—oh, sorry.

(7) The provincial government has recently announced it would cancel the airfare subsidy for patient escorts who fly to Winnipeg for medical treatment, which will be devastating for patients with mobility issues, dementia, or who are elderly and need assistance getting to the city.

(8) The challenges that northerners face will only be overcome if the provincial government respects, improves and adequately funds programs that were designed to help northerners, such as the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to recognize the absolute necessity of maintaining and improving the Northern Patient Transportation Program by continuing to respect Northern Patient Transfer agreements and funding these services in accordance with the needs of northern Manitobans.

And this petition, Madam Speaker, has been signed by many, many Manitobans.

Taxi Industry Regulation

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

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) Taxi industry in Winnipeg provides an important service to all Manitobans.

(2) Taxi industry is regulated to ensure there are both the provision of taxi service and a fair and affordable fare structure.

(3) Regulations have been put in place that has made Winnipeg a leader in protecting the safety of taxi drivers through the installation of shields and cameras.

(4) The regulated taxi system also has significant measures in place to protect passengers, including a stringent complaint system.

(5) The provincial government has moved to bring in legislation through Bill 30 that will transfer jurisdiction to the City of Winnipeg in order to bring in so-called ride-sharing services like Uber.

(6) There were no consultations with the taxi industry prior to the introduction of this bill.

(7) The introduction of this bill jeopardizes safety, taxi service, and also puts consumers at risk, as well as the livelihood of hundreds of Manitobans, many of whom have invested their life savings into the industry.

(8) The proposed legislation also puts the regulated framework at risk and could lead to issues such as what has been seen in other jurisdictions, including differential pricing, not providing service to some areas of the city, and significant risks in terms of taxi driver and passenger safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plans to deregulate the taxi industry, including withdrawing Bill 30.

And this petition is signed by many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: Any further petitions?

Transit Funding

Ms. Flor Marcelino (Logan): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017, section 88(8) repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states, quote, "The municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular or rapid public transit system a transit operating grant in an amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue," unquote.

(2) Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing the carbon footprint.

(3) Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal transit agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aging road infrastructure and addressing climate change.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017.

Signed by many, many Manitobans. Thank you.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and the background to this petition is as follows:

Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act of 2017, section 88(8) repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states the following: The municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular, a rapid public transit system, a transit operating grant in an amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the

transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue.

Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing our carbon footprint.

Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal transit agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aging road infrastructure and addressing climate change.

* (14:50)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act of 2017.

Signed by Avery Penner, Darcie Reimer, Mary Dafoe and many, many Manitobans.

Thank you.

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017, section 88(8), repeals the portion of The Municipal Taxation and Funding Act which states the municipal grants for a fiscal year must include for each municipality that operates a regular or rapid public transit system a transit operating grant in the amount that is not less than 50 per cent of the annual operating cost of the transit system in excess of its annual operating revenue.

(2) Public transit is critical to Manitoba's economy, to preserving its infrastructure and to reducing the carbon footprint.

(3) Eliminating the grant guarantees for municipal transit—that—municipal transit agencies will be detrimental to transit services and be harmful to provincial objectives of connecting Manitobans to employment, improving aging road infrastructure and addressing climate change.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to withdraw its plan to repeal the annual operating grant for municipal transit agencies and remove section 88(8) of Bill 36, the budget implementation and statutes amendment act, 2017.

Signed by many, many Manitobans.

Madam Speaker: Grievances?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

Speaker's Statement

Madam Speaker: I have a statement for the House.

I'm advising the House that I have received three letters from members selecting private members' bills for second reading votes. As a reminder to the House, rule 24 permits each recognized party to select up to three private members' bills per session and each independent member to select one private member's bill per session to proceed to a second reading vote. Rule 24 also requires written notice to be provided to the Speaker regarding the date and time of the vote. This notice must be provided no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled end of the fall sittings, which would be today.

Accordingly, the following bills have been selected for second reading votes: Bill 227, The Provincial Court Amendment Act (Mandatory Training and Continuing Education), for November 2nd, 2017, at 10:55 a.m.; Bill 200, The Human Rights Code Amendment Act, for November 2nd, 2017, at 11:50 a.m.; Bill 209, The Mental Health Amendment and Personal Health Information Amendment Act, for November 7th, 2017, at 10:55 a.m.

Also, as a reminder to the House, it was previously announced that the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Fletcher) advised that the question will be put on second reading of his bill, 213, at 10:55 on Tuesday, October 31st, 2017.

I would further remind the House that, in accordance with our subrule 23(5), any recorded vote requested during a private members' hour on Tuesday must be deferred to 11:55 a.m. on the following Thursday.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

House Business

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): On House business, I would like to announce that the

Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet, if necessary, on Tuesday, October 31st, at 6 p.m. to continue consideration of Bill 30, The Local Vehicles for Hire Act.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the Government House Leader that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet, if necessary, on Tuesday, October 31st, at 6 p.m. to continue consideration of Bill 30, The Local Vehicles for Hire Act.

* * *

Mr. Cullen: Would you resolve the House into Committee of Supply?

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that the House will consider Estimates this afternoon.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
(Concurrent Sections)
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

* (15:00)

Mr. Chairperson (Dennis Smook): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Executive Council.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): I think yesterday I might have run out the clock with a long preamble about a question on the education property tax credits. So I just re-ask the question more directly and just see whether the Premier is planning any changes to the scope or to the amount of the Education Property Tax Credit.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): Before I get to that, I did want to—I'd undertaken to get information on some previous questions, and I do want to get that on the record in the time we have.

So, first of all, I've been asked about the climate change survey—remember a couple days ago?—with more detail on the survey and what the responses were and so on. And, of course, tomorrow, as the member knows, we'll launch our plan and there'll be another opportunity for public involvement.

And I appreciate the fact that the member has not criticized the efforts we made to reach out to Manitobans the way that the Liberal—provincial

Liberal members have. I find that distasteful. I've also read some commentary from someone who should know better, belittling the exercise that—of asking people for perspectives, and this has been a long-standing practice of governments, not just provincially here but across the country, and I think it's an important one because it gives people, citizens, a chance to participate in a way they might not otherwise have. Like, for some, you know, perhaps because some of the comments are coming from people who live in Winnipeg and perhaps, you know, that's easy for them to feel like they can be heard, but for a lot of people where I come from and where the Leader of the Opposition grew up originally, I think, as well, sometimes you feel out of the loop, and I think that for a lot of people in Manitoba it's true that they feel that way. And maybe people in the city too.

But I'm just saying for people who come from rural or northern communities, and, of course, this is, you know, it's a web—part of our outreach was a web survey, and anybody can participate in a web survey; doesn't matter whether you live in Churchill or Thompson or The Pas or an isolated First Nations community, if there's Internet connections, you got the opportunity to participate. I think that's a valuable thing; I've always done that since I got into public life. I believe it, and from the comments we got—we got over 15,000 written comments on the survey—people felt it was a worthwhile exercise for them to participate in, and I think it's something that we should continue to endeavour to do.

* (15:10)

We had 37 different community meetings. The Finance Minister did meetings in various locations, and the responses were, you know, diverse, as are Manitobans. But the fact is, Manitobans used the process to participate in it and to hear the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) today describe it as garbage is just—the pits. I think it's a thoughtless comment to make, frankly, and I think it's disrespectful to people who took the time to participate and who worked hard also, staff, MLAs, who worked hard to reach out and invite people to come.

I personally read the lion's share of the comments that were typed in. I read the results, the summary results of the surveys. Yes, you know, I know somebody said, well, it's not scientific. Well, you know, maybe relationship building isn't always scientific. Maybe we just build our relationships.

Sometimes it's an art; maybe sometimes it's science. I don't know, but I don't think there's any one way that's the only way that you should try to get the public involved in life-political.

We engage at election time, all of us, in going door to door, and we do that because reaching out to try to connect with people. This is an exercise in doing that without an election in the offing. This is a sincere attempt to try to get respected, so.

The climate change survey response I'll get into more detail, because the Chairman has told me I'm running out of time. But I do think these exercises are not for show. They're a sincere effort on the part of our government, and any government that I have had the chance to be part of, I've encouraged this type of exercise to take place.

