

**Third Session - Fortieth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**

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

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Fortieth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	NDP
WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Arthur-Virten	
<i>Vacant</i>	Morris	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 27, 2013

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

**Mr. Speaker:** O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom, know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### Bill 209—The Lymphedema Awareness Day Act

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from La Verendrye, that Bill 209, The Lymphedema Awareness Day Act; Loi sur la Journée de sensibilisation au lymphœdème, be now—be read for a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Ewasko:** Mr. Speaker, this bill proclaims March 6th in each year as lymphedema awareness day. Lymphedema affects approximately 25 per cent of breast cancer patients and 140 million people worldwide. Lymphedema can be a difficult condition to treat and one that causes significant morbidity, both physical and psychological, for patients. It is also frequently underdiagnosed and under-treated, which can add to patients' frustration at their chronic and debilitating disease.

This bill will make March 6th officially lymphedema awareness day in Manitoba, a day to honour patients with lymphedema, recognize health-care practitioners who care for patients with lymphedema and educate the public at large about this debilitating disease.

I look forward to unanimous support from both sides of the House on this very important bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Any further introduction of bills?

### PETITIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing none, we'll move on to petitions.

#### Provincial Sales Tax Increase—Referendum

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Good afternoon. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The provincial government promised not to raise taxes in the last election.

(2) Through Bill 20, the provincial government wants to increase the retail sales tax, known as the PST, by one point without the legally required referendum.

(3) An increase to the PST is excessive taxation that will harm Manitoba families.

(4) Bill 20 strips Manitobans of their democratic right to determine when major tax increases are necessary.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to not raise the PST without holding a provincial referendum.

This petition submitted on behalf of J. Stinson, J. Zelych, M. Zelych and many other fine Manitobans.

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

#### Provincial Sales Tax Increase— Cross-Border Shopping

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) Manitoba has a thriving and competitive retail environment in communities near its borders, including Bowsman, Swan River, Minitonas, Benito, Roblin, Russell, Binscarth, St-Lazare, Birtle,

Elkhorn, Virden, Melita, Waskada, Boissevain, Deloraine, Cartwright, Pilot Mound, Crystal City, Manitou, Morden, Winkler, Plum Coulee, Altona, Gretna, Emerson, Morris, Killarney, Sprague, Vita, Reston, Pierson, Miniota, McAuley, St. Malo, Tilston, Foxwarren and many others.

(2) Both the Saskatchewan PST rate and the North Dakota retail sales tax rate are 5 per cent, and the Minnesota retail sales tax rate is 6 per cent.

(3) The retail sales tax rate is 40 per cent cheaper in North Dakota and Saskatchewan and 25 per cent cheaper in Minnesota as compared to Manitoba.

(4) The differential in tax rates creates a disincentive for Manitoba consumers to shop locally to purchase their goods and services.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(1) To acknowledge that the increase in the PST will significantly encourage cross-border shopping and put additional strain on the retail sector, especially for those businesses located close to the Manitoba provincial borders.

(2) Is to urge the provincial government to reverse its PST increase to ensure Manitoba consumers can shop affordably in Manitoba and support local businesses.

And this petition is signed by B. Hildebrand, D. Sawatzky, C. Sawatzky and many, many more fine Manitobans.

#### **Provincial Road 433 Improvements**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) Provincial Road 433, Lee River Road and Cape Coppermine Road, in the rural municipality of Lac du Bonnet has seen an increase in traffic volume in recent years.

(2) New subdivisions have generated considerable population growth, and the area has seen a significant increase in tourism due to the popularity of the Granite Hills Golf Course.

(3) This population growth has generated an increased tax base in the rural municipality.

(4) Lee River Road and Cape Coppermine Road were not originally built to handle the high volume of traffic they now accommodate.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request that the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation recognize that Lee River Road and Cape Coppermine Road can no longer adequately serve both area residents and tourists, and as such consider making improvements to the road to reflect its current use.

This petition is signed by R. McLachlan, P. Chenier, K. Ouellette and many, many more fine Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further petitions?

#### **Highway 217 Bridge Repair**

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The bridge over the Red River on Highway 217 outside of St. Jean Baptiste was built in 1947 and provides a vital link for economic activities and community development on both sides of the river.

