

Fifth Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BLAIKIE, Bill, Hon.	Elmwood	N.D.P.
BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Wellington	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	N.D.P.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	N.D.P.
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	N.D.P.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
<i>Vacant</i>	Inkster	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 9, 2010

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 210—The Seniors' Rights Act

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): I move, seconded by the member from Charleswood, that Bill 210, The Seniors' Rights Act, be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet, seconded by the honourable member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), that Bill 210, The Seniors' Rights Act, be now read a first time.

Mr. Hawranik: The bill establishes a bill of rights for Manitoba seniors, including the right to freedom, independence and individual initiative in planning and managing his or her own life, the right to access affordable and appropriate services and programs, the right to be able to remain in his or her community, the right to a system where long-term care needs are met, the right to access to services, and many other rights, Mr. Speaker, and I would urge the government to support it.

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

PETITIONS

Multiple Sclerosis Treatment

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

More than 3,000 Manitobans and their families are impacted by multiple sclerosis, and Manitoba has one of the highest rates of MS in the world.

New research indicates that there may be a link between a condition known as chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency, CCSVI, and multiple sclerosis. Preliminary studies indicate that many MS symptoms can be relieved with angioplasty, a common procedure.

In order to test this procedure for safety and effectiveness, additional research and clinical trials

are needed. Manitoba is not testing for CCSVI, conducting research or conducting clinical trials.

The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador will be monitoring MS patients who have undergone the liberation treatment and study its impact. Saskatchewan has announced that it will move forward with a clinical trial when their research community presents a proposal, and has invited other provinces to join them. Meanwhile, Manitoba's provincial government has not taken up this initiative nor shows any leadership on this issue.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Manitoba Minister of Health to consider making the province of Manitoba a leader in CCSVI research and to move forward with clinical trials as soon as possible.

This petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by B. Reynolds, J. White, D. Allen and many, many other very concerned Manitobans.

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

PTH 15 and Highway 206 Changes— Public Consultation

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

In August 2008, the Minister of Transportation stated that traffic volumes at the intersection of PTH 15 and Highway 206 in Dugald exceeded those needed to warrant the installation of traffic signals.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Transportation consider holding a public consultation process with Springfield residents to present design options and rationale for the planned changes to PTH 15 and Highway 206 intersection and also in regards to the planned hard median, at a public open house in Dugald.

To request that the Minister of Transportation recognize the value of the businesses affected by the proposed changes, as well as the lives and well-being of the students, seniors and citizens of Manitoba.

This is signed by I. Boyko, S. King, T. Gillespie and many, many other Manitobans.

RCMP Rural Service

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

Manitobans deserve to live in a safe environment and feel secure in their homes and their communities. Some regions of Manitoba have been hard hit by crime, including residential break and enters, property thefts, vandalism and other offences that threaten people's security.

In some areas, RCMP detachments are not staffed on a 24-hour basis. Criminal elements capitalize on this, engaging in crimes at a time when officers may not be readily available to respond to calls for service.

Some believe the current RCMP detachment boundaries need to be redrawn so that the service delivery could be faster and more effective.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Justice to consider working with the RCMP, the federal government and communities to develop strategies to address service challenges in rural Manitoba, such as the possibility of having response units that could be dispatched to regions affected by crime waves.

And to request the Minister of Justice to consider working with stakeholders to determine if the current RCMP detachment boundaries are designed to ensure the swiftest and most effective service delivery.

This petition is signed by E. Brown, J. Bruce, M. Parsons and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Auto Theft—Court Order Breaches

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

On December 11th, 2009, in Winnipeg, Zdzislaw Andrzejczak was killed when the car that he was driving collided with a stolen vehicle.

The death of Mr. Andrzejczak, a husband and a father, along with too many other deaths and injuries involving stolen vehicles, was a preventable tragedy.

Many of those accused in fatalities involving stolen vehicles were previously known to police and identified as chronic and high-risk car thieves who had court orders against them.

Chronic car thieves pose a risk to the safety of all Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all court orders for car thieves are vigorously monitored and enforced.

And to request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all breaches of court orders on car thieves are reported to police and vigorously prosecuted.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by K. Drebit, A. Goot, P. Pittman and thousands of other Manitobans. Thank you.

Multiple Sclerosis Treatment

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

More than 3,000 Manitobans and their families are impacted by multiple sclerosis, and Manitoba has one of the highest rates of MS in the world.

New research indicates that there may be a link between a condition known as chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency and multiple sclerosis. Preliminary studies indicate that many MS symptoms can be relieved with angioplasty, a common procedure.

In order to test this procedure for safety and effectiveness, additional research and clinical trials are needed. Manitoba is not testing for CCSVI, conducting research or conducting clinical trials.

The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador will be monitoring MS patients who have undergone the liberation treatment and studying its impact.

Saskatchewan has announced that it will move forward with a clinical trial when their research community presents a proposal and has invited other provinces to join them. Meanwhile, Manitoba's provincial government has not taken up this initiative nor shown any leadership on this issue.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health to consider making the province of Manitoba a leader in CCSVI research and to move forward with clinical trials as soon as possible.

And this is signed by R. Carver, A. Storm, L. McDonald and many, many other Manitobans.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Order. Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from Gordon Bell High School, we have three grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Mark Dewar. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer).

* (13:40)

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Government Record Premier's Responsibility

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the 13 and a half months since this NDP leader became Premier of Manitoba, he has presided—

An Honourable Member: They all supported Andrew though.

Mr. McFadyen: Exactly. That didn't look anything like the Andrew Swan leadership launch, Mr. Speaker. But, in any event, in the 13 and a half months since he became Premier, he's had 13 major failures and in no particular order—in no particular order—here's a list of five of those 13.

He failed farmers and families with his hidden milk tax. He failed to protect animals by failing to follow up on reports of abuse. He failed to prepare for the loss of hundreds of jobs in Thompson. He failed to control wasteful spending leaving Manitobans with a record high debt which will wipe out our savings account, and he failed to repeal the

vote tax meaning Manitobans will pay \$5 for every NDP vote.

I want to ask the Premier: Of these five failures, which one does he consider to be his biggest failure?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, you know, I'll put the record of myself or any member on this side of the House for one month against the record of the member opposite for the several years that he's been the Leader of the Opposition.

Now, let's just review his hyped up allegations. Farmers: Manitoba was the leader in bringing in an Excess Moisture Insurance program on the prairies, a \$60-million program that provided support for farmers. The members opposite were completely silent on it. Even the farmers in the caucus were completely silent on it. On animals: That investigation has been going on for a couple of years. Charges are coming forward as we speak. And the former minister and the current minister brought forward new legislation, with more serious fines, something the members opposite never did when they were in office. On jobs: 19,000 more jobs in Manitoba, the lowest unemployment rate in the country—the lowest unemployment rate in the country. And on debt: 6 cents on the dollar, when they were in office 13 and a half cents on the dollar.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, I feel like I'm listening to the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) speak to the Indo-Canadian community there's so much excitement in the room here today.

Mr. Speaker, on the list of 13 and a half failures, here's number six through 10, six through 10 on his baker's dozen. Number six, he failed to properly manage the Hecla deal, meaning it's now insolvent. He failed to do his homework on the stadium funding deal. He failed to ensure that our kids can read, causing the worst test score drop in Canada. He failed to call the Phoenix Sinclair inquiry, putting kids in care at risk. He failed to end hallway medicine 11 years after promising that he would, instead, he attacks doctors as he further damages health care.

On failures six through 10, I want to ask this Premier which one bothers him the most.

Mr. Selinger: I actually—I hope his last round is as good as his first two rounds, Mr. Speaker.

Let's start from the top. Hecla Island: Under his government, people actually got charged with criminal offences for selling land inappropriately on

Hecla Island. We cleaned up that mess of corruption in government with respect to Hecla Island. The member opposite was part of a cabal to illegally sell land in Manitoba.

On the stadium: They opposed the MTS Centre; they oppose the stadium. We built the MTS Centre; we'll build the stadium. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? The member opposite will be pulling on his Blue Bomber sweatshirt and going to the games, and saying, I always supported it, just like I supported the MTS Centre. That's what he'll do.

And on education: 80 per cent of kids are completing high school now; only 70 per cent were completing when the member opposite was in power. And we're going to take it to a higher level. We're going to have more kids completing. We're going to have more kids doing better as we roll out new curriculum, Mr. Speaker.

And I know you're at the end of your comments, so I'll come back later.

Mr. McFadyen: Well, Mr. Speaker, since he won't address the first 10 out of the 13 failures, I want to just read the—list the final three, Nos. 11 through 13.

Number 11, Mr. Speaker: He failed to listen to experts on the new transmission line, and he's going to make the next generation of Manitobans pay the price.

Number 12, Mr. Speaker: He failed to tackle violent crime, 14 per cent increase in violent crime from 2008 to 2009, making us the violent crime capital of Canada.

And No. 13, Mr. Speaker: He failed to meet the greenhouse gas emission targets. And on that last point, on point No. 13 alone, the elected premier of Manitoba, Gary Doer, said he deserved to be defeated next year in the election.

Mr. Speaker, does he agree with Gary Doer that he deserves to be elected for his failure on point No. 13, never mind points 1 through 12?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, let's talk about hydro. Only the member opposite from Fort Whyte is the only one in Manitoba that refuses to accept the need to build converter stations in this province.

Seventy-five per cent of the energy—75 per cent of our electricity goes through the Dorsey station. Manitoba Hydro has said since 1997 we need additional security for our transmission through the—in addition to the Dorsey station.

The members opposite were preoccupied with privatizing the telephone system.

Mr. Speaker, greenhouse gases: We protected another 640,000 hectares of boreal forest and tundra just in the last two weeks. We brought in new programs for Lake Winnipeg with respect to the Libau-Netley marsh. All of these initiatives build on top of biodiesel and ethanol.