It's interesting to be criticized from—in one particular case—from a journal that actually publishes anonymous comments from people on the Internet that they would at the same time call these comments garbage. I find that a little bit of a contradiction. I think that there's a real opportunity, if one takes the time to learn, in listening, and that's exactly what we try to do here.

So I'll give a summary of the actual responses now. But I felt I wanted to put that on the record. There's no magic perfect way to get perspectives from people, but I do think reaching out and asking questions is a pretty smart part of any exercise in determining public policy.

Mr. Kinew: Well, I appreciate the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) willingness to answer the matters under advisement. So, hopefully, we can get to that.

And, also, you know, looking through the Manitoba Fiscal Performance Review in the first section, summary section, it does talk about revisiting tax credits in Manitoba potentially reducing the amount or reducing the scope of them in the sense of how many people might qualify for some of them. In some cases, very direct with some of the tax credits in terms of the recommendations, you know, being, you know, seemingly just to phase them out completely. In other areas, it seems to be left more vague, more broad. So that's what I'm curious to hear the Premier's take on.

Is he looking at the education property tax credits in terms of reducing the amount or reducing the scope of them?

Mr. Pallister: So I'll give the summary I undertook to give without repeating the preamble. But I do think again that it's important to respect the views of people.

The climate change survey response was 7,000 responses. The nature of this survey was that you could do the response anonymously. What we're endeavouring to do with the made-in-Manitoba green plan feedback mechanism tomorrow is to make sure that although the person doesn't have to give their name, we want to ensure that we're hearing from Manitobans. So the member knows a lot more about the technological aspects of this than I, but I'll just say that to ensure that the person can comment once and not a hundred times, and then it's not going to be that we're hearing from—I don't know why a bunch of people from the Yukon would tell us about our plan, but they might.

But this one's to make sure—

An Honourable Member: Alberta.

Mr. Pallister: —that people from—[*interjection*] yes, from northwest Ontario or, you know, my friends in Lacombe, Alberta, may have views on this, but we're more interested in hearing from Manitobans. So I can share with the member there are over 7,000 responses to the online survey itself. The data—but because they were submitted anonymously, the data is not available on a number of the responses that came from, like, stakeholder organizations or whatever.

However, we did provide the opportunity, as well, for Manitobans to send us their thoughts separately from the survey, and we got a number of additional submissions that way, more than 200 emailed or mail—snail-mailed submissions, as well, with commentary to complement that online survey.

Of the more than 200 emailed or mailed, a number of those were form letters, as does happen with some of these things, but there were some unique submissions. About half of them were unique submissions. Most of those—three quarters of those were from individuals. One quarter were sent from organizations.

I'll just go further and respond to another question the member had asked me about Churchill and about allocations of funding for Churchill that he had wanted more detail on. Just to start with, funding highlights for this fiscal year for Churchill—some examples of investments that were made this year:

one was support for the U of M for the Churchill Marine Observatory. Another example was support for the new funding model that we adopted for tourism. This—the ninety-six, four—so taking 4 per cent of the revenues generated by tourism in our province, redirecting it back to the tourism promoters and industry. I think there's an article on that that I'd like see if we have it; I can read the results of that. The tourism results have been quite good, quite a reason for optimism that what we've seen so far with making sure that we're promoting Manitoba more and the government of Manitoba less, redirecting those resources back into things that will generate jobs.

Our major focus of our advertising for tourism has been—frankly, has been Churchill in the first year. And Churchill—I'm thinking we've got five new ads that were developed, of which three featured Churchill almost exclusively, and one it mentions Churchill, so really pushed to help the tourism industry in Churchill.

As well, we provided capital funding for the Churchill Town Centre Complex, grant funding to the Town of Churchill to operate the day-to-day functions of the Churchill Town Centre Complex, housing operations, capital support through Manitoba Housing. As the member knows about, what, 70 per cent of the housing in Churchill is Manitoba Housing. So it's a significant commitment to get that housing stock maintained and upgraded when we need to.

Road maintenance funding, Communities Economic Development Fund, child and family services system—and I'll finish this, I see I'm running out of time, but I'll—there's a few other examples, too, where we're actually—unless I can get leave, I'll just keep—I'll finish. I'm almost done.

Mr. Chairperson: The leader of—

An Honourable Member: He has to ask for leave, eh?

An Honourable Member: Yes, I have to ask for leave.

Mr. Chairperson: Oh, you can continue. There's still about 20 seconds to go.

Mr. Pallister: Okay, so the child and family services system—now I'm going to run out of time. Look. Look at that. Now I've got four seconds, see? Right? I knew that was going to happen.

Mr. Kinew: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's always a pleasure to see you at work and juggling all the different demands on your role, there.

So I'm looking at the KPMG fiscal performance review—report, and it identifies in section 3.3 areas of opportunity. Number 4, reduce targeted tax credits, and it outlines property tax credits sort of at the top of the list on the first page in this section. Or, not the first page, but one of the early pages in this section. Then the next page kind of walks through some of the rationale for potentially reducing targeted tax credits and says that there's a few options you could reduce; you could phase out tax credits according to this report. And goes on to say in the recommendations part of this that different options for adjusting property tax credits yield a range of potential financial impacts, and should also be assessed in the context of overall education funding. That's a quote, there.

* (15:20)

So I'm aware that the government is undertaking a review of education funding in the province. You know, the Minister of Education's spoken about it a few times, that this review of education funding might look at the way school divisions are organized, but also the way that, you know, the revenue is collected, the way operating grants are distributed to divisions, and a number of other issues.

I think the last update the minister gave publicly was that this report wouldn't come down until after the civic elections next year, so there'd be, presumably, new trustees in place. They didn't want to interfere with any of that process, I guess, was the thinking.

So I'm just wondering, what can the Premier tell me about this balance, I guess, that the KPMG report suggests—you know, taking a look at potentially reducing the scope or scaling back education property tax credits, but also balancing that with the review of overall education funding, because the KPMG report does seem to suggest striking a balance between looking at the tax credits themselves, but then also the overall education funding picture.

So I'm just wondering what the Premier can tell us is going on on that front, whether we can expect to see the Education Property Tax Credit change. Would it potentially be part of a broader education funding change? Where's that at?

Mr. Pallister: So I'll get to that. I'll just finish off by answering the previously asked questions because I like to make sure that I am fulfilling my commitments to the member for undertakings I made.

So the other—just to summarize, and I'm not getting into too much detail on each financial issue, but I did want to summarize some of the areas where we're making, maintaining or increasing our commitments to Churchill and, of course, some of those that I'd mentioned previously. I stopped at the funding for child and family services system, which, of course, is difficult to predict the budgetary lines on. It's kind of a demand-driven function of government services, so what the actual expenditures are versus budgeted can vary.

It's interesting, in budget-making, right, because as you go through each department, some of them, you can control how much you spend; some of them you can't because it depends on the need and depends—and sometimes during the course of a year—I remember in 1995, the federal Liberal government cut our transfer support for health care right in the middle of the year by a significant amount, and all of a sudden, your budget numbers are all out of whack. So I'm just giving categories for that reason because some of these programs are demand-driven, so the nature of the exact amount that would be available is budgeted, but the nature of what would actually be invested is hard to predict.

So the Health operating capital is the next example, and obviously, that's another one where it could be quite different from the budgeted line. Support for the Churchill Northern Studies Centre; UCN's Churchill Regional Centre is in—as the member knows, is in Churchill—University College of the North; support for the Healthy Child programs; the Churchill Parent Child Coalition; Healthy Baby programs; provincial Polar Bear Alert Program is also funded and operates out of Churchill. So those are examples.

The member asked me yesterday concerning Mr. Paul Beauregard, who is the newly—recently hired secretary of Treasury Board, about meetings that I had had with him. And on checking, the meeting date was January the 24th of this year, so, you know, approximately nine months ago. The topic was the Bell-MTS merger.

And I don't have with me the names of the other people in attendance. I believe mister—I don't remember Mr. Beauregard actually speaking at that meeting; I think he was acting more as the

co-ordinator for the people who came to the meeting. One of them was—I think his name is George Core [*phonetic*], who is the head of Bell and was in Winnipeg at the time. So that was the nature of that one.