\* (13:40)

(2) The Department of Infrastructure and Transportation closed the bridge after spending significant sums of money and time on rehabilitation efforts in the summer of 2012.

(3) Individuals require numerous trips across the river each day to access schools, businesses and health-care facilities. The bridge closure causes daily undue hardship and inconvenience for residents due to time requirements and higher transportation costs.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to repair or replace the existing bridge as soon as possible to allow communities on both sides of the river to return to regular activities.

And this petition is signed by S. McVicar, B. McVicar, A. Unrau and many, many other fine Manitobans.

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual statement on fidelity bonds, as required by section 20 of The Public Officers Act.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we will have seated from Kelvin High School 30 grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Ben Carr. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

On behalf of honourable members, we welcome all of our students here this afternoon.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### MGEU

#### Senior Staff Suspensions

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition):** A long-time NDP activist, Bob Dewar, was in the news recently, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Dewar is a former chief of staff to the previous premier, and he was the NDP campaign manager back in '99, I believe in 2003 as well, and he was serving as executive director of the Manitoba Government Employees' Union until recently. Free Press report on October the 18th stated that he was suspended, did not say why.

Given the fact that he serves on other government-appointed—in government-appointed roles in addition to this role, Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned that this issue needs to be addressed by the Premier.

Will he elaborate on the reasons for Mr. Dewar's suspension, and could he explain what is at issue here with his suspension from his responsibilities at MGEU?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, that's between the employer and the employee; it has nothing to do with us.

But I can say this, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would elaborate on why he continues to support the Senate when all Manitobans and Canadians would like to see it abolished.

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, the Premier seems intent on trying to create the impression he wants to end

patronage in Ottawa, but he certainly doesn't want to end it here, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is he's appointed Mr. Dewar to political positions within—for example, on the Workers Compensation Board, in 2007 he was appointed by this government, again in—by this now-Finance Minister in 2012. These are fine examples, I think, of patronage appointments. This board—you know, the Senate has never changed. It's always been a home of patronage, but our civil service should not be, Mr. Speaker, a home of patronage.

This board, the Workers Compensation Board, is a centre of governance for workers in our province. It is an important agency for the working people of this province. Mr. Dewar cashes cheques from the people of Manitoba for his work on that board at \$80 an hour.

If Mr. Dewar is not good enough for the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, why is he good enough for this Premier on the Workers Compensation Board?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, the employees select their candidates to serve on the Workers Compensation Board, and if they chose that particular individual, that's entirely within their purview.

But when speaks to campaign managers, it was the senator from Manitoba, the Conservative senator from Manitoba that was the campaign manager for the PCs in the last election, and the Leader of the Opposition has just admitted that it's a patronage appointment paid for by the taxpayers and doing political work for the Leader of the Opposition. Why does he support that, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Pallister:** Well, you know what they say about imitation and flattery, Mr. Speaker. If patronage is alive in Ottawa, it's obvious that it's honoured and it's replicated by this particular Premier.

Mr. Dewar's status is unclear. Mr. Dewar's suspension casts a shadow. It's cast a shadow over him, and that's perhaps undeserved. And it would be wise to clear the air. It would be wise to make sure that nothing untoward has happened in respect of Mr. Dewar's responsibilities, because, of course, it casts a shadow on his other responsibilities.

Now, a small portion of his compensation was paid from the patronage appointment that he received

from this government. He was, of course, appointed by this government to that position.

And so, given the fact that Mr. Dewar did donate \$2,975 last year to the NDP, it would make sense, if there was any hint of impropriety or non-performance by Mr. Dewar, would it not be appropriate that that money be returned to the people of Manitoba?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Leader of the Opposition acknowledging that the senators appointed by the PCs in Ottawa are patronage appointments, which raises the question: Why does the Leader of the Opposition think that it's okay that those patronage appointments get involved in provincial elections as their campaign managers? That's totally unacceptable, even by his standard of ethics, completely unacceptable to this side of the House.

We think the Senate should be abolished. They want to keep it going because it gives them a freebie in the next election.