The members opposite still haven't said whether they even think climate change is a reality. They've never even actually gone public and accepted whether climate change is a reality. I can tell you, Jim Prentice is a way ahead of them on that.

And finally, on violent crime, Mr. Speaker: We're going to help young people stay in school to 18 and get jobs. The members opposite are going to vote against it.

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

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about his member for Flin Flon's (Mr. Jennissen) comments in favour of climate change that he made in the House just a couple of days ago.

But, Mr. Speaker, we've got 13 major failures over 13 and a half months.

Will the Premier do the honourable thing today and apologize to the people of Manitoba for his 13-month tour of failure, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, what we will do is we will continue to move Manitoba forward on every one of those files, whether it's support for farmers, whether it's support for young people, whether it's additional family physicians for Manitobans, whether it's housing, whether it's growing our economy through innovation.

I can tell you what we won't do, Mr. Speaker, we won't cut front-line services a half a billion dollars like the member opposite is intending to do last June. He wanted to put the entire recovery at risk in Manitoba with his reckless cuts, just like he wants to put Manitoba Hydro at risk by not building converter stations.

Manitobans know what the Leader of the Opposition's all about, and the more they hear about it, the less they like it.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, 13 and a half months, 13 major failures that hurt Manitobans from all

walks of life. He won't even have the courage to stand up today and apologize to Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this Premier: Will he be strong enough to take personal responsibility for these 13 failures, or is he going to take the weak road of trying to blame others?

* (13:50)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we will have the courage to move the province forward, to build the lowest—on the lowest unemployment rate in the country by educating more people for the future economy. We will keep our neighbourhoods safe by investing in community policing and housing and recreation programs that make a difference for people. We will do things that continue to address climate change, when the members opposite haven't even made up their mind whether it exists or not, Mr. Speaker. We will do things to increase access to primary health-care physicians for all Manitobans, when the members opposite want to cut health care.

Mr. Speaker, it's very clear. When the people take a look at what the agenda for the future of the province is, our agenda is clear and transparent. Theirs is hidden. Their agenda is hidden beneath a half a billion dollars of cuts in budgeting.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, 13 and a half months, 13 major failures on crime, on health care, on hydro, on education, on Child and Family Services, on farming, on protecting animals, on protecting children, on helping kids learn.

Mr. Speaker, if he won't apologize for those 13 major failures, if he won't be strong enough to accept personal responsibility for those 13 major failures, will he today hold his failing ministers accountable? Will he take responsibility, be a leader and sack his failing ministers for their miserable failures on these major files for Manitobans?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the reckless approach—the member opposite—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Let's have a little decorum, please.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, this is just so typical of the member for Fort Whyte. Every time he's not happy with something, he wants to fire them or sack them. That's his approach.

Mr. Speaker, take a look at this session. We've brought in legislation to enable a 30-member cadet police corps in Manitoba. Will the members opposite support it? We will see. We brought in legislation denying compensation to convicted criminals in Manitoba. We brought in legislation taking driver's licences from drug dealers. We brought in legislation of tougher impaired driving laws. We've made a commitment to providing family doctors by 2015. We've made a commitment to innovative quick-care clinics staffed by nurse practitioners, which didn't exist a decade ago. We brought in a new one-stop location for addictions and mental health services. We brought in more addictions beds for women seeking treatment. We brought more incentives in, just this morning, for doctors to practice in underserved areas of Manitoba. We brought in, just this week, a new primary health clinic in the northwest corner of Winnipeg. And we've now extended health-care coverage under Workers Compensation for firefighters and paramedics.

That is an agenda that moves the province forward. The question is: Will the members opposite support it, or will they once again try to block it?

Manitoba Hydro Bipole III Location

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

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, 13 and a half months, 13 major failures, and what he's saying today is that he's going to continue to reward ministers who fail Manitobans. What a weak response from a weak Premier who won't apologize, who won't accept personal responsibility, who won't hold anybody accountable for their failures to the people of Manitoba.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest failures on the list, failure No. 11, the transmission line, this Premier thinks that he knows more than everybody else on how to build transmission lines.

I want to ask the Premier: Who is right—who is right—on the issue of the transmission line, the 19 respected engineers who are calling for common sense or this NDP leader?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, again, is the only one that wants to sack and fire people that disagree with him. That's an attitude that I don't think speaks well for any leader in this Legislature.

And, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to people on the issue of how we build hydro transmission in this province, will the member opposite finally confess to the fact that he's the only one that doesn't want to build the converter stations in this province to secure the Manitoba economy, to secure our export revenues, to ensure the reputation of Manitoba Hydro stays strong as we go forward?

We will move hydro forward based on consultations with the people of Manitoba. Eighty-two meetings were held with the people on the east side of Manitoba, and they said, we want to protect the traditional territory that we occupy. We want to see an all-weather road, but we do not want to see hydro transmission ripping up the boreal forest.

Only the member opposite wants to refute and go against what the local people on the east side are asking for themselves, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, it feels like we're watching the final days of the Bourbons: let them eat cake. But let's get back to the 13 major failures over 13 and a half months.

Failure No. 11: the transmission line, the failure to listen to experts. Those engineers, the eminent engineers who say that he is wrong, are joined by hundreds of elected officials from across the province of Manitoba: elected councillors, elected mayors, elected reeves. They all got together last week. They said he was wrong; they said the engineers were right. They're also joined by First Nations leaders like Chief George Kemp. They're joined by producers. They're joined by ratepayers. They're joined by Manitobans from all walks of life. They're even joined by the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), Mr Speaker.

Is he really—does he really consider himself to be smarter than the engineers, the municipal leaders and even the member for Minto when it comes to hydro lines?

Mr. Selinger: Well, Mr. Speaker, there was a time in the history of the province on—during the Tritschler commission, when experts used to say that we should never build hydro in the north; we should build coal plants because it's just too difficult to have transmission come from the north to the south. There was a time when people—when the experts used to think that we could flood the north. We could flood the entire north because there weren't that many

people that lived there, so we could have clean electricity in the south.

Now there are people that say the boreal forest doesn't count, that the opportunity to protect the environment, the pristine boreal forest on the east side, is an opportunity that should be squandered. The reality is we have to move forward. The Farlinger report was very clear: when it comes to considering major public policy issues such as where you put industrial transmission, you have to consider the environment; you have to consider the wishes of the people; you have to consider the risk to your economy and the risk to Hydro; and you have to make a prudent decision which will allow Manitoba to move forward. That's the decision we support. The members opposite want to be reckless and irresponsible. Manitobans won't support any of that.

Mr. McFadyen: Well, Mr. Speaker, the 19 senior professional engineers who signed the letter the other day say, and I quote: that the decision that has been made by this Premier is wrong. It is seriously flawed. And they go on to say: It is essential Bipole III be located on the east side of the lakes, not on the west side. That includes Al Snyder. It includes the former CEO of Hydro appointed by Ed Schreyer, none other than Len Bateman. It includes Garland Laliberte, dean emeritus of engineering—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I need to be able to hear you, sir. Order. Let's have a little decorum here.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

Mr. McFadyen: It includes, Mr. Speaker, Bryan Purdy. It includes Al Snyder. It includes Art Sparling. It includes Garland Laliberte, the dean emeritus of engineering. It includes Bob Foster, vice-president of Wardrop Engineering. It includes Will Tishinski, vice-president of Manitoba Hydro. It includes Allan Trupp, associate dean and professor of mechanical and industrial engineering at the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I know he's got a Ph.D. from the LSE, but does he really know more about power lines than this illustrious group of engineers?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate it when the member who runs into a little resistance wants to sack and fire people and initiate personal attacks.

* (14:00)

Look, let's review a little bit of history. When the original plan to flood northern Manitoba was brought forward, it was the New Democratic government of the day which modified that plan to protect people, to ensure Aboriginal communities weren't flooded out. In spite of that, with the Northern Flood Agreement, over \$700 million has been paid out in compensation because of the approach that was taken at that time.

We don't build dams anymore that have significant flooding. We build dams in co-operation with Aboriginal people and all the effects are addressed ahead of time and mitigation is put in place through a partnership with First Nations people. That's a new way of doing business in Manitoba, a way that respects the people that occupy the traditional territory where hydro is developed.

And that's exactly what we'll do on the east side. We want to respect the traditional territories of the First Nations people that occupy that territory, and they are saying they want to retain that as a pristine boreal forest for the opportunity for ecotourism, to have that resource for future generations.

Members opposite may be opposed to that, but let them not be so arrogant that they know better than the people of Manitoba.

Emergency Health-Care Services Wait Times

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

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): The very Premier who's talking about protecting the boreal forest is sending his highways minister up there, as we speak, with chainsaws, with dynamite, and they're blasting their way through that very forest to build a highway. If he was so concerned about boreal forest, why is he up there with the chainsaws, the dynamite and the bulldozers building a road, Mr. Speaker? He has no credibility on this issue or any other issue that he talks about today in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, if he's not going to take responsibility for failure No. 11 on the bipole line, let's talk about failure No. 5, his failure to end hallway medicine. Why hasn't he done it yet?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, just before I get to his main question, let me deal with his preliminary comments.

Last spring, the people in the northeast corner of Manitoba, in the Island Lakes region, were not able to get essential food, essential fuel, essential goods, because the winter roads, due to climate change, were no longer viable. They couldn't carry those goods and services.

The members opposite don't even accept that climate change is a real issue. The people on the east side have said, we need some permanent roads so we can have access to medicine, food, milk, meats, fish, things that everybody in southern Manitoba take for granted.

We are building all-weather roads on the east side, following the pathway of the winter roads, with the consent and support of the Aboriginal people on the east side.

Now the member doesn't even want to build roads for those people on the east side. He doesn't want to give them the opportunity to have the same quality of life we had.