I would also want to put in context now, to get to the member's inquiries about KPMG—to put into context why we commissioned KPMG—or, tendered, actually, for a review of the fiscal situation, and it was at least in part because of the poison water we've been handed by the previous administration. We had—and when we came into power, we found that we had RHA-projected deficits that had grown significantly to over \$60 million. We had a credit rating downgrade that had happened and another that occurred after we came in as a consequence of previously unaddressed fiscal issues, what could only be described as out-of-control spending without results, and because of that unaddressed effect, our interest rate impact was estimated to be a negative \$30 million. So we had a \$30-million negative impact in that respect.

In terms of the liabilities that had not been previously stated on the east-side road project, which our previous Auditor General's report commented was a massive boondoggle, significant investments to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars with very few miles of road being built—kilometres of road being constructed, and so, even though we knew there were significant liabilities there, there were an additional \$20 million of liabilities that were not previously disclosed or publicized.

We also knew, and this was something that we inherited, that the previous government had raided the Fiscal Stabilization Account to the tune of over \$150 million so that it had gone down from over \$800 million down to about \$100 million.

Mr. Chairperson: The First Minister's time has expired.

Mr. Kinew: It's always a pleasure to watch you in action, Mr. Chair. You seem to perfectly time your interjections with how the First Minister wraps up his statements there—interesting back and forth there.

Anyways, that aside, so just getting back to that KPMG report, some of the recommendations and some of the direction in there, I asked yesterday about the child fitness and cultural tax credits and then today, you know, asking a little bit more about the education property tax credits, so I was curious about the one line in the report that says that

whatever changes are made to the Education Property Tax Credit should be done taking into account overall education funding.

So what can the First Minister tell us about what is being planned in terms of changes to education funding and how that might impact the Education Property Tax Credit?

Mr. Pallister: Well, it is a 254-page report, and so I'll just continue to set the stage on it and then move to the executive summary components so we can put in context the reasons for the report's commissioning.

But I would say this: We inherited a fiscal mess, we inherited a social mess, and we inherited an economic development mess. There was no evident planning or strategy around economics and then development of an economic plan for the province, no developed strategy around how to address some of the major challenges in various social services, such as health care, child care, kids in care, or the diminished competencies of students under various measures reported on by the media. No clear strategy or planning evident, and so, as a consequence, again we inherited rather significant challenges. Of course, I and my colleagues like to embrace our challenges head on, not make people wait while we address them slowly.

And so we are tackling these challenges in each and every category. We are certainly concerned about improving the quality of education. And, of course, shortening wait times had some good news today about initial year-over-year numbers looking about 28 per cent better in ERs than they were a year ago. That's very, very good, but it's just a start. More to be done—much more to be done, in fact.

These bits of progress, though, shine the light of hope on the challenges of change, which I know all of us face in our lives. The reality that change is not easy has been made apparent to me in numerous ways at numerous times in my life, and I endeavour to do a better job, as I get to be an older man, of learning how to accept with grace the challenges that are put in front of me. Challenges of change have to be faced, though, in the context of improving services for Manitobans in each of these categories because, without that acceptance, we will not improve the lives of Manitobans as we should and as we are entrusted to do.

* (15:30)

On the actual FleetNet issue, this is one that stands above I think most others as an example of the

kind of poisoned water we inherited in April of just last year when we came into government, and I've spoken about it before, but it is an extremely illustrative example of the lack of foresight and planning by the previous administration.

And so I know, too, as I say these things, that the member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) has been willing to accept challenges with his application for the position he now holds, that he has demonstrated he's willing to do that and I encourage him to also, since he has accepted the challenges of the position that he applied for now and been graciously rewarded by the members of the New Democratic Party in a secret-ballot vote with the opportunity to be the Leader of the Opposition. I would encourage him also to encourage others in accepting those same challenges, the ones he's accepted in his life, that I've accepted in mine, that others on our side of the House have certainly embraced in the last year and a half since we came into government, because without that willingness to accept those challenges the status quo will prevail and the same old, same old will prevail and this new direction he spoke of in his campaign will not be established.

So we inherited a \$400-million, approximately, perhaps more, mess with the FleetNet situation. Hundreds of millions of dollars of additional challenges in other categories. Additional debt on our provincial debt that had doubled in the previous six fiscal years at a time when interest rates were low—never lower, ever—and the interest rates have already started to rise. There are storm clouds on the horizon.

There's a real danger in terms of housing in our country and we can't just function as a single entity in Manitoba in a silo. We have to function as part of a confederation, part of a global economy, and we have to realize there are real storm clouds up, not just Kim Jong-il and Donald Trump having tweeting matches but—as dangerous as that is—but also things like the housing crisis that may well occur if interest rates rise to any significant degree. There are many people who own houses in our province right now and across the country who have never seen interest rates on their mortgages above 6 per cent in their entire lives. I worked with family farms and small-business people for many years trying to get them out of debt and help them to stop running their businesses just for the banks when the interest rates were 20 per cent. I can remember that, and I think that young people today will be in a state of shock when their \$350,000 mortgages go up by one point,

and we are going to be in a serious dilemma if that happens.

So these are the kinds of things we have to prepare our province for. We have to be ahead of the game and we can't do that by just propping up the past, we can't do that by catering to the same special interests that were catered to for too long.

Mr. Kinew: So I asked a few times whether there's changes planned to the Education Property Tax Credit and didn't hear an answer from the Premier (Mr. Pallister), but he did share yesterday that he'd give, quote, good consideration to the recommendations in the KPMG report. So I guess we'll take it at his word that there'll be good consideration of whether there's changes there to reduce the scope or reduce the amount of the education property tax credit.

I'm curious about the comment the Premier makes about rising interest rates. Would like to know—I think there was a re-org and some of the people who do economic projections for the Province are now in the Department of Finance where they'd previously been in some other parts of government, but I'm sure that the First Minister has access to these projections. I'm curious to know what do the government's internal projections say about where interest rates are headed, like what range in terms of numbers can we expect to see for interest rates in 2018 and 2019.

Mr. Pallister: No, the member's incorrect in that—I know he wasn't asserting, but incorrect in the observation that there was some changes there. The fiscal research functions of government remain in Finance where they've always been.

The—as far as the interest rate aspects are concerned I assure the member—I have some background in this field—that there have never been lower interest rates as was the case over the last year and a half, two years in the history of mankind, and so in fact in some countries they're paying people to borrow money. That's without precedent.

So, you know, again, I want to put things in context because I think that is important to do. I think many times we look at a single issue as is—has been the case in some of the exchanges we've had in question period. A reduction in one category in health care is pointed out as a cut when, in fact, the increase in our budgets over the last two years has exceeded over half a billion dollars, which doesn't look like much of a cut to a common sense person.

So you know, we need to put—sometime pull back to get the real perspective, the true perspective on issues.

I would put this perspective on things: when we came in, there had been five consecutive years of the previous government underestimating their deficits, which had grown in virtually every one of those years. In the six years precedent to us coming in, the government had doubled both its gross and net debt. The debt-service charges, as a consequence, went up. Of course, even though interest rates were low at the time, relative to historical records, they remain a burden and this year we'll surpass \$970 million—it may get up to a billion dollars—for the first time in the province's history.

So, if you care about organizing your own finances, then certainly you should care about organizing the finances of the Province of Manitoba because essentially those are the—those have an impact on the finances of each of us, and of families all across our province, and will as we move forward.

Fundamentally, that ability to manage the funds relates to many other aspects of government operations. They don't operate in insolation. You can't just borrow your way to better health care, that's been tried by the previous administration and it didn't work. You can't borrow your way to better education, and that's been tried by the previous administration and it didn't work. You can't borrow your way to better social services and expect better social services, that's been tried by the previous administration and it didn't work. So what you have to do is look for better ways to do things and you have to look at doing it sustainably and well with the resources that you are given, not just with resources you borrow.

We've allowed—over the last few years—our provincial government to put a burden on future generations that's without precedent—at a pace that is without precedent. And now we will pay the price for that in addition to all the other uncertainties we have to face. In addition to the potential for a housing downturn, in potential—for the—in consideration and in addition to the very real considerations of additional interest rates being imposed on us which will cost us. Not just in terms of our additional borrowing requirements—which are monumental—but in terms of the servicing of our debt as it renews.