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

**Mr. Pallister:** Mr. Speaker, there's no one in this House, including the members opposite, who believes for a second that if this party ever had a day in power in Ottawa, they wouldn't have their fat-cat supporters and donors in the Senate in no time at all. No one believes that.

Mr. Speaker, we believe in recycling. My family certainly believes in recycling. But what we don't believe in on this side of the House is that it's right for the NDP to recycle payments to their patronage appointees back into their own political party's coffers.

Now, let's look at Mr. Buckley, Bruce Buckley, another long-time, diehard NDP worker volunteer, and good for him for that. I want to make clear that that is my point. He should not, however, if he has been suspended for any wrongdoing, he should not remain on the Taxicab Board. This government has appointed him to the Taxicab Board. He cashed cheques for working on the Taxicab Board. If the Premier is not concerned that something untoward has happened to cause these suspensions, I would suggest he should be.

Is he not concerned that these gentlemen are cashing public cheques at the expense of Manitoba taxpayers?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, we've appointed good quality people on the recommendations of employers, on the recommendations of community people, including members that sit in the PC caucus opposite right now. Some of those have been appointed to us by major boards in Manitoba with respect to agriculture.

Leader of the Opposition just said that it was a patronage appointment, just acknowledged that he was the campaign chairman in the provincial election. Why doesn't he do what the Prime Minister does and require him to repay his wages for being involved in partisan political activity in Manitoba?

**Mr. Pallister:** This government requires every Manitoban to repay their wages to this government, Mr. Speaker. That's the problem with high-spending governments and high-tax governments. And this one embodies that practice.

Mr. Buckley was appointed by this government by way of a patronage appointment to the Taxicab Board in 2008. Now, he is the chair of the Taxicab Board, which controls licences, rates, standards, inspections for our cabbies. This is an important board. It acts, also, as a liaison between the government and the industry. But I'm concerned that it's being used as a liaison between the New Democratic Party and taxicab boards. I'm wondering if that's the reason that Mr. Buckley is paid so much to sit on that board.

Would the Premier like to verify that this position is one which is very influential in offering direct support from the taxicab drivers of our province to the NDP and that Mr. Buckley plays a key role in that service to the party, not the people of Manitoba?

\*(13:50)

**Mr. Selinger:** The member from Agassiz, the member from Portage la Prairie, we appointed them to boards because they're good people.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition acknowledges that it's a patronage appointment to the Senate. He was a member of the Parliament that appointed these people. He served with the government when these appointments were made. Now—now it's okay that we keep the Senate going. Now it's okay that the taxpayer pay for his partisan political activity in Manitoban.

Mr. Speaker, how do spell hypocrisy in Manitoba? PC is how it starts.

**Mr. Pallister:** Mr. Speaker, when this Premier was—before this Premier was engaged in public life, I was personally and people I was associated with were advocating for Senate reform. A long time before this particular gentleman even entered public life, I was calling for an accountable, elected Senate. And so I presumed that the member would research that position a little more fully before he would advocate that I would be a maintainer of the status quo. Given the opportunity to fight for change, I have.

He is fighting for abolition, Mr. Speaker, and we can have a debate about that, but it won't be a billboard debate or a presumptuous sort of a, I don't know, National Enquirer style of debate that the Premier seems to advocate. It will be a thoughtful and reasoned debate that will promote a better country, a unified country.

Now, Mr. Buckley donated \$900 last year to the PC Party. I'm wondering if the Premier's going to engage in getting it back.

**Mr. Selinger:** Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition had a chance to vote against maintaining the Senate in Canada, saving taxpayers \$92 million. But, no, when the moment of truth came, he voted to maintain the Senate. He voted for public subsidies for what he calls patronage appointments, and those patronage appointments are involved in Manitoba elections. It follows up on his role in the '95 election where we saw the biggest vote rigging in the history of Manitoba.

He wants to maintain patronage in Ottawa and patronage in Manitoba. Shame on him, Mr. Speaker.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

I—the Premier is trying to pretend he has lots of passion on this issue. I wonder why, if he has so much passion, why he didn't bother to show up for the vote yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

I listened very carefully to the debate here this afternoon and members are doing quite well with respect to keeping within the parliamentary practices and procedures that we have, and on the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition

House Leader strays over the lines of parliamentary procedure. And I think all members in here will know that we're not to make references to members' presence or absence in this Assembly, and that's for a variety of reasons including the many and varied duties that members of this Assembly have to perform on behalf of serving their constituents.