And when it comes to hallway medicine, Mr. Speaker, we post the results everyday, and it's a dramatic improvement over the days when they kept people in the hallways for three weeks to a month at a time. We clear those hallways on a daily basis and serve Manitoba patients.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, no where in that fog of falsehood and misinformation was there anything representing anything close to an answer to an important question.

Mr. Speaker, we are in favour of removing the equivalent of 40,000 vehicles from the road by building down the shorter, more environmentally responsible east side of Manitoba. We are in favour of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by closing coal-fired plants south of the border by exporting more than 40 megawatts of clean energy from Manitoba Hydro to our southern neighbours.

And, we are also in favour, Mr. Speaker, of him giving a straight answer to the question of why he still hasn't ended hallway medicine.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, not only did I answer the question on hallway medicine, we now post daily on the Internet, on a website, how many people are waiting for service in emergency rooms. The members opposite used to hide that information. It was never publicly available.

In the interest of public accountability, this government has put on the Web, every single day,

how many people are waiting for service in the emergency rooms. And we work with the physicians in the emergency rooms, who we have increased the number of them and increased their compensation. We've redesigned those emergency rooms for greater flow through. We work every single day with our hospitals and our health authorities to make sure patients get timely care when they need it.

And many of us, recently, have gone through that experience and we have seen the results of the investments we've made. There're still waiting times, Mr. Speaker, but it's a question of hours now, not days and weeks, as it was before.

And I'd be happy to get back to his bipole question on my third answer, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. McFadyen: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know why he just won't admit that he failed to keep the promise. It's not that—doesn't take that much strength and courage to admit that he failed on something. And, in fact, people might even give him some credit for acknowledging that failure.

But instead of acknowledging—instead of acknowledging his failure, his complete failure in health care, instead of acknowledging that failure, he talks about posting things on the Internet. But the reality is that all that he has done is he has set up the JOD in order to bully doctors into staying quiet because they can't handle the truth about their failures in health care. Rather than trying to bully doctors and worsen health care, why not just admit they've completely failed, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, not only have we made very significant improvements in the number of people waiting for service in emergency rooms, not only have we done that, not only do we have 404–5 more doctors in Manitoba, not only do we have an additional 2,500 more nurses in Manitoba, not only do we, for the first time ever, have nurse practitioners in Manitoba, we are now bringing them together in teams and in networks to ensure that Manitobans have access to a family physician.

These things were never done with the members opposite. They cut the enrolment in medical school. They cut the enrolment in nursing schools. They never even had nurse practitioners as a profession inside this province. They never had midwives as a profession inside of this province.

The investments we have made in health care have resulted in dramatic improvements. Is the system perfect? No, it is not, Mr. Speaker. Is

it dramatically better? Yes, it is. Would the approach the members opposite take make it better? A half-a-billion-dollar cuts would make it worse. We will make it better.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Targets

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable after 11 years in power that you could become so arrogant and so cut off from reality that you would say to the family of Brian Sinclair that things are dramatically better in health care. Shame on you, sir, for saying such a thing to the family of Brian Sinclair. Shame on you for not accepting responsibility for keeping your promise in health care.

If he won't accept responsibility for failure 11, if he won't accept responsibility for failure No. 5, for failing to keep their promise on hallway medicine: Will he accept responsibility for failure No. 13, the one that Mr. Doer was talking about, his failure to meet their targets on greenhouse gas emissions? Will he accept responsibility?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is remarkable in his ability to deny his own responsibilities—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I'll once again ask for a little decorum, please.

Mr. Selinger: Well, Mr. Speaker, the members need to explain to everybody in this House and Manitobans how their proposal last spring to cut a half a billion dollars out of the budget would've increased the number of people available to help with health-care needs, how it would've increased the number of teachers in the classroom, how it would've increased the number of police officers in the community.

And when it comes—and, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions, protecting the boreal forest on the east side and up in the northwest corner of Manitoba allows for—the forests allow for major carbon and deep sinks to sequester carbon dioxide in this province, the members opposite do not want to protect those natural assets. They do not want to protect those resources which produce clean oxygen. They do not want to protect those resources which produce clean water. They do not want to protect the endangered species in there, whether it's

woodland caribou or even polar bears. They don't really have a policy on the environment. All they want to do is deflect attention from their own inability to have a clear vision for this province, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Mr. Speaker, we have said that you can save—

* (14:10)

Mr. Speaker: Order. I haven't recognized the honourable member yet.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on his first supplementary—on his new question that he had started earlier.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, we have said that you could save about a billion dollars and take the equivalent of 40,000 vehicles off the road and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, close a coal-fired plant in the [*inaudible*] with a single decision. All that requires him to do is set aside his stubborn political decision to interfere in Manitoba Hydro, listen to common sense, listen to the experts, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save a billion dollars. But he won't do that, and that's one of the reasons why he's failing to keep his promise on greenhouse gas emission targets.

Will he admit today, Mr. Speaker, that he failed, and will he have the courage to accept responsibility for that failure?

Mr. Selinger: The member opposite would still like to cut a billion dollars out for converter stations in Manitoba. He would put the entire Manitoba economy at risk in spite of what Hydro has been recommending since 1997, that there be additional generator stations put in place, converter stations put in place in order to protect the security of the Manitoba energy supply.

The member opposite is on the record for wanting to shrink the amount of boreal forest protected on the east side by 80 per cent. Can he explain to Manitobans how shrinking the amount of boreal forest you want to protect is going to do anything for protecting of the Manitoba and, indeed, the global climate, on climate change? Cutting down trees, reducing protected areas does nothing for climate change, Mr. Speaker.

Doing something that does not allow for converter stations to be built does not protect the Manitoba economy. Being reckless and being irresponsible does not move Manitoba forward, Mr.

Speaker. Manitobans know that. The only one that doesn't know that is the member from Fort Whyte.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, for him to call Al Snyder reckless and irresponsible is beneath contempt. For him to refer to Len Bateman as reckless and irresponsible is beyond reprehensible. For him to refer to the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) as reckless and irresponsible is, perhaps, understandable—and that's perhaps understandable, but even so, he should go back to caucus and apologize to him as well.

Mr. Speaker, does he agree—does he agree—with the former elected premier of Manitoba, Mr. Doer, and the 55 per cent of Manitobans who are now saying, they deserve to be defeated next year because of their failures?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite continues to point fingers everywhere else. There's only one person that I said was reckless and irresponsible, and that's the member for Fort Whyte, no matter how he tries to deflect it. I said it was the wild, reckless commitments that the member from Fort Whyte made. He has said he will not build converter stations in Manitoba which will protect the energy supply to our local economy, which will protect \$20 billion of export revenues, which will allow us to move forward with a power supply that will displace 7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in foreign markets.

The member opposite doesn't want to supply clean energy; he wants to put that at risk. The global economy, the global environment needs clean hydroelectricity. We intend to build it. They intend to block it and mothball it like they did the last time they were in office. They did nothing on improving Manitoba Hydro performance in Manitoba in the 11 years in office. We're building Wuskwatim. We're going to build Keeyask. We're going to build Conawapa, and we're going to do it while protecting the boreal forest and in partnership with First Nations people.

Violent Crime Rate Increase

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

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on a new question, the Premier, he fails to take responsibility for any of these 13 major failures. He stands in his place and he blames everybody but himself. He's not strong

enough to apologize. He's not strong enough to do something about his failing ministers. He rewards failure, and he won't stand up and apologize.

Now, we're curious, Mr. Speaker, whose fault is it that we've had a 14 per cent increase in violent crime? Whose fault is that? We're curious to know who he's going to try to blame for that major failure on the part of his government.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, no question we want every neighbourhood and every Manitoban—they should have the right to feel safe in their neighbourhoods. We have, with our Auto Theft Suppression Strategy, reduced auto thefts by over 70 per cent in Manitoba. That approach to dealing with auto thefts is one that has won recognition from across the country. That very same approach is now going to be applied to people in gangs that are perpetrating violent crimes.

We are going to put the resources to do that. We're going to ensure that neighbourhoods are safe. We are going to suppress crime. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we're going to make it less attractive to go into crime.

When the members opposite were in government they drove kids out of school. We're going to keep kids in school until they're 18 years old. We're going to provide them with an opportunity to get a trade or an education or a skill, an opportunity to make a living and get an education.

I hope the members opposite have the courage to support that bill before we rise today, Mr. Speaker.

Phoenix Sinclair Death Public Inquiry

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, over four years ago the elected premier, Gary Doer, promised an inquiry into the tragic death of Phoenix Sinclair.

Mr. Speaker, there are two people in this Chamber who have the power to get that inquiry going, the Premier and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Swan). Who is he going to blame for this failure?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have consistently said that a 'quiry' will be called as soon as any possibility of the conviction which has occurred—the people that committed this heinous crime have been convicted. There's still a possibility they could appeal it to the Supreme Court.

Once we are beyond the zone where there's very remote possibility of them being able to get an appeal in the Supreme Court, we will call the inquiry. It will have broad terms of reference. It will look at all the issues relating to this tragic death, but what we won't do is put at risk reversing the conviction of those people that committed this heinous crime, Mr. Speaker.

Government Record Premier's Responsibility

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, 13 and a half months, 13 failures. He won't take responsibility for any of his failures. He won't follow through and take a position on whether Gary Doer is right—that he deserves to be defeated next year.

He won't take responsibility for calling promised inquiries, for ending hallway medicine, for increases in violent crime, for the rising debt, for the mismanagement of Hydro, for the failure to protect animals, for the drop in grades. He won't take responsibility for any of those things. He rewards failure, Mr. Speaker. He's not strong enough to take responsibility.

On the back of all of that, Mr. Speaker, the *Swan Valley Star and Times* says that since taking over for the former premier that this Premier has reduced the provincial NDP to a sleazy, American-style attack party, smearing their critics with half truths and lies.