Each of these factors and many others, such as global uncertainty, such as the fact this is the second longest bull market since the Second World War, which means a recession could be a lot closer than we think in terms of the overall stock situations that many investors use for their retirement funds, and for their security financially against emergencies, and so on and so forth. All of these factors are real. They've been real for a while, they've just been ignored by the previous administration and they can't be ignored any longer.

So I have to put that in context when the man who represents the leadership of the NDP asks me about one specific aspect of what we might consider in a report which is—how many pages long? Two hundred and seventy pages approximately, with 150 recommendations. He asks me about one comment from KPMG about looking at tax credits. Well yes, we're open minded to looking at options because we have to. Because to be afraid to do that—for whatever reason—would mean we'd be preserving the status quo, and the status quo isn't working. It hasn't worked for a while.

And Manitobans, of course, voted for change and they voted for a change that would fix their finances, repair their services, and rebuild their economy, and that's the kind of change they're going to get. I would also add to the context of this for the member—how many, how much time do I have there Mr. Chair?

Mr. Chairperson: Twenty.

Mr. Pallister: Twenty—got real, fast.

There were five consecutive years before we came in, where the previous government not only projected massive deficits, it underestimated them too. So they collectively came in at over \$1.1 billion more than they had projected.

Mr. Kinew: Just one last bit of questioning. Before this committee took the break over the summer, I think there was a lengthy, lengthy discussion about the Premier's communication habits while he's in Costa Rica. I don't want to revisit all of those questions again, but there was one question that I did have left unanswered when I was looking at that.

I was just wondering, the private email account that was used by the Premier to share his government documents while he was in Costa Rica—what kind of account was that? Was that like a Gmail account, or a Hotmail account, or was it an MTS account?

* (15:40)

Mr. Pallister: It was an MTS account.

Just to finish my available time here, I have to share with the member that the additional debt—and this is almost unbelievable, but it's important to understand: the additional debt over and above the projected NDP deficits for the five years before we came in that they incurred simply with out-of-control expenditure—that run-up was \$1.1 billion; \$1.1 billion of—in five years, cumulatively, where they actually overspent their budget line. Now, their budget line was moving away from balance by itself. This \$1.1 billion pointed it even further away.

The member has spoken about compassion. I want to say to him there is nothing compassionate about out-of-control expenditures. On the little farm where I grew up, our parents worked very, very hard to make sure our expenditures were not out of control because, if they were, it jeopardized their future and the future of their children. One point one billion dollars over five years—a doubling of the debt over the previous six years, all handed to future generations. And much of it will be repaid by young people who haven't even had the chance to work yet, or vote. That's not compassionate. That's not fair. That's not right. It'd be like taking your friends all out for a nice dinner at a fancy restaurant, and then handing the bill to baby in the high chair at the end of the table. That's just not fair.

Expenditure growth every year exceeded revenue growth. Without changing the course of the previous government's actions, the deficit would have hit \$1.7 billion by '19-20 fiscal. One point seven billion. I repeat: \$1.7-billion deficit. That's taxes that are deferred. That's all it is. A deficit is not that hard to understand. It's a tax that hasn't been paid yet that's going to have to get paid. That's what a deficit is. It adds to your accumulated debt. Then you have to service it. You have to pay interest on it. The interest rates are the lowest they've been in humanity's history, so where do you think those interest rates are going to go?

So this is what we inherited; ballooning net debt, an 11.4 per cent annual increase. Eleven point four per cent annual increase in our net debt over the five years prior to us coming to government. At this pace, Manitoba's net debt would have climbed to almost \$41 billion by 2021-22. Forty-one billion dollars of debt.

Now, the parliamentary budget office just issued a report two weeks ago and said the federal government's awash in cash—this same federal government that cut our health-care transfer growth, which I still encourage the member opposite to adopt a new position for the NDP and support us in trying to fight for health care and a fair partnership—used to be that health care was funded 50-50 and the federal government dropped it to 25 under Paul Martin. Now it's at 19. And, if you believe David Dodge's report from last year, it's dropping to below 15 pretty fast.

So what they used to be was an equal partner to health care. Then they become a junior partner. Now they're a mini partner. And soon they're going to be a mini-me, mini-me partner. Like, they're dropping out of sight and they're telling us in Manitoba how we should spend the money.

So I would encourage the member, as we did today—and I appreciated his support for the bill on assisted dying very much. I think that was a thoughtful decision, and I admire it. But I do think we should also be standing together for health care. We should be standing together to have the federal government do its part. Not let them run away.

I've been trying to get the Prime Minister to have a face-to-face with the premiers. You know when the last meeting was on health care, the No. 1 priority? The last Prime Minister's meeting with the premiers on this issue was 2002. This is not acceptable. Absolutely not. And health care is a top priority. And we deserve to have a partner that steps up to the plate. Not just to take credit when it directs funding for a specific program, but to be a real partner in supporting health care. Our needs are growing; our population is aging. We need this partnership. And I really encourage the members on the NDP—I think we could really do a lot—I think they have a real good chance to add to our unity on this issue and take the position that the federal Liberal government is wrong on this issue. Politically, I don't think it would hurt them in any way, shape or form. But, more importantly, I think our voices joined together on this issue—I think it would be a very powerful message to send to the federal government.

Most other provincial governments are Liberal governments right now, and so they aren't going to say—they don't want to say anything. It appears that they're willing to almost genuflect before the Prime Minister. We're not, and we're standing up for health care. And I want the members of the NDP to do the

same here in Manitoba. I think we can effectively make a difference.

Mr. Kinew: We don't mind saying the Liberals are wrong—the Premier (Mr. Pallister) might like to hear that—but then we usually like to follow that up by saying the Conservatives are wrong, too. So it's a kind of a little one-two punch we have going on. Third way.

But the—like, on a more serious note, the Premier might, you know, he—I guess he doesn't get an update on—a brief of every scrum recording that his staffers in their various departments do, but I did—I do actually agree that the federal government should be doing more when it comes to health transfers.

On the medical assistance in dying front, you know, my colleagues deserve a lot of credit for that; it was very thoughtful discussion that we had around the caucus table, and there are people who come at it from a variety of perspectives. Some people have strong religious convictions; others have experiences born out of real life that have driven them to certain places; and still others are advocating on behalf of constituents, what they've heard. And we know that this issue is one that is resonating with many people as they share emails and letters with many of our offices on this issue. So we did deliberate on this one, and, you know, we arrived at the position we articulated today.

But, again, I think there needs to be a balance, a balance between the rights of a conscientious objector, their religious freedom, and the need to have access to fulfill the Charter rights of some individuals who, when they are of sound mind and they have had access to good palliative care and mental health services, may seek to end their suffering in a way that is consistent with the laws of this country. And so I would like to see that balance. It's a more nuanced position than we can sometimes arrive at in a world of Twitter and headline news, but it is a more realistic discussion.

I take seriously, you know, the Premier's comments today and in this committee. I do disagree with him on the nature of the challenge in health care. I do recognize that there is a sustainability challenge in the health-care system. There's an issue in our province with many Manitobans having unique and complex medical needs. There's renal health, there's diabetes, there's MS. There's other conditions that many Manitobans have. There's also the aging baby boomer population. And this is

driving more and more demands on our health-care system.

But what I see in the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) approach, driven by, in some cases, reports, but also on his own decisions, is that he seems to be assuming that the driver of costs in our health-care system is just the number of nurses and doctors and health-care aides and physiotherapists that we have working. But I think that we ought to, in our analysis, step back from that and recognize that the real driver of costs in our health-care system is the underlying wellness of people in our society.

And the more that we can do to keep people healthy at home, the more that we can do to help seniors, prevent themselves from being reinjured, the more that we can do to help a young kid in northern Manitoba eat a healthy diet of fresh food so that they don't have to drink pop every day, the more that we're going to have a stronger quality of life for all Manitobans, the more that we're going to have an ability to have everyone reach their full potential; but also, in the long run, and in the medium term, we will see a reduction in the demands on our health-care system. So that's the approach that I advocate for: is one that sees us invest in mental health, in enhanced Pharmacare and also in primary prevention—diet, exercise, nutrition, injury prevention—so that we can reinvest the savings in the medium- and long-term in acute-care services.

So, with that little spiel done, the—I'd like to present a motion.

I move, that line item 2.1.(a) be amended so that the Premier's salary be reduced to \$50,000–\$50,400.

*(15:50)

Mr. Chairperson: At this point, we request that the minister's staff leave the table for consideration of this last item.