So in addition to the ruling that there is no point of order in this matter, I add a caution to the honourable member for Steinbach and to members of the House to please follow the parliamentary practices and procedures with respect to members' presence and absence in the House.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Now is the honourable member for River East.

#### PST Increase Request to Reverse

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East):** Mr. Speaker, this government has absolutely no credibility and Manitobans don't believe a word that comes out of their mouth.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) stood before the last election and said, read my lips, I'm not going to raise taxes, and on top of that, a PST increase? That's nonsense. Those were the words out of the Premier's mouth before the last election, and what have we seen since then? We have seen two huge increases in taxes, an expansion of the PST the first budget after the election and an increase of 1 per cent in the PST—[interjection]—yes—in this last budget.

Mr. Speaker, this government still has time. Will the Premier today commit to reverse his decision and not increase the PST? There's still time.

**Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance):** I want to thank the member for the question.

I think, as we've discussed in this House before, that decision that we took was a difficult decision, was not an easy decision. We know that it has an impact on families to pay that 1 cent on the dollar more on the things that they buy. But we also believed that we needed to invest in Manitoba, we needed to invest in our future growth and our future prosperity, not only for ourselves but for our kids.

We want to build this province. We want to make sure we have the roads that can take our goods abroad for export. We want to make sure that we

have clean and safe water for all of our citizens that live here. To do that, we did raise one point on the dollar, and that was a difficult decision. But we believe that it will help our kids have good lives here, stay in Manitoba and raise their families.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Again, how can anyone, how can any Manitoban believe a word that comes out of the mouth of any member of this government?

Mr. Speaker, let me tell the government again, before the last election, they said, we're not going to raise taxes, trust me. Before the last election, said, we're—they said, we're not going to raise the PST, just trust me, just elect me and we will follow through on our promises. Well, those promises are hollow.

How can this government expect anyone to believe anything they say today when they wring their hands and say, oh, my goodness, it was a tough decision? Mr. Speaker, it was a decision to tell the truth before the last election.

**Ms. Howard:** Well, wringing our hands is exactly what we didn't do when we were faced with the hard decision. We were elected, all of us who were elected in this House, not just to make the easy decisions but to make the hard decisions, and sometimes those hard decisions are unpopular. But when we get elected, we know that we are here not only for the next four years but we're here to build the best province that we can for our kids, for future generations. In order to do that, we believe it's going to take some investment now.

We want to make that investment to grow our economy. We don't want to do that at the expense of nurses and doctors. We don't want to do that at the expense of teachers for our kids. We want to do that in a way that we can afford the services that Manitoba families count on but also invest in their future.

I want a Manitoba where, when my child grows up, he can live and have the great life that I've had here. That's what we're investing in.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Again, those words ring hollow. They ring hollow to Manitobans who were betrayed before the last election when they were told by this NDP government that they weren't going to raise taxes, that raising the PST was absolute nonsense, it wasn't going to happen. Mr. Speaker, Manitobans again have been betrayed.

And it's not too late. The legislation hasn't passed yet. They have raised the PST illegally.

Will they now think very carefully over this next week and say to Manitobans, we told you, we made a mistake, we misled you before the last election, we're going to live up to our promise to you and we're going to rescind the 1 per cent PST. Will they do that today?

**Ms. Howard:** Well, I know that what the members opposite would have us do is cut deeply into the services that Manitobans count on. We know that we only need to look to the last session when the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, had his opportunity to tell Manitobans what he would do. And what he said is that he would cut deeply into the services that Manitobans count on, health care and education, that he would make sure that people who serve our families lose their jobs. And that is the government he was part of in the '90s, a government that made short-sighted decisions to make sure we weren't training the nurses and the doctors that are still missing in the system today.

We won't go down that same road. This was a tough decision. It was hard. It wasn't easy. But it was a decision that we believe is going to set Manitoba on a future to growth and prosperity. It's going to make Manitoba a good place for our kids.