Is the reason, Mr. Speaker—is the reason that he has turned his party into a sleazy, American-style attack party because they have nothing to celebrate? Is it because everything he touches fails?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): You know, Mr. Speaker, I think the tenor of the last question that the member from Fort Whyte posed just illustrates perfectly the character that he brings to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are a political party that actually thinks—we actually think that there's a role for all Manitobans in the democratic process. We don't go out and try to fix elections like the members opposite did.

* (14:20)

Mr. Speaker, we have improved the democratic process in this province. We are the government that brought in a ban on corporate and union donations inside this province. The members opposite oppose a ban on corporate union donations. They want to

return us to the dark days when special interests could control the members of the Legislature—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority Headquarter and Administration Costs

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, a troubling report released today by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation shows that the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority on Main Street spent \$37,000 in public funds on planters and picnic tables for their headquarters on Main Street, so that the minister's highly paid vice-presidents can enjoy their lattes in luxury. This got the Health Minister's rubber stamp of approval. Let's look at what else got the Health Minister's rubber stamp of approval: Baths for the elderly only once a week in personal care homes, jail cells as treatment for patients with Alzheimer's disease, and 11 more years of hallway medicine.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this Health Minister's top dogs at the WRHA get upwards of \$350,000 a year. When will the minister do the right thing and end the party for her highly paid employees and make them do their jobs, protecting everyday Manitobans?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): You know, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite asks whether health care has improved in this province, and I've got to tell you: when you have 405 more doctors supported by this minister, who has increased medical school enrolment; when you have 2,500 more nurses supported by the resources we've invested in more training; when you have 94 nurse practitioners in this province that didn't exist before; when you have an expanded Pharmacare program in terms of the drugs covered in this province; when you have physicians assistants for the first time ever in this province; when you have midwives for the first time ever in this province and when you know that all of those things are going out to support people in the communities to do things like chronic disease management, right at the community level; when you have 160 new ambulances in the province; when you have diagnostic services going out to where people live and providing more dialysis services for people, you know that health care has improved.

We don't say that we're perfect, but we work every single day to make that system better, and the member opposite knows that.

Joe McLeod Incident Public Inquiry

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, and when you have major problems in many of the RHAs in this province, and you have to call operational reviews in the NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority, as the minister had to do the other day, and you can't even have reporters at board meetings in the Burntwood Regional Health Authority, what is disgusting is that none of us in this House is surprised by the \$37,000 backyard renovations by the Health Minister's WRHA. What's troubling is, with all the time and money she spent on her empire building, she's forgotten that her vice-presidents have a job to do, like ensuring that folks like Joe McLeod, a 69-year-old Alzheimer patient in a personal care home instead of in a jail cell where he should've been—he should've been in a personal care home, not a jail cell.

I wonder why this Health Minister is more concerned about protecting her vice-presidents. I ask the Health Minister: When will she call the inquiry that's needed into why Joe McLeod ended up in a jail cell instead of a personal care home?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite because it lets me put on the record that individuals, such as the one he mentioned, need the kind of care that they deserve. That individual is now in a personal care home and that's where he properly belongs, and that's why we have committed to building more personal care homes in this province. And we've announced further personal care beds being put into this province in regions where they're needed, regardless of the political stripe of that region, unlike the members opposite when they build health-care facilities.

We have announced additional assisted living housing opportunities in this province, and we are building record numbers of housing units to help people stay off the streets. We do not want people sleeping in the streets in this province. There's a major new health facility—housing facility being built on Main Street as we speak, and all across Manitoba we are building social housing and the kind of supports that allow people to live with dignity in this province.

Mr. Gerrard: Lots of costs and far too little performance. Look, a \$37,000 garden for a bureaucratic office and a jail cell for a month as treatment for a person with Alzheimer's disease. I

think I figured out this NDP's complex numbers, they're hopes, but they're poor performance.

If you're a senior vice-president, you get a six-figure salary, a garden to drink your latte in, protection from this Premier. If you're an everyday Manitoban with Alzheimer's, you get a month in jail with car thieves and gang members.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. The Premier—the minister has doubled her staff and, clearly, has an empire to build, and she and the Premier don't care enough to call an inquiry into what happened to Joe McLeod.

Can this Premier finally do what's right, hold the health system to account, hold the VPs to account and call an inquiry into what happened with Joe Macleod? Why did he end up in a jail cell for a month when all he had was Alzheimer's disease?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, when—within 24 hours of being alerted of this situation, this individual was put in an appropriate personal care facility, where he properly belonged and deserved treatment. And let's remember that in this province in the old days under the members opposite when they were in government, when a critical incident occurred, it was buried, and you had to dig it out.

We now have a regular—we have a routine put in place called the critical incident review. Every critical incident is reviewed, and out of that experience are learnings and recommendations to ensure that those things don't happen again.

We have put the number of people in emergency rooms on the website. We have a critical incident review process. We are building a culture in the health-care system of accountability and transparency and learning, because we know that there's always going to be things that have to be improved in the way we deliver health care.

And the way you improve things is, first of all, acknowledging that there's an issue, making it public and then having a process of reviewing it and putting new practices in place and then ensuring that you have the health personnel to make it better.

All of those things are items that we're putting on the agenda to improve the ability of Manitobans to have good quality health care, and we're just getting rolling, Mr. Speaker, on that.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions have—has expired.

Speaker's Statement

Mr. Speaker: I have an announcement for the House.

I would like to advise that, after 26 years as Deputy Clerk, Bev Bosiak is retiring at the end of this month. Today will be her last day at the table.

Before asking you to join me in wishing her well on her retirement, I have a few things to put on the record about Bev. Appointed—it could be dangerous; it could be dangerous. Appointed in 1984, she is the first woman to sit at the table in Manitoba and one of the first female table officers in Canada.

When Bev Bosiak began her career as Deputy Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in 1984, she was one of a handful of Legislative Assembly staff: the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, the office manager, a sessional administrative assistant, Hansard manager, one committee clerk and a Sergeant-at-Arms. There were no computers or laptops at the table or even in the offices of the Legislative Building. There was only typewriters, pens, carbon-copy paper and, of course, that old famous bottle of whiteout, and there were no fax machines, cellphones or laptops or BlackBerries. The telephone and the telegrams and handwritten notes were your means of relaying information efficiently.

* (14:30)

Over the years, the Assembly staff has grown in numbers. Bev has been the manager of the journals, committees, research and the Chamber branches and worked with the offices who provide our television and Internet and information technology services to the Chamber and, also, has overseen the development of all these areas of service to the Assembly.

Besides her advice to the members of the Manitoba Assembly, to House leaders and their assistants, and, of course, to presiding officers, she worked with all of the delegations of Manitoba Legislature—legislators who participate in the Midwestern Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments. Organizing and accompanying a delegation of 15 MLAs is an accomplishment in itself.

Over the past 26 years, she has been witness to many historical moments in this Chamber. The debates on the Meech Lake Accord were perhaps the most memorable for Bev. When Bev retires on December 31st, she will bid farewell to 26 years of late-night sittings, some all-night sittings and even

some weekend sittings. I have no doubt she will be happy to say farewell to the ringing of the bells, not only the bells in the Chamber but also the bells on her alarm clock. Just think, Bev has served the Legislative Assembly through nine legislatures, four premiers and five Speakers. Other than the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), she has served the Legislative Assembly longer than any one of us in this Chamber. Her expertise, dedication and commitment to all members of the Legislative Assembly and staff who have served over the years has been greatly appreciated.

So please join me in wishing Bev all the best for a long, happy and a healthy retirement. Deserves a hug, right? *[Applause]*

Madam Deputy Clerk (Bev Bosiak): Thanks, George. Thanks very much for everything.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much. You deserve everything. Thank you very much.

"So Long, It's Been Good to Know Yuh" was sung.

Mr. Speaker: So, all the best, Bev.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Communities That Care Program

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Mr. Speaker, children and youth who struggle with depression, anxiety and mental health issues in our communities often feel isolated and alone. This is felt most by youth in those neighbourhoods where socio-economic conditions can exacerbate the pressures they already feel. The Communities That Care initiative is a program that brings these communities together to address the root causes of the issues that affect our most vulnerable.

The CTC initiative is a proven, prevention-based model that uses strategic consultations, training and research to try and steer youth away from problem behaviours like substance abuse, delinquency and violence, with the ultimate goal of addressing the devastating reality of teen suicide.

I am proud to say that the neighbourhood of Elmwood, in my constituency of Concordia, is the first urban community in Manitoba and only the second in Canada to be designated as a Communities That Care community. The program has a preventative, positive approach. It works over the long term with youth people to foster-preventative, positive approach works over the long term with young people to foster leadership

qualities, identify suicide-related issues and take steps to address those as thoroughly as possible.

The people of Elmwood and east Elmwood have been incredibly engaged and supportive of the project since it began, with dozens of residents and community leaders coming together to support the initiative. Recently, the program took a major step forward as the board and community stakeholders undertook a comprehensive training exercise led by the—by an expert on the CTC model from the United States.

I had the distinct honour of serving as the first co-chair of the citizen-led board and also participating in this training. So it was a particularly exciting undertaking for me.

When a community comes together to tackle problems, it shows our youth that when they are making choices in life they don't have to make them alone. Communities That Care members and volunteers bind themselves to the interests and concerns of our youth and do amazing work.

Thank you to the board and to all the volunteers involved for your hard work and dedication to our community.

Elkhorn Highway 256 Railway Crossing

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring a serious matter to the attention of the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

On November 4th, in the village of Elkhorn, a local resident, Mr. Bowles, was struck by a train at a mainline railroad lighted crossing on provincial highway 256. This fatal collision is the second death in recent years at this crossing; others have occurred previously. Highway 256 is the only route into Elkhorn from the south, Mr. Speaker, and is used extensively by cars and trucks, particularly from farms and the oil industry, as well as other heavy equipment and school buses loaded with schoolchildren attending Elkhorn collegiate.

