



SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

At the Opening of the Third Session
of the 43rd Legislature

November 18, 2025

Manitoba 



Delivered by:

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Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba

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From Promise to Progress

We begin by honouring the sacred importance of these lands and waters, and of the ancestors that once walked where we are standing today.

We recognize the Anishininewak, Cree, Dene, Dakota, Métis, Inuit and Anishinaabe nations who paved the way to what is now known as Manitoba – home to all treaty people.

In the last two years, we have faced new challenges together. Threats to Canada's sovereignty. A trade war on two fronts. And this past summer, a historic wildfire season that displaced 35,000 people – and a severe drought.

These challenges have had an impact on our families, communities and our province's finances, but we remain committed to balancing the budget in our first term.

Tragically, we lost two Manitobans in the wildfire. Today we remember Sue and Richard Nowell and commemorate them by renaming the bridge along highway 313 in Lac du Bonnet in their honour.

We also remember Marina Simard from Hollow Water First Nation. And we honour the heroism of Corporal Brianne Bartmanovich who put her life on the line to protect others.

Through all our challenges we have come out stronger, more united as One Manitoba.

We have added over 3,500 net new health care staff to the frontlines, opened six new primary care clinics, where you can book online, and started work at new Personal Care Homes in Lac du Bonnet, Arborg, and Transcona.

We lowered costs for families with a permanent cut to the gas tax, a year-long hydro freeze and reduced housing costs.

We made communities safer for everyone, successfully moving 100 people from encampments to housing and investing in policing and public safety.

The last two years have taught us this: not only can we get through difficult things by working together – but that together, incredible things are possible.

Two years ago, who could have imagined a multi-billion-dollar opportunity in Churchill? A major project of national importance with the potential to ship Canadian goods to European markets.

And because Manitobans believe in reconciliation, something incredible is happening here today, in the People's building.

One hundred and fifty-five years after Manitoba joined confederation, a Throne Speech will be published in Anishinaabemowin, the language that named our province.

This progress makes us proud to be Manitobans.

Patient-Focused Health Care

For two years our focus in health care was to staff up the workforce and change the workplace culture.

The next step is to create a safer, more efficient patient experience so you can feel that positive change.

We will improve safety for patients and staff with a patient safety charter enshrining into law your right to good health care.

Then we will end the practice of mandatory overtime for health care workers, starting with nurses on the frontlines.

You wouldn't get on a plane with a pilot who has worked two back-to-back shifts. Why should you go to an ER where nurses have been asked to do that very thing.

We will legislate staff to patient ratios in priority areas of the health care system.

With the new Seniors' Advocate in place, 141 more personal care home beds, and new staff added to homecare, we are fixing the systemic problems created by the previous government and ensuring that every senior and their caregivers will have their health care concerns heard and addressed.

And we will continue to make workplaces safer with 126 Institutional Safety officers in hospitals and 8 more coming to Thompson, two police officers stationed 24/7 at the Health Sciences Centre and other safety and security measures.

We have already replaced outdated paper health cards with durable plastic ones. Today, we are proud to announce the next step: digital health cards available in January.

Now you can access health care however you choose with paper, plastic or pixels.

In the new year, we will launch a new patient portal, giving Manitobans secure, convenient access to your lab results and immunizations.

Based on consensus advice from labour leaders, businesses and employers, we will eliminate the requirement for sick notes that add an additional burden on working families and unnecessary paperwork for doctors.

We will expand the scope of practice for pharmacists, so you can skip the doctor's office and pick up prescriptions for birth control, UTIs and common ailments at your local pharmacy. We will bring doctors and pharmacists together as we move forward with this change to ensure the best quality of care for patients.

We are on our way to meet our goal of completing 800 more hip and knee surgeries at the Selkirk Hospital and we will introduce a new direct entry MRI tech training program.

We are bringing better health care to South and North Winnipeg where the previous government closed Emergency Rooms. We added 22 more health care staff at Seven Oaks Hospital, opened a new extended-hours clinic and added more surgeries at Concordia Hospital, and we are starting construction on the new Victoria ER in January.

We are making progress on our promise to fix rural health care. We reopened the Carberry ER closed by the previous government and we will start construction this winter on a new ER in Eriksdale for Interlake families.

We will train and hire new paramedics quicker than ever before with 14 seats in a new direct-entry program for Primary Care Paramedics at Red River College and we continue to make Advanced Care Paramedics in rural Manitoba a priority with the first fully enrolled class of ACPs and a commitment to hire all of them.

As part of our promise to deliver better health care for women, we are reversing the damaging cuts made by the previous government, adding more lactation consultants to help moms and babies in those critical early days, hiring midwives in the Interlake Eastern Health Authority for the first time and returning birthing services to Norway House Cree Nation.

When our government took office, Manitoba faced the worst doctor shortage in the country. That gap is now closing with 285 net new doctors added since October 2023, including 6 doctors from the United States and more in the recruitment process. Last year marked the largest increase of doctors ever.