### **Tax Increases Impact on Earnings**

**Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson):** Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister continues to talk about tough decisions. It wasn't a tough decision for them to put \$5,000 in each one of their bank accounts every year for a vote tax.

\* (14:00)

This morning Statistics Canada reported once again that Manitoba is at the bottom of the barrel—country. Average earnings, weekly earnings in Manitoba—and for every Manitoban, they take home to feed their family 36 cents more year over year. Congratulations.

Employees in Saskatchewan make \$115.41 a week more than their Manitoba counterparts every week of the year, Mr. Speaker.

Why is this government punishing workers in this province with higher taxes and less money in their pockets?

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy):** I wonder if the member opposite would reflect on the average weekly earnings of a nurse who gets fired.

**Mr. Graydon:** And I wonder if the minister would refer to the 18 closed ERs in this province that she worked so diligently for.

Manitoba is \$80.70 behind the national average. We receive the lowest average weekly paycheques west of Québec. Manitoba's once again at the bottom of the barrel.

Competition is important to the economy, and the government is driving workers out in this province to more competitive economies. Manitoba has become an environment where businesses aren't welcome and employees are leaving for other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, why has this spend government allowed Manitoba to become uncompetitive with the rest of the country, and when will they reverse the PST increase?

**Ms. Oswald:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite and I have had this conversation back and forth for some days now about the fact that, compared to the same period last year, we've seen a net increase of 8,300 jobs in the private sector.

We also know, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba is one of the most affordable places to live. Members opposite spoke of Saskatchewan. It's actually Saskatchewan, in their own budget documents, that ranked Manitoba at the top for affordability.

And as for his comments about people fleeing the province, I would cite for him a comment from his colleague from Morden-Winkler who said in his response to the Throne Speech: We have communities across this province who are firing on all cylinders, with a population growth, according to StatsCan, exceeds 20 per cent. Don't believe me; believe his own colleague.

**Mr. Graydon:** Can you imagine what they would do if we had a government that was supporting them?

A 14 per cent PST increase is doing nothing but driving workers and businesses away. High taxes are driving employees and the business away and this government doesn't understand that. They don't get it. Hundred and forty-three full-time jobs are leaving this province each and every day. The minister and this government are losing workers, and it's no

surprise that they can earn more money in other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, why is this minister happy to be a bottom-feeder? Why is she happy at the bottom of the barrel? This government—

**Mr. Speaker:** I'm listening very closely to the debate here this afternoon, and I know I've cautioned honourable members in this House several times before about personalizing the debate. And I'm asking and, in fact, I'm cautioning the honourable member for Emerson, please do not personalize the debate. The words you just chose here a few moments ago are skating very close to the edge, and I want him to pick and choose his words very carefully, please.

The honourable member for Emerson, to complete his question.

**Mr. Graydon:** Well, thank you for that, Mr. Speaker, and I'll apologize for the bottom-feeder remarks, but the fact is they're happy to be at the bottom of the barrel.

The government should reverse the PST increase and build our economy that—so every Manitoban can benefit.

When will this minister take that responsibility seriously?

**Ms. Oswald:** Well, it seems we've returned to the Hundred Acre Wood, and Christopher Robin is nowhere in sight.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the government of Saskatchewan ranks us at the top for affordability. We know that KPMG ranks Winnipeg as the No. 1 Midwestern city to do business in because of its affordability. We know that RBC financial experts predict our economy is going to be growing at an exponential rate. We know we have a steadily growing economy. We know we have an increasing population.

We're going to continue to work hard through our infrastructure investments to ensure that Manitobans get good paying jobs so they can live out their dreams, buy that house, buy that cottage. We're optimistic on this side of the House. Not so much over there.

#### **Power Smart Program Reductions Manitoba Hydro Rate Increases**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** In his submission to the Public Utilities Board, Mr. Dunsky says, and I

quote: I was surprised to find that Manitoba Hydro is now planning for a steep decline. When considering conservation programs only, targets declined steadily from 2009 onwards such that savings by 2025 fall by some 85 per cent.