Mr. Speaker, last Friday, Elkhorn resident Cecile Fisher presented to me petitions signed by over 400 local Elkhorn and area citizens to be presented to the minister and his department. In presenting these petitions to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure today, I wish to read the request as follows, and that is:

THAT we petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to install crossing arms on the CPR mainline crossing at Provincial Road 256 in the within the village of Elkhorn.

To request the government of Manitoba, the Government of Canada and the Canadian Pacific Railway to pay for the purchase of—and installation of crossing arms at Provincial Road 256.

And to request the various levels of government and CPR to work together with great haste to ensure that this is completed promptly, before any further lives are endangered.

And, Mr. Speaker, these citizens are aware that there is a multi-level responsibility in bringing this project to fruition; however, as PR 256 is a provincial highway, they are requesting the Province of Manitoba, through the minister's department, to be financially involved in this project.

And, as their representative, I urge the government to act on these citizens' concerns at the earliest opportunity with the other involved parties as—to, as much as possible, provide safety for the citizens of Elkhorn and area.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Citizens For Crime Awareness

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, this November I had an honour and pleasure of being the guest speaker at the volunteer appreciation event held in recognition of past Neighbourhood Watch Area captains, block captains and co-captains for Crime Awareness in the university and Pembina areas.

Citizens For Crime Awareness is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization. Members of this group work very hard to promote crime prevention through programs and safety-related training, as well as by providing information about the extent and nature of crimes in their communities.

The programs run by this group are recognized by the Winnipeg Police Service as effective tools in their efforts to promote increased crime awareness in Winnipeg's communities. Efforts such as the Crime Prevention Network are also supported by research which has found that community-based initiatives to prevent crime help reduce it.

The Citizens For Crime Awareness hosts a variety of crime prevention and awareness workshops. I took one of these workshops last

spring, where I learned some very important lessons. One of the key lessons I learned was that crimes are often described as happening because of opportunity. By learning how to reduce opportunities that may invite criminal activity, I now know more about how to reduce the incidents of such crimes in our neighbourhoods.

* (14:40)

The community-based Citizens For Crime Awareness also complements the Winnipeg Police Service's community-based policing strategy, particularly with the Community Relations Crime Prevention Unit. This relationship is formalized by an agreement with the Winnipeg Police Service to provide crime information to communities they work in, as well as to police.

I ask all members of this House to join me in congratulating this dedicated group of volunteers who have helped to, along with the Winnipeg police and the many prevention programs our government supports, ensure the safety and security of the residents of St. Norbert and Fort Richmond.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Glenboro Panthers Boys' Volleyball Team

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Glenboro Panthers varsity boys' volleyball team on a successful season. The team recently won the provincial A title in La Broquerie.

The boys won a hard-fought zone final over their archrival, the Treherne Tigers, to advance to the provincial championship. The Panthers were ranked fourth out of the 10-team field. The boys went through their round robin pool undefeated. In the playoff round, they defeated Wawanesa in the first game. They then came up against No. 1 ranked Rosenort. After dropping the first set, the boys rallied for the victory. This set up the final with archrival Treherne. Glenboro won the final in two straight games.

Bryce Watson and Travis Strain picked up all-star awards, and Travis also won the most valuable player trophy. Addison Cullen was voted the sportsman leadership award for the weekend.

The team also left a donation with school principal, Luc Brémault, for the Merkel family of La Broquerie who had just lost their father in a house fire.

I offer my congratulations on a job well done to the team for this season.

Mr. Speaker, I also ask for leave that the names of the players and the coaches be recorded in *Hansard*. I also ask that the congratulatory letter sent to the local paper by the principal of La Broquerie school be also recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement for the names of the members and what he just requested to be recorded in *Hansard*? [Agreed]

Addison Jefferey Cullen, Lucas Henry Delichte, JC Austin Dowse, Bryan Douglas Henderson, Trysten Joey Jefferies, Spencer Craig Myers, Jeffrey Rory Schwarz, Travis James Strain, Mitchel Daniel Thornborough, Drake Errol Wallis, Bryce Patrick Watson, Coach Keith Braaksma, Coach Josh Braaksma

Letter to the editor:

Be proud of your boys!

The 2010 Varsity A Boys Volleyball Provincial Championships were held at École St-Joachim in La Broquerie from November 25th to the 27th. Our school had the pleasure of hosting this great event where the Glenboro Panthers Varsity Boys team were crowned the provincial champions. What a feat! What an accomplishment. Definitely something of which these players, their parents, their school and their community can be proud.

This group of boys cannot go unnoticed for their prowess on the volleyball court, but they certainly cannot go unnoticed for their act of kindness and generosity towards a family they did not know. Two of the players asked to see me in my office on the Friday of the tournament. The eleven boys on the team offered a donation for a family stricken by tragedy here in La Broquerie, where a father lost his life after saving his 13-year-old son in a fire that destroyed their home on the weekend prior to the championship. A total of \$250 was deposited in the Merkel family trust fund on their behalf.

Be proud of your boys, not only for their sporting achievement, but most of all for their hearts of gold, in recognizing and taking action for a family in great need. That is an accomplishment.

Félicitations!

Luc Brémault

*Directeur/Principal
École Saint-Joachim
La Broquerie, MB*

Arborg and District Multicultural Heritage Village

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, a short time ago I attended the annual fall supper at the Arborg and District Multicultural Heritage Village. It was a wonderful event at which many residents from Arborg and the surrounding area came together in support of their community.

The dinner also provided me with an opportunity to present the heritage village with a cheque for \$12,000 from the Community Places Program from the Department of Housing and Community Development. This latest funding is in addition to the \$84,147 they have already received from the Community Places Program since 2001.

The goal of the program is to provide funding to non-profit community organizations throughout Manitoba that offer sustainable recreation and wellness benefits to their community. Currently, the heritage village features a number of historic buildings, including the restored St. Nicholas Parish Hall from Poplarfield, which is used year-round for local and family gatherings. There is also a campground which is open from May to September.

The village provides a valuable link to the way of life of the European families who settled in the Interlake region in the early 1900s. In the early years, the northern Interlake region saw an influx of Icelandic and Polish-Ukrainian pioneers.

Since then, this area has attracted a wide variety of people from other cultural backgrounds. The common thread amongst those who have lived in this area is how they have learned to live and work together as one community. Community values have a strong hold in the Interlake region, as we have learned that together, we are better prepared to overcome the challenges of living in such a beautiful yet rugged region of our province.

In closing, I would like to also acknowledge a dedicated volunteer, Pat Eyolfson, who was recently voted Volunteer of the Year by Community Futures East Interlake for her work on the village since its inception.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Before I call grievances, I want to make a quick statement to all members.

As the Assembly will be recessing today until-into the new year, and because we will have Youth Parliament meeting here in the Chamber later

on in this month, I'm asking that all members empty the contents of their desk before leaving today.

And I encourage members to use the blue bins that are here in the Chamber to recycle their *Hansards* and copies of bills. Any other material you have to recycle should be placed in the larger blue bins in the two message rooms.

And I thank all honourable members for your co-operation.

GRIEVANCES

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): I rise today to grieve about this government's woeful mishandling of an animal welfare case that is currently unfolding in the RM–Rural Municipality of Swan River.

Yesterday, that we learned that a 68-year-old man had been charged with 44 counts of causing damage and industry to animals under the Criminal Code.

On December 1st, 15 horses, two donkeys were seized and removed from a property in that municipality due to concerns about their living conditions and care. Also included were 27 dogs. The photos released in this–relation to this incident are truly disturbing. They paint a picture of animals that have been neglected and denied the care to which they are legally and morally entitled: the provision of food, water, adequate housing, proper grooming and medical care.

Let's review the situation, Mr. Speaker. The donkeys and the horses have hooves so overgrown that they have trouble walking. The dogs have had chain collars embedded in their necks to the point where their flesh was rotting. The odour was terrible. The desperate animals were so hungry that they were reduced to eating their own feces.

I find it deeply disturbing that this situation went on for so long under the watch of this NDP government. After all, many of the members across the way have spoken out so passionately about the need to protect animals, and I respect that. I respect the member for Kirkfield Park (Ms. Blady), when she brought in the animal—the act to deal with the personal animals—I'll just get the act straight here if I can, but for the record—The Service Animals Protection Act. She spoke passionately about it,

Mr. Speaker. And just the other day the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) spoke passionately about saving the polar bears. And she went into great detail for a length of time that was unbelievable, actually. The member from Minto did the same.

Mr. Speaker, after all, many of the members across the way have spoken out and we respect it on this side. Yet, this—and I might point out also, at the same time, that the service animal protection act was supported unanimously in this House, yet this situation unfolded in the backyard of the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), the former minister of Agriculture. It has been revealed that she was made aware of this situation back in the mid-2008 when she was the Minister of Agriculture. A concerned citizen, Sharon Otto, came forward, told the media recently that she had been personally spoken to the member for Swan River in the mid-2008.

The minister had assured this woman that she would, quote: Go out there, look over the place. End quote. Deeply worried that no action had been taken on this file, Otto followed up with the minister's office again in late 2008. But as we all know, no action was taken to seize these animals.

Concerns continued to be raised about the care of the animals, Mr. Speaker. Maggie Roman, a president of Romak, president of the Swan Valley Animal Protection League confirms this issue was well known in the region. Romak stated in a December 4th interview in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and I quote: Every second person I talked to in a report or knows someone who did. End quote.

I asked the member for Swan River three times yesterday to explain when she first knew of this terrible situation. I also asked her to explain why she did not act. However, she remained firmly planted in her seat, refusing to be held accountable for her actions. Shame on her.

Instead, the current agricultural minister, the member for Dauphin-Roblin (Mr. Struthers) was up, trying to deflect the spotlight of public accountability away from the member of Swan River. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. Not only was the member of Swan River the agricultural minister when these concerns first came to light, she was also the MLA representing that very municipality where these deplorable incidents took place. I'd like to remind this government that not only does it have the legislative tools at its disposal to deal with these

animal welfare cases, it also has the moral responsibility to act. One of the legislative tools is The Animal Care Act.