Strong Economy, Lower Costs

Despite economic headwinds, wildfire, drought, and tariffs, we have made progress to lower your bills, create more good jobs and a more affordable economy.

We lowered inflation with our permanent cut to the gas tax, froze hydro rates, cut taxes for renters and saved the average homeowner \$1500 this year and \$1600 next year with our Homeowners Affordability tax credit.

We doubled the prenatal benefit for low-income mothers and gave out hundreds of grants to organizations to provide free and low-cost community services like free swimming lessons for kids in The Pas and free evening programs in Thompson and Brandon.

We lowered costs for Manitoba businesses with a cut to the payroll tax and we created 25,000 new, good, full-time jobs for Manitobans.

We continue to build more affordable housing. Since forming government, we have created 143 social and affordable housing units, added over 100 shelter beds to give Manitobans a warm place to sleep, and brought back 2024 units that were closed under the previous government.

Now we'll bring in new rules to stop unfair rent increases and strengthen renters' rights. And we will commission a provincial study to try and find new ways to save you money on groceries.

A multi-billion-dollar investment in Churchill would transform our economy for generations. We know there is no nation building without Indigenous Nations, so we are pursuing this potential project the right way. In true partnership with First Nations and the Red River Métis, we will enshrine Canada's first Crown-Indigenous corporation into law.

Working with the Major Projects Office and the Arctic Gateway Group, the Manitoba Crown-Indigenous Corporation will build the best business and environmental case for a trade corridor to Churchill. To expand the shipping season, we will conduct a feasibility study this winter.

If we secure a major project, we will make sure it has a major impact with additional revenue supporting all-weather roads that can connect the poorest kids in our province from isolated communities with opportunities.

Manitoba has the in-demand, low-cost, clean energy that tech companies need right now. Following recommendations from Jim Balsillie, Canada's thought leader in innovation, we will invest in the generation and protection of our intellectual property, establish sovereign AI infrastructure and ensure that Manitobans benefit from the new digital economy with better government services and stronger privacy protections.

To help Trump-proof our economy we will build new dual-fuel combustion turbines in Westman, bringing 750 megawatts of power online to help heat our homes on the coldest days of the year.

We are investing in rural economic development with increased municipal funding, a \$3.7 billion historic capital investment and a freeze on Crown land leases for the third year in row.

Our two new Manitoba Agricultural Service Corporation offices in Virden and Shoal Lake are now supporting over 1,000 farmers and producers. And over the coming year we will develop the legislative tools for a new livestock inspection program that will improve the financial stability of beef operations and expand their access to capital.

We will continue to press the Federal government to take action against Chinese tariffs to protect our pork and canola producers while we pursue economic engagement with the world's second largest economy.

As we decrease our reliance on the U.S., we are increasing our investments in homegrown entrepreneurs and job-creators, eliminating the PST from manufacturing equipment and modernizing the Small Business Venture Capital Tax Credit. And we are signing a new contract for park passes with a Manitoba company, replacing the previous government's contract with a Texas firm.

In the next year we will finish the road for the Wasagamack airport and work with the Red-Seine-Rat Wastewater Cooperative, the Pembina Valley Water Cooperative and the City of Morden to support wastewater infrastructure as we continue to support the North End Water Treatment project in Winnipeg.

Next year we will also start work on twinning Highway 1 from the Ontario border to West Hawk Lake and start the design phase of the Carberry overpass at the intersection of Highway 1 & 5.

Improving Public Safety

No matter where you live in Manitoba you should feel safe – at home, at your neighbourhood park, downtown.

While our investments in policing and public safety have driven the crime rate down for the first time in years, the dramatic rise in methamphetamine use has led to unpredictable and violent behavior in our communities.

Our Protective Care legislation to modernize addictions treatment means first responders have the power to take someone on meth to the right place, with the right services for the right amount of time.

At our new Protective Care Centre in Winnipeg, health care workers will help people detox safely, assess underlying issues and connect them with health care and supports.

New detox beds at Main Street Project will help people leaving the Protective Care Centre to take the first steps to what we all want – recovery. We are also supporting streamlined housing access with wraparound supports at Main Street Project to house people until they can enter treatment.

Our Supervised Consumption Site will start operations in Winnipeg this January, to bolster our expert-led response and connect people with the health care they need.

These investments will help Manitobans overcome addiction and make our communities safer for everyone.

We won't just respond to addiction, we will confront it at its source, working with the Winnipeg Police and RCMP to carry out a targeted meth sweep focusing on those producing and distributing meth, and standing up a task force reporting directly to the Justice Minister on drug enforcement.

Working with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, we will take action to stop meth and other drugs from entering northern First Nations by investing in a northern airport scanner.

We are making our streets safer with new legislation to ban dangerous weapons from our public spaces.

We are helping Manitobans protect their families and livelihoods with a \$300 security rebate for homes and \$2,500 rebate for businesses that will launch this December. And our leadership on bail reform has led to some initial results with tougher Criminal Code legislation.