The staff has left the room, so it has been moved by the honourable member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Kinew) that line item 2.1.(a) be amended so that the Premier's salary be reduced to \$50,400.

The motion is in order. Are there any questions or comments on the motion?

Mr. Kinew: Just make a brief comment, I know it's sometimes the practice to reduce a first minister or minister's salary to \$1 but we thought that this is a more reasonable request. It does recognize that there is extra work, significant extra work being done by the Premier, but also brings his salary back down to

the level that it might have been prior to the last election.

Mr. Pallister: Well, this is going to cut into my ability to buy tickets for that raffle and I think it's actually going to reduce the profitability of the raffle. I just want to put that on the record.

Mr. Chairperson: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Chairperson: Shall the motion pass?

Some Honourable Members: Pass.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Chairperson: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed to the motion, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kinew: Mr. Chair, I would request a recorded vote in the Chamber.

Mr. Chairperson: A formal vote has been requested by the member.

This section of the Committee of Supply will now recess in order to allow this matter to be reported and for members to proceed to the Chamber for the vote.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*(15:00)

Madam Chairperson (Sarah Guillemard): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply will now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Sustainable Development.

As previously agreed, questioning for this department will proceed in a global manner.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Greg Selinger (St. Boniface): We were on the threshold of new understanding of the plight of the loon in terms of its reproductive barriers, and one of which was explained to us was the ingestion of lead as—in amounts as small as one ounce in terms of fishing sinkers, and the minister was endeavouring—just beginning to launch into a very thorough answer, as I recall. And I wanted to give her the opportunity to explain that factor as well as other factors that may be hampering the ability to ensure the survivability of the iconic Canadian loon.

*(15:10)

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): So I want to thank the members opposite for bringing this issue to this table, and I do have to say I'm quite grateful for the opportunity to actually learn a little bit about the challenges that do exist from within our loon population and the reproductive barriers that exist for the loon population. And our government is very concerned with whatever we can do to ensure that their populations—the populations of these iconic Canadian loons remain healthy, not just for now, but well into the future.

And so our starting point in this regard is our partnership with the Canadian Wildlife Service. We do look to our federal counterparts for guidance on this issue, and particularly the issue with the loon because they are a migratory bird. We do have—you know, it's a nation-wide conversation as well as an international conversation, and as members know—that these loons wouldn't—would be heading down south for warmer climates in the winter, and where they land, their wintering grounds, are not always soil that would be—or environments that would be as clean as our Canadian environment.

For example, their wintering grounds are often in the Gulf of Mexico and other tropical zones that don't have the same environmental standards as Canada and have also seen many contributing factors to the toxicity in their environment that would have an effect or an impact on our Canadian loons.

And so we—we are working with Canadian Wildlife Service, the federal entity that—they are looking at this across Canada. And we also know that what we have been told by the Canadian Wildlife Service is that the science is very unsettled in their view, in terms of what is putting stress on the loon populations. The ingesting the lead is something that is being looked at across the country with our federal colleagues and other jurisdictions in this

country to see if there is something that could be done. But, first of all, we certainly do want to have sound science that would guide us and guide any decision that we would make on focusing on how we can stabilize our loon populations.

So that really is the first point, is to find a—really look at the science and have a conclusive answer as to what is hindering the populations of the loon.

And the other thing that we do know that is harming our loons, is the increase in pleasure boats, I guess, coming close to shores. These—the loons do nest along the shorelines. In quiet bays, is where they prefer, and the increase in pleasure-boating would put strain in those areas. That pleasure boat could come along and create a lot of waves that would destabilize the area. Perhaps the loon would leave the nest, leaving their eggs in the nest unattended, which of course puts those eggs at a greater risk for predators and other ill consequences.

So we do think that the traffic in these bays, the increased traffic of pleasure-boating in the bays where the loons like to nest certainly does put strain on them and their reproductive cycle. The noise levels might just push them away from nest frequently, and we know anybody who's been on a—in a bay or on a shore at a popular lake destination in Manitoba, and while we're immensely proud of our parks and our lakes and we enjoy that lifestyle, we also know that there's—those pressures that the pleasure boats certainly could be affecting the loon populations.

So thank you for that question.

Mr. Selinger: One more follow-up for the minister: The minister has said that there could be at least three factors. There could be the environment that they're wintering in in terms of the Mexican—or the gulf and Mexican coast, and that their circumstances may be more challenging for survival there in terms of pollution. We've seen that with the recent hurricanes and some of the damage done there and the hydrocarbons, quite frankly, which have been released, and the pollution that's been released.

She also mentioned the problems with boating and how that could disturb their natural habitats for nesting in Manitoba or anywhere in Canada, for that matter.

*(15:20)

But the third factor that was identified was the use of lead in fishing lures and equipment and

sinkers, et cetera. And even though other—there are other alternative products that are available, lead still is used frequently because it's inexpensive, and they had said that it's down to one ounce now.

In terms of—even though the science is still unsettled in terms of the total complex of factors which are affecting their reproductive capacity, wouldn't it be prudent, and I ask if the 'minist'—what our current rules are and what we might do to prevent lead entering the—literally, the gullets of loons, or the stomachs of loons.

If we could eliminate that one factor even while we're pursuing these other factors, wouldn't that be something that would be wise to do in taking one risk factor away from their health? And I ask the minister, through her officials, if that's something that we might do as a jurisdiction in Canada and then encourage other jurisdictions to do it as well, and we could be a leader in that regard, because there's many, many substitute products already out there which are much safer for the loon and other species.

Ms. Squires: So I can confirm for the member that, of course, my department—we will be watching the science on this as it becomes available and dialoguing with experts on this issue, not just experts here or in my department but experts throughout the country on what we can do to be working towards ensuring a healthy loon population for now and into our future generations.

What we are not going to do is begin to get ahead of the science and impose measures or regulations that may or may not have a rooting in science, and by that I mean we don't want to do things that could possibly harm the population more than help the population if we are using unscientific guidance towards those decisions. So the one thing that I can assure members opposite is that our government is certainly looking to employ experts and use that knowledge that comes from the experts to tell us and guide the decisions and the policies of our department.

And just for a few reference points on areas where we think that it would have made a difference, perhaps, if the scientists and the experts had been engaged as opposed to stifled or ignored by previous administration. For example, when the decision was made to dump a half a million dollars of potash in Lake Winnipeg to stop the spread of zebra mussels. We know that that wasn't effective. It was not an effective use of dollars; it wasn't an effective use in terms of implementing measures that would help

Lake Winnipeg. It did nothing to reduce the spread of the aquatic invasive species by that point and, therefore, that is one example where, you know, policies—bad policies can lead to further destruction of the environment, and we're just not prepared to be getting ahead of the science and the experts.

Another example is in 2014 when members opposite commissioned a report from the University of Manitoba to say, you know what, can we take a look at these anaerobic digesters. We imposed this on industry; we think maybe we don't have it right, or I'm not sure what the rationale was for commissioning the 2014 study with the U of M on anaerobic digesters, but one thing is clear is that when the experts came out and said, you know what, anaerobic digesters simply do not work in our climate. They don't have any benefit whatsoever in this climate, and that would lead to the conclusion that perhaps this regulation should be not imposed upon industry. That science, we know, was recycled or discarded.

So that is something that we're not going to be doing in our department. We're going to be taking a science-based approach to all of our policies and decisions to ensure that we protect our environment, that we protect our—all the species and really also protect the people that call Manitoba their home.

Mr. James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview): The minister—as you know, for several months now I've been asking for your department to release the Finnigan report on Parker wetlands. That report was commissioned by our government in about March of 2015 and released—*[interjection]*—'16, thank you. And then I think was received by your department sometime in June or July 2016. It's about 15 months later.

Would you be willing to release that report?

* (15:30)

Ms. Squires: So I can confirm for the member that I'll table that report on Monday, and it will be posted on the registry as well on Monday. The reason it hasn't been done any sooner is simply our legal—there was an—a legal opinion of some stuff that may need to be redacted. There's a personal email address in that report, and, of course, we don't want to violate anyone's personal information, so some discussions amongst the legal authority in terms of how to redact this information.