Yesterday in this House we were remembering the life of Harry Enns, a long-time member of Lakeside. He was a man who was sincerely dedicated to this province's agricultural sector. In 1996, Mr. Enns introduced a new animal care act which consolidated two existing animal protection acts. The purpose of this new legislation was to ensure that Manitoba had stronger laws to protect animals from mistreatment and/or neglect, including dogs raised at breeding operations, commonly known as puppy mills.

* (14:50)

The legislative changes Mr. Enns introduced included stiffer fines for offenders and allowing corrective action to be taken immediately to relieve cases of suffering and distress. As well, commercial dog and cat breeding operations would have to be licensed. Mr. Enns recognized that the humane treatment of pets and farm animals was paramount.

When the NDP took office, many Manitobans assumed that they would use the legislative tools, like The Animal Care Act, to ensure that animals were receiving proper care. In August 2000, just short of one year after the member of Swan River took office and became agricultural minister, her government used the provisions of The Animal Care Act to help seize 93 dogs from a puppy mill due to concerns over their welfare.

The government press release issued on August 16th, 2000, stated, and I quote: Under the criminal care act, the provincial animal protection officer may seize any animal that is considered to be in distress or kept in a condition that may result in a significant impairment to its health and well-being. End of quote. The member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), who was the agricultural minister, stated in that very same press release, and I quote: Our primary concern has been the welfare of the dogs. It was very important that we took action to protect these dogs while ensuring their proper process was followed. End quote.

Well, let's fast-forward to 2008. Suddenly, the member from Swan River, oblivious to the concerns that the dogs and other animals are being raised in deplorable conditions, had an operation in her own

very constituency. I ask: Why? How is it that The Animal Care Act, which had been used to seize dogs from a puppy mill in 2000, wasn't being used to address a situation unfolding in the member's own backyard? It seems incomprehensible that dozens and dozens of complaints were raised about the operation, but no meaningful action took place until last week when a municipality stepped in, Mr. Speaker, not the provincial government. I'm standing here today grieving the ineptitude of this NDP government on handling this situation.

However, I would be remiss if I did not recognize some of the people who have been working so diligently to have addressed it. They include the RM of Swan River animal control officer Jeff Blythe, animal care advocates Debbie Peterson, Maggie Romak, Bonnie Riddell of Papa Ranch Equine Rescue, and Sharon Otto, just to name a few, Mr. Speaker. There are many others who have raised concerns who have not been identified publicly. All these caring citizens should be recognized for their timeless work on this case.

The NDP are trying to deflect attention away from this horrendous mismanagement of this issue. I find it morally repugnant that they did not use the legislative tools that they have to swiftly address the situation and prevent needless suffering of these animals. Mr. Speaker, if it had not been for Jeff Blythe, those animals would still be there dying and suffering in darkness and in feces, eating their own feces. The agricultural minister and the member for Swan River owe Manitobans an explanation about why they failed to protect these animals and why they could not—that could not protect themselves.

Mr. Speaker, this minister needs to apologize. She needs to apologize and explain. The minister—the current Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) needs to do exactly the same because he was made aware. He was made aware by Bonnie Riddell and by Debbie Peterson and by a number of other individuals. He was made aware of these deplorable—deplorable—conditions that these animals were kept under, and had it not been for the control officer and a newly elected reeve in Swan River, these animals would continue to die. They would continue to die. The chains embedded in their necks would have only got worse. It's amazing that some of them lived.

I appreciate the opportunity to air a grievance on this important matter today, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much.

ORDERS OF THE DAY*(Continued)***GOVERNMENT BUSINESS****House Business**

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the plan for this afternoon, we're going to move through third reading motions and then we will move to, as there is time, second reading on Bill 6.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Howard: Thank you. The order in which we'll consider third readings: Bill 2, 12, 4, 3, 8, 9, 7, 5 and 10.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, order of business for the afternoon, we'll deal with concurrence and third readings, and this is the order of the bills that will be called: 2, 12, 4, 3, 8, 9, 7, 5 and 10. And, if we're concluded—if we have concluded the concurrence and third readings, then we will deal with second reading of Bill 6. So that's the order of business for this afternoon.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS**Bill 2—The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Winnipeg Police Service Auxiliary Cadets)**

Mr. Speaker: Okay, someone call bill—concurrence and third reading of Bill 2, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Winnipeg Police Service Auxiliary Cadets).

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 2, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Winnipeg Police Service Auxiliary Cadets); Loi modifiant la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg (cadets auxiliaires du Service de police de Winnipeg), reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Just a few words on this bill before we see it go forward for royal assent. I want to commend the City of Winnipeg, the mayor, the chief of police and those involved with the police association, for bringing forward this initiative to ensure that the police cadet corps will be a part of the Winnipeg Police Service. I hope that it'll make a difference for front-line officers, who we

know are dealing each and every day with a great number of different stresses and strains in their job, and to the extent that this alleviates some of their work so they can focus on things like investigations and proactive police work, we certainly support that.

So, again, we want this bill to go forward so that it can apply to provincial pieces of legislation and jurisdiction, and we commend the City of Winnipeg, the mayor, the police chief, the administration and the association for making it happen.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I, too, want to just say a few words on this bill. I think it's a step forward having the cadets, and I want to congratulate the cadets who are in the program and the Winnipeg Police Service for their efforts in bringing this program forward.

We hope that this works very well in helping the police in providing additional coverage in terms of services for people in Winnipeg. We'll be watching this very closely. As I said at second reading in committee, I think one of the things which is very important is having very clear guidelines in terms of what the cadets will be doing and what they won't be doing and to have very close supervision, particularly at the beginning and certainly over things where there may be issues coming forward.

So I salute the cadets for getting involved, and I hope this program works very well. Thank you.

* (15:00)

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 2, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Winnipeg Police Service Auxiliary Cadets).

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

Bill 12—The Highway Traffic Amendment and Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay, now we'll call Bill 12, The Highway Traffic Amendment and Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 12, The Highway Traffic Amendment and Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur

les conducteurs et les véhicules, reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Just a few comments regarding Bill 12. We hope that this builds upon some other strong frameworks to combat drinking and driving that started in the 1990s in terms of seizing of vehicles and some groundbreaking legislation that came forward then. We know that this is only one piece of the puzzle. When you look at the legislative framework, there's also enforcement that needs to happen, ensuring that our police have the resources to go out there and find those who are drinking and driving on our roads and causing others to be in peril on our roads at night.

Also, public education is an important part of reducing drinking and driving. There have been some good steps that have happened over the last couple of decades but we still see far too many tragic incidents where people are getting that knock at the door at night, which all parents and all people fear to hear about, either their child or a loved one. So we hope that the legislation before us today will be a part of reducing drinking and driving and, during this holiday season, we would remind all people that the best event, the best party are the ones that you make it home safely from. Thank you very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans were shocked this fall when two young people died in accidents in which one of the drivers had been drinking and driving and, certainly, we need to do whatever we can to decrease these tragedies to make sure that our roads are safe for all, and we hope that these measures will help to contribute to an effort to decrease the deaths and disabilities as a result of people who have been drinking and driving. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 12, The Highway Traffic Amendment and Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act.

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

Bill 4—The Retail Businesses Holiday Closing Amendment Act

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 4, The Retail Businesses Holiday Closing Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I just want to take this opportunity to thank the two presenters, Chuck Davidson and Lanny McInnis, for coming out and for giving us, as committee members, a convincing argument that the days and the hours—or rather the hours within that Boxing Day should be extended.

So, again, I want to thank them for the research that they did and for representing the business community the way they did. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few words on Bill 4, which the Liberal Party will support. But I would like to thank those who have come forward on this bill, either in the Legislature or provided advice as this bill has come forward.

I think that hopefully this bill will work well. I note that there were, during the committee stage and elsewhere, commitments from members of the government and members of the business community, that no employer would be forced to open on Boxing Day and no employee would be forced to work on Boxing Day. We're going to be watching and see if, in fact, that is the way that this works and how well it works for people in Manitoba. But hopefully it will work well and for that reason, we support it. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 4, The Retail Businesses Holiday Closing Amendment Act.

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

**Bill 3—The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act
(Denying Compensation to Offenders and
Other Amendments)**

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 3, The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act (Denying Compensation to Offenders and Other Amendments); Loi modifiant la Déclaration des droits des victimes (refus de versement d'indemnités aux auteurs d'infractions et autres modifications), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to see this bill move on and receive royal assent this afternoon. Certainly, we hope that there'll be further initiatives forthcoming, not only to ensure that victims of crime receive compensation, which is important—and receive support as a result of the crimes that they have committed against them or those that they witness.

We also hope there'll be more initiatives to reduce the number of victims. Because, ultimately, that should be the goal of all us, as legislators; not simply to find ways to provide compensation for those who are victims of crime but, in fact, to reduce the chance of somebody becoming a victim of crime, so that they'll never have to rely on this piece of legislation or other pieces of legislation. That truly where—is where our concern as Conservatives lie, is not with this particular bill, but with the fact that it needs to be relied on so extensively in the province of Manitoba, because there are so many Manitobans who become victims in the course of their daily lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on Bill 3 at third reading. This bill denies compensations to offenders who have been involved in illegal activities in the past.

Although we're supportive in the Liberal Party of this bill, I think there is a caution here in terms of the powers which are made available to the director, the discretion, the potential, depending on the nature of the activity. It's important that this—these powers be used wisely and fairly and that the message in this bill be one that is carried forward, but carried

forward in a way that is not going to give rise to greater variability in terms of the decisions that are made and thus impact, differentially, people in similar conditions.