Guided by the experts at the Canadian Centre for Child Protection we are protecting women and children online by strengthening the Intimate Images Act, making it the strongest in Canada.

We will break ground on a correctional facility, a Centre for Justice in Dauphin next fall, making our province safer, helping people who are ready to turn their lives around and returning good jobs to the Parkland that were cut by the previous government.

Protecting the Environment

Manitobans felt the devastating impact of climate change this summer. After the worst wildfire season in 30 years our government is committed to strengthening our wildfire response.

We will conduct the most comprehensive after-action wildfire review our province has ever undertaken, working with First Nations, Indigenous governments, municipalities, and the external organizations that contributed to our unique One Manitoba response.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change's Expert Advisory Council will also conduct a review with recommendations on wildfire awareness and education, prevention and preparedness, and air quality.

It is not enough to mitigate climate change – we have to fight it.

Our Indigenized Path to Net Zero sets an ambitious 2050 target that builds on Manitoba's clean energy strengths, supports our economy, and makes climate-friendly choices affordable for every family. We will roll out the next steps of our Net Zero plan in the spring, with legislated targets to follow.

Building off our clean energy advantage, we will build up Manitoba's hydrogen energy sector.

With funding to study a marine protected area in Churchill we will ensure that our belugas, polar bears and northern ecology continue to thrive as we grow the economy and create good jobs. And we will continue to protect more of Manitoba's important areas to ensure the health of our land, air, and water.

Every year over 5 million people visit Manitoba parks. Last year we made park entry free. This year, you can display your pride for Manitoba's parks by voting for a new provincial park-themed licence plate.

Every Child Matters

This winter construction will start on four new schools, built by Manitoba workers, with 402 childcare spots in River East, Pembina Trails, Seven Oaks and Brandon. With our updated English Language Arts curriculum and the roll out of our universal early reading screening program, we are making sure kids have the support and tools they need to learn to read.

With more than 800 new teachers in our classrooms, 4,200 more childcare spots, and our universal school food program, we are helping more kids learn and graduate. The next step is to reach the students who are falling through the cracks with our new "Reach Out, Reach Up" program that helps schools improve attendance.

As AI advances, we will engage in ongoing consultation with parents, students, experts, and educators to make sure it is used safely and responsibly as a tool for learning, not a replacement. As part of this process, we will hold a summit for K-12 and post-secondary educators this January.

As we continue our work to support Indigenous Nations as they reassume jurisdiction over child welfare, we reaffirm our shared commitment to work with Authorities, agencies, and nations to keep children safe.

Last year we lost fewer children in our province than the previous year. There is still more work to be done. But working with parents, health workers and educators we will move the needle on one of our most important goals.

We are listening to young people, their parents, grandparents and educators in Manitoba. Our first One Manitoba youth summit this winter will give high school students the chance to share their ideas with us and learn from local leaders who overcame challenges to reach their goals and make our province better.

In Manitoba, parents and kids spend so much of our lives at the field, the rink, the baseball diamond. The loss of seventeen-year-old football player Darius Hartshorne is heartbreaking. To show our support for his family, his team and the school community at Sisler High School, we will invest in a new scoreboard and bleachers for the Spartans in his memory.

A Government That Works for You

We are updating the Accessibility for Manitobans Act to make Manitoba a truly accessible province.

Et nous sommes en voie de faire du Manitoba une province véritablement bilingue. Nous présenterons bientôt les résultats des consultations que nous avons menées auprès des communautés francophones et d'expression française depuis six mois. En décembre, nous ouvrirons des bureaux à Saint-Boniface pour offrir des services juridiques en français et nous présenterons notre candidature à l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie.

We are committed to modernizing board governance at our post-secondary institutions and colleges to ensure the best education and training for every Manitoba student.

We respect the freedom and autonomy of municipalities and are moving forward with implementing the recommendations from our Bill 37 review.

Incredible Things Are Possible in Manitoba

Two years ago, our health care system was in chaos. Health care workers were leaving the frontlines. Today they are joining in record numbers.

Two years ago, the homelessness and addictions crisis felt hopeless. Today we are moving the dial with a coordinated plan that is working, moving people from tents to stable housing with the help they need.

Two years ago, costs were rising, and jobs were leaving the province. Today we have lowered your housing, heating and gas bills. And we are building roads, schools, and hospitals with good Manitoba jobs.

We are redefining Manitoba's place in the world – as a trading hub, a leader in human rights and a force for good.

We searched the landfill and brought home Mercedes Myran and Morgan Harris because when someone goes missing, we go looking.

We opened our arms when children from Gaza needed medical care, setting another few places at our table.

We have done a lot, but the possibility of so much more is just at our fingertips...

A new trade corridor running through Manitoba, connecting Canadian goods to new markets, connecting the poorest kids in our province with a road that will lead to a good education and a good job, connecting all of us to a brighter future.

Transforming our northern port into a global economic hub, glimmering beneath the northern lights.

Little old Manitoba no more.

Manitoba, let's be proud of who we are and how far we have come.

In Manitoba incredible things are possible.