There was also one particular paragraph that our legal counsel had flagged that possibly could

jeopardize some other ongoing discussions before the courts, and so we likely would then err on the side of caution and redact that one small paragraph. But, otherwise, that report will be released in full. It'll be put on the public registry and tabled in the House on Monday for your review.

Mr. Allum: I have to say I greatly appreciate that. And I don't know what's in it. All's I know is that 49 people who put themselves on the line to try to defend an area with great ecological integrity, and that has—clearly has meaning to the Metis nation as well, find themselves in litigation, and my hope has always been that there would be a political rather a litigated resolution to an issue around a valuable green space.

And I'm sorry that I never got the chance to take you out and show it because it really is quite an extraordinary, if smaller, kind of place. I mean, it's not Assiniboine Forest, but it's still 50 acres, and it's still a fabulous place to be and to commune with nature. And, because it does seem to have an indigenous connection as well, from my point of view, it's the kind of place that's worth preserving in an otherwise concrete jungle that we live in.

So I don't know what's in that report, but we were always hoping to find something that might keep it from being—providing a more community-based political solution as to having people of good conscience on the end of a lawsuit for which they don't, in my opinion, don't deserve, nor do they deserve any kind of record or fine as a result of a legitimate, in my view, civil protest about an important ecological space.

So I greatly appreciate that and turn the questioning back over.

Mr. Selinger: To the minister, I'm just waiting for Rob to catch his breath.

On your—I just wondered if the minister was aware that when she made the comments about the anaerobic digesters—as I recall, the legislation said, anaerobic 'igesters' or an equivalent technology. In other words, it didn't restrict them to one type of technology, but it was an attempt to get a standard there that would protect the land, and they could have used any other scientifically proven or—technology or equivalent that would achieve a similar level of results.

Was the member aware of that dimension of the legislation?

* (15:40)

Ms. Squires: So I do appreciate that, of course, the legislation did say that an equivalent technology could be substituted for the anaerobic digesters, but I'm sure members opposites' also aware that that equivalent technology doesn't really exist in our climate. Our experts had done a cross-jurisdictional scan, looked all throughout the country and found something that would help, that would be that equivalent technology and in our climate it simply does not exist.

And I know that members opposite were on a plan to, you know, not take serious action on reducing climate change effects. And possibly if members opposite had continued down the road of a—with their climate plan, perhaps in a few years we would achieve a climate in which these anaerobic digesters would be effective. But, as of right now in the climate that we have here in North America and in Manitoba, the anaerobic digesters don't work and the equivalent technology—there again I rely on the experts. I have tremendous regard for the experts, not just the ones around the table, but all the experts that the Department of Sustainable Development depends on on a regular basis to make decisions and make policy. So when they have come back to me and said, you know, we've done a cross-jurisdictional scan and that technology certainly is not—there's not a suitable alternative to these anaerobic digesters. I'm inclined to believe them.

It seems as though perhaps member opposite, they're familiar with the fairy tale of Cinderella. It's like, Cinderella, you can go to the ball once you've done all of these chores; once you've met all these requirements, you can go to the ball knowing that it's just really, you know, a nonachievable goal that is set before her to actually get her way. And that seems to be the case with members opposite in putting that alternative method in the legislation knowing that there wasn't any alternative solution to the anaerobic digesters.

And I do believe that if the University of Manitoba experts, who had been commissioned by members opposite, to find out whether or not these anaerobic digesters were effective or not, I'm certain that they would have, you know, flagged something that could have been used as an alternative. They had quickly just ascertained that these digesters were not an effective alternative, and at that point, you know, I know members opposite just recycled the report and didn't do anything with the regulations.

So we are looking at methods to—science-based methods and science-based evidence really to manage our entire department. We are being led by science and will certainly continue down that path, because what's at stake is just too important. We can't let our environment, our climate and our entire way of life be jeopardized by solutions that don't work, that don't have any fundamental purpose other than—well I don't even want to speculate what the fundamental purpose was—and really are not effective and do not result in the consequences or the—they just don't achieve the results as perhaps initially intended.

Mr. Selinger: So could the minister then tell us what the department is recommending which will address the issue?

* (15:50)

Ms. Squires: I appreciate the question regarding how we're essentially going to control nutrients on the soil and how we can prevent an overload of those nutrients from spilling into our waterways. That is a fundamental challenge that our government is rising to. We are—there are certain measures that are in place that will remain in place; that includes a ban on winter spreading. We are also looking at various soil types and soil analysis before we allow—before we sign off on the manure management plans, we ensure that the soil can actually—would benefit from those nutrients that would be applied from the manure. And we have, with our manure management plans that do look at—do the soil analysis before allowing the manure to be applied, we have—some of these protections are the most stringent protections in North America in terms of how to appropriately apply the manure and ensure that the soil can absorb and benefit from those nutrients.

So all of those measures exist in legislation and will continue to exist in the framework. Now, what we're doing on top of that is a really exciting initiative that my department is really pleased to be spearheading along with my colleague, the Minister from Agriculture, on how we can improve outcomes in our watersheds. And we really do believe that having a comprehensive watershed system is going to be a tremendous part of the solution in ensuring that we don't have a significant runoff into our lakes and streams, which, of course, then would not only increase the nutrients, but there are several other products in the manure that we would like to be maintained; there's better benefit for it to stay on the

soil as opposed to running off into the lakes and streams.

And so what we're doing is working proactively with farmers, and I know that several farmers in my conversations thus far and other folks—Delta Waterfowl and other stakeholder groups that are interested in ensuring that we have appropriate—a watershed strategy in the province—I know they're very excited about it. And they did participate, a lot of them, in a consultation that I had just concluded on October the 4th, I believe, or maybe it was October 6th. But it was on a real holistic approach to watershed management where we're looking at realigning our conservation districts to the watershed boundaries to ensure that we've got some efficiencies there and also looking at drainage, the issue of drainage, and our watershed management program, which is based on the Alternative Land Use Services, which is ALUS, and it is essentially about securing the ecological services and goods for the benefit of all Manitobans, and from the consultation document, if members opposite—and I hope that they had read it, because it's—again, it's a non-partisan document. It's an issue about how we can really protect our land and conserve—get the most benefit of our land while protecting our waterways. So I hope that members opposite had read this document, but I won't make that assumption, and so I will provide a little bit of a summary of what is in this document.

But this initiative is based on the Alternative Land Use Services model. And it is—we've called it the GRowing Outcomes in Watersheds. And it's a program that will help to reduce the impacts of flooding and reduce nutrient loading. Now, that is a real key factor here, that this program will have an impact on nutrient loading. It will also improve water quality and protect our wetlands and some of the other side effects.

So that addresses the piece about how we're going to manage nutrient loading. But the—another benefit is that it will mitigate the effects of drought and protect our drinking water sources in partnership with land owners. And I can—I see I'm going to be out of time, so I will finish providing that information in my next answer.

Madam Chairperson: Mr. Altemeyer—

Order, please.

A formal vote has been requested in another section of the Committee of Supply. I am therefore recessing this section of Committee of Supply in

order for members to proceed to the Chamber for a formal vote.

JUSTICE

* (15:00)

Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Pivniuk): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of Committee of Supply will now resume the consideration for the Estimates for the Department of Justice. At this time, I invite the ministerial and the opposition staff to enter the Chamber.

I would now ask the minister to introduce her staff in attendance today.

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): My deputy minister, David Wright, and our ADM of admin and finance, Maria Campos, and we have David Greening with us as well.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. Now I'll ask the critic to introduce her staff.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): This is Emily Coutts.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you.

Okay, we'll—as previously agreed, questioning for this department will proceed in a global manner. The floor is now open for questions.

Ms. Fontaine: So I just kind of wanted to go back on our discussion in respect of cannabis again. And I know that there's been some discussion in respect of the supply, and I know that there's been some comments made in respect of supply, but also kind of disseminating our business plan and giving gangs and criminal organizations—

Would the minister just explain or elaborate a little bit on some of the concerns coming out of that?

Mrs. Stefanson: You know, the member raises a really good question and this is something that is under the purview, actually, of the federal government. So we are waiting on the—we're waiting for the federal government to make that decision, who will be the licence producers for medical—or for, sorry, recreational marijuana.

We do know that currently, there are suppliers for medical marijuana and producers for medical marijuana right now, but there's not enough supply there to be able to supply both the medical as well as

the recreational marijuana once it becomes legalized with just the existing producers. So—and of course, if we look at where many of those producers exist now, they're concentrated in areas that are not necessarily in Manitoba.