* (15:10)

So I think that we'll be watching carefully to see what happens in terms of this bill, and it's worthwhile following closely to make sure that it's used wisely and well. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question for the House is Bill 3, The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act (Denying Compensation to Offenders and Other Amendments).

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

Bill 8—The Legal Aid Manitoba Amendment Act

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 8, The Legal Aid Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'aide juridique du Manitoba, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Again, Mr. Speaker, and also it is our expectation that this bill will receive royal assent this afternoon after having gone through the committee process. We certainly support the intention of the legislation, which should try to reduce the burden on Legal Aid by ensuring there's a means test for young offenders who may have wherewithal, through their parents, to have legal support that they need in coming into contact with the law.

Again, we see a large part of the problems that Legal Aid has, and we read and hear a lot of the difficulties that those working in Legal Aid are experiencing, is because of the great number of people who are coming to Legal Aid, and that is still the result of more and more crime in this province. So, ultimately, if we're going to take the burden off of Legal Aid, the surest way and the most impactful way to do that would be to reduce crime so that there wouldn't be as many individuals needing to rely on Legal Aid and going to Legal Aid. So we would

hope that, instead of simply responding to the pressures of increased crime that are happening in the province of Manitoba, that the government would come forward with initiatives that would actually reduce the number of crime and then, similar to the previous piece of legislation that we were debating, we wouldn't have to rely so much on victims' bills and so much on Legal Aid because we would have less crime in the province of Manitoba. So we hope that the government can turn their focus towards that lofty goal as opposed to just simply trying to address the—what comes downstream as the result of more crime.

We look forward to this bill passing.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I speak briefly on Bill 8, The Legal Aid Manitoba Amendment Act, which will provide for the ability of Legal Aid Manitoba to register a statement against land owned by a parent who fails to retain legal representation for a child charged with an offence. I know that the people at Legal Aid support this effort to give them additional resources in order that they're able to better represent people in Manitoba, and, hopefully, that's the way that this will work out. And I think it would appear that this will provide for a greater level of accountability and we'll watch very closely and see what the result is, but, at this point, prepared to support this as it goes to third reading and then to royal assent. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 8, The Legal Aid Manitoba Amendment Act.

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

Bill 9—The Summary Convictions Amendment Act

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 9, The Summary Convictions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): This bill purports to levy a fine against those who aren't

paying their fines. Well, we have some questions about whether or not the individuals who have already proven to not want to pay their fines will then pay an additional fine because they didn't pay their first fine. We look forward to seeing whether or not it'll work. We have—we know that there are some 42 to 58 million dollars outstanding in terms of fines in the province of Manitoba. This will probably increase that number because it'll add fines to that, but if it motivates people to pay their fines then we look forward to seeing it, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, on Bill 9, we, too, have some skepticism about the effectiveness of any of the people involved here are going to be people who are poor, and this—there may be better ways of enabling people to pay their fines rather than putting additional fines. But we'll hold that skepticism and see if this works, and watch as this legislation passes and then goes on to royal assent. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 9, The Summary Convictions Amendment Act.

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

Bill 7—The Polar Bear Protection Amendment Act (International Polar Bear Conservation Centre)

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Blaikie), that Bill 7, The Polar Bear Protection Amendment Act (International Polar Bear Conservation Centre); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection des ours polaires (Centre international de conservation des ours polaires), reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): It's my privilege to rise in the House to support Bill 7, The Polar Bear Protection Amendment Act. The establishment of the International Polar Bear Conservation Centre is a move that I think will be beneficial for us here in Manitoba as leaders in the world in regards to polar bear research. It allows for research into polar bears, and, of course, even in today's *Free Press* we see the concerns of climate

change in regards to polar bears in our own—in their living conditions and it—so they're under change constantly, and I think that this kind of a bill or this type of establishment will put us, in Manitoba and Winnipeg, as leaders in this particular area, and, of course, we can't leave out Churchill, where their natural habitat in Manitoba is as well, and much further north, Mr. Speaker, you having had great personal experience in this yourself.

* (15:20)

And, I guess, the only thing I'd like to say is that it's—that I think we should—in establishment, I'd urge the minister to make sure that they continue to look at putting some people on with practical experience in regards to the habitat and that have actually worked with and lived with in the regions where polar bears are secure in their habitat. And look forward to the Assiniboine Park Conservatory's—Conservancy's, rather, appointments as well to this. It's half and half, I understand, up to eight members on this committee, and certainly look forward to working with them in the future in regards to the fine research that'll be done in this area. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a comment on Bill 7, The Polar Bear Protection Amendment Act.

I had asked some questions at the committee stage and one of the replies reflected the importance of the research and educational activities to be done at the centre, and the importance of having not just private sector but public sector funding to enable that research to be done in a substantial way.

And so I will just remind the minister that I will be looking at his departmental budget next spring just to make sure that the adequacy of the research funds that are allocated to make sure that this institute can function properly and that the agreement between the government and the Assiniboine Park are done in such a way that will assure that the research is conducted and will contribute substantially, and that there are links to post-secondary organizations and that this will make a substantial contribution to knowledge of polar bears and impact of climate change and so on. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House: concurrence and third reading of Bill 7, The Polar Bear Protection Amendment Act (International Polar Bear Conservation Centre).

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

Bill 5—The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Historic Property Designations)

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Local Government (Mr. Lemieux), that Bill 5, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Historic Property Designations); Loi modifiant la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg (désignations de biens historiques), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill 5, briefly. The—this bill is only a bill that gives—it gives the City of Winnipeg the same rights on heritage properties and heritage buildings that all the other municipalities of the province have enjoyed for close to 15 years.

I've talked to habitat—or to Heritage Winnipeg. They're quite pleased with this bill. They made a written presentation to the committee. We support this bill. We look—we're happy to see it go forward. Thank you very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party supports this bill to provide the powers to the City of Winnipeg that are already present in other municipalities, and hopes that these are used well and appropriately by the City. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is Bill 5, The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Historic Property Designations).

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

**Bill 10—The Employment Standards Code
Amendment Act (Leave for
Citizenship Ceremonies)**

Mr. Speaker: Now we'll move on to Bill 10, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Citizenship Ceremonies).

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 10, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Citizenship Ceremonies); Loi modifiant le Code des normes d'emploi (congés relatifs aux cérémonies de citoyenneté), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I want to put a few comments on the record, and I will again repeat some of the comments that I made in committee, and that is, I believe, that this bill could have actually been dealt with in regulation.

And the other thing that I would indicate is that I have yet to find of an employer who has not allowed their employee or employees to go and get their citizenship. So in my—and certainly my area is one where we've had a lot of immigration taking place, I have not heard of any concerns out there. In fact, the employers have been very proud to have their employees become Canadian citizens.

So, with those few words, we are certainly prepared to pass this bill.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party is supportive of this effort to recognize the importance of citizenship as a major achievement and very important for people coming to Canada and a celebration of their arrival here and becoming part of the Canadian family.

So, certainly, I support this legislation and look forward to it becoming law after it receives royal assent.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is concurrence third reading of Bill 10, The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Citizenship Ceremonies).

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

SECOND READINGS

**Bill 6—The Workers Compensation
Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed to, we will now move on to second reading of Bill 6, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), that Bill 6, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

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

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister for Labour and Immigration, seconded by the honourable Attorney General, that Bill 6, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of the bill, and the message has been tabled.

Ms. Howard: Before I begin my remarks on this bill, I just wanted to add, certainly, our congratulations on her retirement to Bev Bosiak who served this House so capably for so long, and I didn't know until today that she was the first woman to sit at the table in the House and I think that is an accomplishment worth noting.

Mr. Mohinder Saran, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

This bill adds to what we have done in the past on protecting firefighters and making sure that they're covered for occupational diseases such as cancers. This government's been a national leader in workers compensation coverage with respect to firefighters.

We're all aware the important work that firefighters do. In addition to the extraordinary safety hazards associated with their occupation, it's also been well established that firefighters are exposed to a host of health hazards.

These new amendments reflect our continuing commitment to the thousands of full-time, part-time and volunteer firefighters—the brave men and women

who risk their lives on a daily basis to protect us and our communities.

I'm pleased to state that the proposed act expands the list of presumptive diseases for firefighters to include multiple myeloma, primary site prostate, primary site skin and, for the first time in Canada, primary site breast cancer.

In 2002, Manitoba became the first Canadian jurisdiction to have a statutory firefighter presumption, meaning that certain injuries are presumed to be caused by the occupation of firefighting unless the contrary is proven.

We're pleased that other Canadian jurisdictions have since introduced and passed similar legislation, and that is certainly in no small part due to the advocacy of Alex Forrest of the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg.

* (15:30)

In 2002, five primary site cancers were included: brain, bladder, and kidney cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and leukemia. In 2005, we extended the presumption to part-time and volunteer firefighters and added primary site colorectal and ureter cancers, lung cancer for non-smokers and heart injuries within 24 hours of attendance at an emergency response. In 2009, primary site esophageal and primary site testicular cancers were also added to the presumption.

This new amendment will create the most comprehensive coverage in Canada for firefighters. No other jurisdiction in Canada currently includes breast cancer in their presumptive legislation. Women in the fire service are still few in number; however, the Winnipeg fire service has the highest percentage of women serving of any fire service in Canada. The addition of breast cancer to the list of covered cancers is the right thing to do, and this government is committed to being proactive in recognizing the increased risk and perils faced by our brave men and women in the fire service. It should be noted, of course, that the addition of breast cancer is not limited to female firefighters, as both men and women can contract breast cancer.

Members of this House unanimously supported the firefighter presumptive legislation in 2002, 2005 and 2009, and I expect that that support will continue with this bill. This bill is also important because it creates a floor for the three indexing factors used to

calculate WCB benefits. Workers Compensation Board benefits for all workers are automatically indexed to the rate of inflation. The legislation does not make a distinction between upward and downward movements in the indexing factors, although upward movements are subject to a cap. Historically, the Consumer Price Index and the industrial average wage indexing factors have gone up, which has resulted in an increase in WCB benefits. However, for the first time, one of the indexes went down year over year, which means that the indexing factor will be slightly negative.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

The government wants to protect both the upside and the downside. This bill introduces a floor which ensures that no workers will have their benefits reduced because of indexing. I ask the members of this House for their support of this amendment which solves a current problem and prevent any future problems for the workers of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): I welcome the opportunity to put a few words on the record in regard to Bill 6, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, which does include or expand coverage of—to the firefighters by the Workers Compensation Board to include multiple myeloma, primary site prostate cancer, primary site skin cancer and primary site breast cancer, Mr Speaker. And it's notable to note that Manitoba does have the highest proportion of female firefighters compared to other provinces, according to the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg.

I think that we need to recognize the hard work that the firefighters do for us in our province. They certainly put their life on the line any time there's a fire and, certainly, we've heard of some pretty bad fires in recent years. I'm reminded of speaking with one of the firefighters who was involved in the Gabrielle Roy fire and his experiences, and so, certainly, that brings it very close to home when you hear those kinds of things on what dangers they face.

So we know that the dangers of the job do include intense heat and smoke which can lead to health problems. Certain materials that burn in homes, like plastics, can release dangerous toxins which can lead to more problems and exposure to carcinogens such as benzene which also can be released during fires, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pleased to see that the bill does extend coverage not only to

full-time, but to part-time and volunteer firefighters, which I think is the right thing to do.

And, as well, it–this bill also contains provisions to index benefits to the rate of inflation. And what has happened lately is the 'indecting'–indexing factors that are used to determine this have been in a negative position, which has meant that the benefits were decreased. And in this bill it's going to provide not only for the firefighters, but for any recipient of Workers Compensation Board benefits, there will not be a decrease in benefits paid out there—even when there's a negative indexing situation, Mr. Speaker.

So, with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to see this bill pass on to committee and pass this bill as soon as we can. Thank you very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few words on Bill 6, a bill which recognizes the importance of firefighters in our province, but also recognizes that our firefighters are at higher risk, because of their occupation, for getting a number of different types of cancers, and this bill will expand the list of cancers which would be covered to include multiple myeloma, the prostate, skin and breast cancers. I think it is important that we recognize the contributions of firefighters, day in and day out, to the importance of all of us here in Manitoba. It's, at the same time, important that we recognize that firefighters are subject to increased incidence of certain diseases, in this case cancers, which result from the exposures that they have in fighting fires.

And this is an important step for a number of reasons. It provides important recognition and, therefore, compensation to those who develop these cancers or the families in an appropriate way. It is never enough to compensate for the death of somebody from one of these cancers, but at least it is something that we can do as a government, as a Province.

I think our goal here should be not just to recognize that firefighters, because of their exposures, are more likely to get certain types of cancers, but we should take this further. We should be looking very hard at steps that can be taken to reduce these exposures, to reduce the likelihood of firefighters getting these cancers. And if we can prevent these cancers in the first place because there has been more attention to them and firefighters, then that in the long-run would be the far by–by far and away the best result.

And so I would urge the government to work with the firefighters to develop and enhance ways of preventing the exposures in the workplace and at the time of fires to the extent that that possibly can be so that we make every possible effort to reduce the higher incidence of cancers in firefighters, because the best possible end result would be that we can change the work environment so that firefighters are no longer at higher risk.

I think it's important that we are also looking at other occupations as well in making sure that where there are occupations which have cancers as a risk factor of that occupation, that we are including those occupations, where there are workers under The Workers Compensation Act for compensation. That is an activity that we need to be engaged in on an ongoing way so that we're–treating people throughout our province, whatever workplace they're working in, fairly and, as with firefighters, by drawing attention to the problem can hopefully bring in measures that can prevent the cancers in the first place.

So I certainly want to support this legislation, as I've supported previous legislation, to enhance the workers compensation benefits for firefighters who develop certain cancers which are higher in firefighters than they are in others with different workplaces.

So, with those few remarks, I look forward to this going on to committee stage and then I would presume, next spring, to third reading and being passed. Thank you.

* (15:40)

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): It's my pleasure to rise to add my comments to Bill 6, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, brought forward by our Minister of Labour (Ms. Howard).

I'd like to first start, Mr. Speaker, by congratulating Bev Bosiak on her impending retirement, long service to this Chamber, and, of course, it was quite unexpected. Yes, she was quite a long time in service to this Chamber, but I do appreciate her service to the members from–on both sides of the House and we wish her well in her future endeavours as she moves into her retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to add my comments on Bill 6. I know this is one more step in the progression of protections that we put in place to look after our firefighting forces in the province of

Manitoba, whether it be full-time, part-time, or our volunteer firefighters in this province.

I do know there was quite a history with respect to this type of legislation in this province, and I'm quite proud to have been a part of that along with the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) in our efforts to bring forward this type of legislation going back as far as 1989 in this province. So, Mr. Speaker, you can see that there's been a long time in coming, but I'm quite happy with the work that our previous minister of Labour has undertaken, with—the member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan), and, of course, our current Minister of Labour (Ms. Howard) with respect to the current piece of legislation. And there was a previous minister of Labour prior to that who started us along this road, and I'd like to thank also Becky Barrett, who's not in this Chamber at this time, for her efforts with respect to the work that she had undertaken to start us along this journey.

I listened to the comments of members opposite. I do know, in past decades here, the members opposite were not quite as supportive of this type of legislation. In fact, they actually voted against it on several occasions, Mr. Speaker. But I'm happy to see that they made a conversion along the way and that they've come a long way and they now support this type of legislation because I think it's the right thing to do for the firefighters, whether it be men or women or volunteer or full-time firefighting forces in this province.

I listened to the comments by the member for—to River Heights just a few moments ago where he talked about us taking the next steps to prevent—protect firefighters in this province. And, yes, perhaps there are things that we can do in the future with respect to protection of firefighters, but if you listen to the comments that they make to us now, there isn't current technology or equipment in place that will totally 100 per cent protect them. And that's why legislation of this type is so important to their future security and the future of their surviving families.

We do know that the fires and the workplace hazards that firefighters encounter can take a variety of—

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Reid: I know the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) wants to hurry up. Too bad he hadn't done that in the 1990s. We wouldn't be having this debate right now. This would have been law in the province.

The firefighters themselves, Mr. Speaker, have put themselves in harm's way day in and day out in protecting every member of our society and that we have an obligation, a moral and ethical obligation, to prevent—protect those firefighters and their families, and I think this legislation, through Bill 6, takes us that next step by providing an inclusion of multiple myeloma, primary site prostate, and skin and breast cancers to the list of cancers that are consumed—considered to be presumptive in favour of the firefighters, should they encounter such a disease.

And I do know that firefighters are quite thankful for the works that our government has made. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I believe this is the 10th time in my time in this Legislature where we have actually debated this type of legislation, and, of course, to our government, this is, I believe, the fifth time that we have made progress to help firefighters and those that are in service of our communities.

And I want to congratulate and thank the current Minister of Labour for her efforts in this regard and for recognizing that we have that obligation to protect firefighters. I want to also, Mr. Speaker, at the press conference that we had this week—and I did not understand or recognize this fact, and the number of women firefighters that we have in service to the people of Winnipeg, the 43 women firefighters. To see them in service to our communities is very heartening, and I want to congratulate them on being members of the Winnipeg fire service. And, of course, we are leaders in Canada with the number of women firefighters we have and that we want to thank them for their service, and this legislation helps to protect them as well as the men that are in firefighting service of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I could say much more, but I know members opposite want to have this legislation proceed through to committee. So I'll conclude and thank the Minister of Labour and other members of the House for supporting of this legislation. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister for Education.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, okay.

Okay, is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 6, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act.

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

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): I'm informed that the Lieutenant-Governor will momentarily be coming into the Chamber to provide royal assent to the bills that we've passed.

ROYAL ASSENT

Acting Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Ray Gislason): His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

His Honour Philip S. Lee, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in the following words:

Mr. Speaker: Your Honour:

At this sitting, the Legislative Assembly has passed certain bills that I ask Your Honour to give assent to.

Madam Clerk Assistant (Monique Grenier):

Bill 2—The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Winnipeg Police Service Auxiliary Cadets); Loi modifiant la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg (cadets auxiliaires du Service de police de Winnipeg)

Bill 3—The Victims' Bill of Rights Amendment Act (Denying Compensation to Offenders and Other Amendments); Loi modifiant la Déclaration des droits des victimes (refus de versement d'indemnités aux auteurs d'infractions et autres modifications)

Bill 4—The Retail Businesses Holiday Closing Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail

Bill 5—The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Historic Property Designations); Loi modifiant la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg (désignations de biens historiques)

Bill 7—The Polar Bear Protection Amendment Act (International Polar Bear Conservation Centre);

Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection des ours polaires (Centre international de conservation des ours polaires)

Bill 8—The Legal Aid Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'aide juridique du Manitoba

Bill 9—The Summary Convictions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires

Bill 10—The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave for Citizenship Ceremonies); Loi modifiant le Code des normes d'emploi (congés relatifs aux cérémonies de citoyenneté)

Bill 12—The Highway Traffic Amendment and Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur les conducteurs et les véhicules

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): In Her Majesty's name, His Honour assents to these bills.

* (15:50)

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

Mr. Speaker: Please be seated.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. To the table officers, especially Bev, who we're all going to miss, and the pages and all of my colleagues, the best of the New Year, and, for one last time, would you ask the House if there's a will to call it 5 o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Okay, is it the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

And, before I do, I would like to wish everyone all the best in the holiday season. Merry Christmas, happy new year, on behalf of my family to yours and all the best of your Christmas.

So now the hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned and will return at the call of the Speaker.

"We Wish You a Merry Christmas" was sung.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 9, 2010

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