I'm not positive, but I think there's maybe two producers of medical marijuana in Manitoba right now. Delta 9 and there's one other. I can't recall the specific name of it. But we're waiting on the federal government to indicate who those producers will be and we will be obligated to purchase from one of those producers that is licensed by the federal government.

So that's not a decision that we make; it's a decision that they make.

Ms. Fontaine: So could the minister just expand a little bit—I guess the second part of my question was in respect of—kind of that narrative that—or, you know, what was kind of shared in respect of gangs and criminal activity. So I just want to kind of explore that a little bit. That was noted, I guess just on maybe Monday by the Premier (Mr. Pallister) in respect of—I think the—it was something to the effect of giving out our business plan to gangs and criminal elements or whatever.

So if the minister would be so kind as just to expand on that and what are the real concerns in respect of that.

Mrs. Stefanson: Yes.

No, the member raises a good point, and what our concern is, is in obviously what we want to do—is—keep this out of organized gangs and those people from further distributing this on the black market.

We want to ensure that—the pricing is going to be key on this. So—and it starts with, you know, you'll have to buy it from producers and then depending on the distribution model that's used, the idea is that you don't want to price yourself out of the market, so to speak, because if the price is higher with the recreational marijuana that is legalized, it will then drive people to the black market.

* (15:10)

So I believe that was his concern, is just on the pricing to ensure that, you know, we've got one chance—this is a significant public policy change for our country and we've got, you know, sort of one chance to get this right.

Ms. Fontaine: When does the government expect to issue—well, actually, before I do that, let me just follow-up on what would the minister consider and—as best as possible—consider a good price based on some case files across the country. So what would the minister consider a good price for that?

Mrs. Stefanson: I thank the member for the question.

And, you know, this does go across with other government departments, as well, who are responsible for different areas. So Growth, Enterprise and Trade is involved and Finance is involved on the taxation side, and we, primarily, in Justice are focusing on the public health and safety side. But certainly, when we're looking at—I mean, we do look at things as a whole government approach and the concern here is that we can't price ourselves out of the market; otherwise, you're driving people to that illicit market. And so, we have to take into consideration all of these components, and I don't have the price of all those components at my fingertips. But that's something that will be explored as part of moving forward with a distribution plan and developing a public safety and health plan as well.

Ms. Fontaine: Can the minister advise whether or not she or her colleagues are considering distributing it through a Crown corporation?

Mrs. Stefanson: I thank the member for the question.

And certainly the member will recall that we came out—we did a fairly extensive online survey for Manitobans. We also—I also had the opportunity to do a virtual town hall where we had upwards of—I think it was close to almost six or seven thousand people on the call at one point in time during the evening. It was about an hour and a half long and we took questions from members of the public and it was an excellent dialogue. We got some great feedback from Manitobans on that. And then our online survey as well—I think we got close to—we touched close to 37,000 Manitobans, and that continues to grow with our online survey as well.

So we've heard from many, many, many Manitobans, and I think the Premier (Mr. Pallister), we did announce when we spoke about the consultation process in—specific in the area of cannabis, we—the Premier mentioned that we'll be rolling out that distribution network within the next

few weeks. So stay tuned, and we will—and again, I mean, this is—it's not—my area is sort of more the public health and safety side and so that, the rest of it, will be rolled out in due course.

Ms. Fontaine: Miigwech to the minister for that response.

Can the minister advise how many adults are at each provincial facility—provincial jail as of right now?

Mrs. Stefanson: I thank the member for the question. And as of this morning, our numbers were: at Brandon correctional, 316.

This is for adults—yes, this is for adults only. I think that's what you asked.

In Dauphin, 67; in Headingley, 833; at Milner Ridge, 544; in The Pas, 161; in women's, 260; and in the Winnipeg Remand Centre, 263.

So that's for a total of 2,444.

Ms. Fontaine: I'm not sure if you would have this, but I'm just curious if we have numbers—so, the exact same numbers for each of those—or not the exact same numbers, but for each of those facilities, would we have the numbers for last year at this time?

I don't know what it's about, but—

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister.

* (15:20)

Mrs. Stefanson: Yes, just in comparison—we look at the 2016-17 average numbers at 2,454.

Mr. Chairperson: Could you repeat?

Mrs. Stefanson: Do you want me to repeat it?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please.

Mrs. Stefanson: Yes. That's 2,454 total. I don't have for—the breakdown for each individual, but that's the average for the 2016-17 year.

Ms. Fontaine: And to be clear, it's just not possible to get on this particular day last year those numbers, because this is average, right?

Mrs. Stefanson: I can endeavour to get that information for the member. So just to clarify, so on this day last year—there's a loge over there. Sorry.

Just to clarify, so it's this day last year and what the numbers were, okay. We can endeavour to get that. We don't have it here right now but we'll get it to you, yes.

Ms. Fontaine: Yes, just—yes, exactly. Just to have a snapshot to see what those numbers look like. So that would be appreciated, I appreciate that.

And so in respect of, and I suppose that it would be also the same question, but today's numbers in respect of youth, but then also next year again for you.

Mrs. Stefanson: Yes, so the youth numbers, the Agassiz Youth Centre, as of this morning, the number was 88, and the Manitoba Youth Centre is 111. And we can endeavour to get the other information for the member later along with those other numbers.

Ms. Fontaine: I appreciate that. So, and I'm not sure if—I mean, I imagine that this is obviously possible but I'm not sure if you have the information right now, but I'm wondering if the minister would be able to tell us, you know, of all these facilities what are the numbers for individuals that are actually waiting for court appearances or on remand versus sentencing.

Mrs. Stefanson: What I could do for right now is just give the percentages overall, if that would be helpful to the member.

So, across the adult centres, 29 per cent are currently sentenced and 70 per cent—so it's a 30, 70, I guess, roughly 29, 70, you know, sort of. Those are the round numbers.

And it was the adult you were looking for, or both?

And on the youth side, 37 per cent are sentenced and 60 per cent are on remand, and 3 per cent are federally sentenced.

Ms. Fontaine: Miigwech for those numbers.

So, is there a—kind of like a median time frame in which people are on remand and waiting? Like, is there—I'm just wondering what the—the median time frame for waiting in correctional facilities.

Mrs. Stefanson: I assume you're looking for the average number of days for the last year that people are waiting on remand?

Ms. Fontaine: Yes

Mrs. Stefanson: So, in adult sentenced custody, the average sentencing time period is 51 days, and in the adult remand custody the average time spent is 54 days.

Ms. Fontaine: So, is the—or, what has the minister done, or what is the minister planning on doing in an attempt to reduce the length of time that people are in correctional facilities waiting for sentencing?

* (15:30)

Mrs. Stefanson: It's—you know, it's a great question and could probably go on for quite some time about this. But I will just recap.

Much of this we have discussed in other days here with you in justice, but we have our preliminary inquiry reform, which is part of it. Of course, you know we are still waiting on the federal government with respect to those changes, and we're hoping that will come forward fairly soon.

We have our ICAP program, which is our intensive case assessment process, which is essentially early assessment by our Crown prosecutors in the process to divert cases, perhaps through to restorative justice, or making those decisions early on in the process to help manoeuvre them through the system.

And, of course, we've got our restorative justice initiatives. We've got our preventative justice initiatives—so the Block by Block—Thunderwing, those organizations as well. I think we spoke fairly at length; maybe not as much as we could, but certainly about restorative justice initiatives. And we also talked about the responsible reintegration program into—which is those who are incarcerated—finding more responsible ways of reintegrating them back into society.

Ms. Fontaine: Miigwech for that. And yes, we did kind of go over some of that.

But I just want to—what prevention and harm-reduction programs has the minister or the department funded or created to specifically reduce overcrowding in jails?

Mrs. Stefanson: I'm just wondering, can the member—I just couldn't quite hear. I may have to put my earpiece in here. I couldn't hear the beginning part of your question.

Ms. Fontaine: Sorry, I'll speak louder. Sorry about that. What prevention or—and/or harm reduction programs has the department funded or created specifically to reduce overcrowding in jails?

* (15:40)

Mrs. Stefanson: It's a great question.

Pretty much all of our programming right now is going towards trying to reduce the number of people who are in our provincial jails, our incarceration rate.

We understand the significance of that, and so there are many, many programs. I could go through all of the programs, but there are many of them, and certainly I could do that if the member opposite wants me to.

Ms. Fontaine: Oh. I'm sorry. I'm getting tired. Sorry. I'm a tired turtle, sorry.

You know what, actually we're good. We can go back to that.

I kind of just want to have a little bit of a discussion on whether or not the department is working with the feds or with any of, you know, our First Nation communities or actually any of our First Nation organizations in respect of section 81 and 84. And I'm just wondering of the correctional—the corrections and conditional release act, so I'm just wondering if there's any work being done in concert in respect of that.

Mrs. Stefanson: I believe what the member is referring to is the federal laws that govern federal corrections facilities. So those are exclusive to the federal corrections facilities, and then we have our own laws here.

So it is separate. And I'm not sure, I mean, maybe if the member wants to clarify further what other information she's looking for.

Ms. Fontaine: Yes. No, certainly I recognize that that's federal, but there—and I recall—and, again, it's many years back—that's it's been a very difficult process to get those provisions in place or those agreements in place in respect of, you know, getting indigenous offenders—I hate that word, but getting them back into the community. And, actually, I recall that there were a couple of our PTOs that were looking at trying to lobby the Province, and I can't really remember what happened there.

So I was just wondering if there was any work being done, and, again, recognizing—I fully recognize and appreciate it is a federal, but there was several years back—because one of the complaints about, you know, 81 and 84 is it's so difficult to obtain. They're so difficult to get, and so when we have such an overpopulation federally, provincially, right—so we've got these provisions within the code but people can't actually access them, right. Either the criteria in the community is you don't have the infrastructure to

bring a person back, all of these things. So, like I said, I do remember at some point there was some discussion about trying to, again, in some capacity engage the Province.

Again, that was a lot of years ago and so I was just wondering if there was any kind of research or analysis or anything going on in the department in respect of 81 and 84.

Mrs. Colleen Mayer, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair

Mrs. Stefanson: I just thank the member for the question.

There's been no specific reach out or anything from the federal government with respect to what the member's asking but certainly I think what she's wanting to know as well is how are we working to ensure that we're dealing with the overrepresentation of the indigenous population in our jail system as well and certainly one of the things that we're—that we are starting with is this responsible reintegration program into society to ensure that the supports are there for those that need them. Before—rather than just opening up the doors and people are leaving, what was happening in the past is in many cases the reincarceration rate is significant and so what we want to do is obviously—the recidivism rate is significant.

So we want to reduce that likelihood of those people re-entering our jail system and so we're working with people in the indigenous community as well as other programs to ensure that we find a responsible way to appropriately reintegrate these people back into society. So those are some of the initiatives that we're taking now, which we think—and it's working through Probation Services and a realignment of our Probation Services to allow for this and we think this is key to get people back into the community as quickly as we can in a responsible fashion.

Ms. Fontaine: So, actually, I remember a couple years back—again, many years back, when I had far less grey hair—but I remember there—one of the things that we—the courts don't necessarily utilize as well in respect of—you know, as robustly as could be used is Gladue, and so, you know—and that's another piece in respect of sentencing and the over-incarceration of our people, right.

* (15:50)

So I remember years back participating just over here at law courts and it was a young woman who—where was she—she was either at Portage, old Portage, or Remand. Actually, she was at Portage. I remember this, and so I was asked to try and just, you know, advocate and—or, you know, come in support, and, man, it was—they—so it was an attempt by her lawyer to facilitate some Gladue process in respect of her sentencing and it was so inadequately done and I remember here was this—she was an indigenous woman. She suffered from all kinds of trauma. She was in there for, you know, multiple breaches stemming from a, you know, an original charge and all of these things and the response was so egregious.

And I remember the prosecutor at the time, because here was this really disenfranchised woman who came to jail and I remember his—she was starting to talk about, you know, the, you know, all of the conditions in which she finds herself, right, like all of those issues that kind of led up to this particular moment.

And I remember the prosecutor—which her lawyer didn't do a good job facilitating that discussion, right, so that the judge has a more thorough opportunity at an adequate or a fair sentencing, and I remember so clearly the prosecutor going like this, ah, and throwing himself on the desk when she started to talk about, you know, the multiple sexual abuse and the multiple traumas, and all of these things. And what it really illustrated for me is that most people don't know or appreciate or understand Gladue.

And so I'm just wondering—and which is such a key in respect of really situating folks to understand, you know, the over-incarceration of our people and the reason why this is the reality that we're facing across the country.

And so I'm just wondering if the department has done any more work in that regard so that—and, in fact, there are many, many defence lawyers that don't even produce a Gladue report at all. So it is this piece of that sentencing regime that is kind of omitted.

And so I'm just wondering if the department is doing anything on that.

Report

Mr. Dennis Smook (Chairperson of the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in room 254): Madam Chairperson, in the section of Committee of Supply meeting in room 254, considering the

Estimates of the Department of Executive Council, the honourable member from Fort Rouge moved the following motion:

THAT line item 2.1.(a) be amended so that the Premier's salary be reduced to \$50,400.

Madam Chairperson, this motion was defeated on a voice vote. Subsequently, two members requested that a counted vote be taken on this matter.

The Acting Chairperson (Colleen Mayer): A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

All sections in Chamber for recorded vote.

Mr. Chairperson in the Chair

Recorded Vote

Mr. Chairperson: In the section of the Committee of Supply meeting in room 254, considering the Estimates for the Executive Council, the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) moved the following motion: that item line 2.1.(a) be amended so that the Premier's (Mr. Pallister) salary be reduced to \$50,400.

This motion was defeated in a voice vote, and, subsequently, two members requested a formal vote on this matter.

The question before the committee is the motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

A COUNT-OUT VOTE was taken, the result being as follows: Yeas 16, Nays 37.

Mr. Chairperson: The motion is accordingly defeated.

Mr. Chairperson: The sections of Committee of Supply will now continue with the consideration of departmental Estimates. I assume that we'll continue or—do you want committee to rise?

The Opposition House Leader—the Government House Leader.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Committee rise.

Mr. Chairperson: The committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader):
Will you canvass the House to see if it's the will of
the House to call it 5 o'clock?

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Doyle Pivniuk): Canvass the
House and call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 5 o'clock p.m., the House now is
adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on
Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, October 26, 2017

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Committee Reports		Advanced Education Act	
		Fontaine	3213
		Wishart	3213
Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs		Pallister	3213
Tenth Report		Government Health-Care Plan	
Guillemard	3203	Gerrard	3214
		Pallister	3214
		Goertzen	3214
Ministerial Statements			
Snow-Clearing Services		Addiction and Mental Health Services	
Schuler	3204	Gerrard	3214
Lindsey	3205	Pallister	3215
Lamoureux	3205		
Members' Statements		Arts and Culture in Manitoba	
Robert Shankland		A. Smith	3215
Curry	3205	Cox	3215
Gord Downie		Advanced Education Act	
Kinew	3206	F. Marcelino	3215
		Wishart	3215
Icelandic National Football Team		Advanced Education Act	
Isleifson	3206	B. Smith	3216
		Pallister	3216
United Grain Growers Grain Elevator			
Nesbitt	3207		
Leadership Campaign–Volunteer Appreciation		Speaker's Ruling	
Lamoureux	3207	Driedger	3217
Oral Questions		Petitions	
Medical Assistance in Dying Legislation		Transit Funding	
Kinew	3208	Kinew	3218
Pallister	3208	Allum	3218
Goertzen	3209		
Advanced Education Act		Northern Patient Transfer Program	
Kinew	3209	Lathlin	3219
Pallister	3210	Lindsey	3219
Advanced Education Act		Taxi Industry Regulation	
Wiebe	3211	Maloway	3220
Wishart	3211		
Advanced Education Act		Transit Funding	
Lathlin	3212	F. Marcelino	3220
Wishart	3212	Selinger	3220
		B. Smith	3221

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

Speaker's Statement

Driedger 3221

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Committee of Supply

(Concurrent Sections)

Executive Council

Kinew 3222

Pallister 3222

Sustainable Development

Selinger 3231

Squires 3231

Allum 3232

Justice

Stefanson 3235

Fontaine 3235

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