By hitting Manitobans with the 8 per cent increase and then decimating the Power Smart program, is the so-called NDP balanced approach to force Manitobans to consume more electricity and then charge them for it?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Acting Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro):** Mr. Speaker, when I had the chance to meet with Mr. Dunsky several years ago, when we talked about Power Smart programs, we found out that we are, in fact, in Manitoba the No. 1 jurisdiction in Canada with respect to Power Smart programs. And, in fact, Mr. Dunsky said, one way that you could do better would be to have a pay-as-you-go program to allow people who are on lower incomes and businesses in order to lower their cost of electricity while conserving electricity. That's when that idea first came up, in my meeting with Mr. Dunsky.

Mr. Speaker, we brought legislation and put that in place, and the member opposite and all the members of the Conservative Party voted against the No. 1 power-saving and poor-helping program in the entire continent as recommended and suggested by Mr. Dunsky when he was here visiting with us.

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, and then after the meeting with Mr. Dunsky, the minister went ahead and slashed the program by 17 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I have a document to table for the minister's photo album of shame, and in the table provided to the Legislature, it shows Manitoba's disastrous decline in Manitoba Hydro's power savings program. In fact, Mr. Dunsky states, and I quote: In practice, reducing the level of planned-for DSM, or Power Smart, is a self-fulfilling prophecy, as Manitoba Hydro will have to commit itself and its resources to the earlier construction of more expensive and longer lead-time generation stations.

The question is: Is it this NDP's so-called balanced approach to force Manitobans to consume more electricity, then charge them more for it and thus justify the NDP's \$34-billion Hydro gamble?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, we will certainly let Manitobans decide whether or not the money spent during the lean, mean Tory years of \$58 million a year in Power Smart versus 10 times the volume

right now, \$400 million in Power Smart right now, we'll let Manitobans decide.

We'll also let Manitobans decide why power rates in Saskatchewan are 60 per cent higher in Saskatchewan and 60 per cent higher in Ontario and why the members opposite are against the \$100-million sale of hydro to Saskatchewan, why members are against that sale to the province of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Schuler:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we're pleased to hear from the minister that he'd like the people to decide something. Then why doesn't he vote for Bill 20, which would actually give the people a referendum? Why doesn't he stand up and support the people's right to decide?

It is becoming clear that this NDP is forcing Manitobans to consume more electricity by cutting the Power Smart program by 17 per cent a year at the same time this NDP government is forcing Manitobans to pay more for it, and now, after the fact, the NDP want to consult Manitobans on how they're being ripped off.

Is this just another way for this NDP that they can justify a \$34-billion Hydro gamble?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are talking a little bit about Saskatchewan. We are selling Saskatchewan. This has to get out of its coal and they're spending \$15 billion to get out of coal and they're signed an MOU for many hundreds of megawatts. But they're going to buy a hundred million dollars, to start, of Manitoba hydro, firstly.

Secondly, I don't understand why the member opposite, who talks so much about Saskatchewan and why, yesterday in the House, when the Saskatchewan Legislature voted unanimously to abolish the Senate, that member and all his colleagues stood up for the patronage-pit Senate and supported the patronage of the Senate and will have Senator Plett run their campaign again right out of his office in the Senate, why that member voted in favour of keeping the Senate when Saskatchewan voted unanimously. Even the Conservatives in Saskatchewan voted in favour of abolishing the Senate. Why did he vote in favour of that?

\* (14:10)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

The honourable minister's time has expired.

### Emergency Services Left-Not-Seen Patients

**Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler):** A record number of people are leaving Winnipeg emergency rooms without being seen by a doctor. Now, in the past 12 months over 28,000 people left ER without being seen, 5,000 more than the year before, 11,000 more than 10 years ago.

Yesterday this minister said that she doesn't track the reasons why people are leaving ER. She says they're probably leaving because their condition is not that serious.

I ask the minister: Is she serious? If a follow-up call is being made like she says it is, then why is the minister not recording the reason that individuals are leaving without being seen, or does she not want to know?

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Acting Minister of Health):** Golly, I thought he was going to be a bit sweeter to me after I quoted him in one of my previous answers, but alas.

I can say to the member, actually, that the Health Links program, nurses at Health Links do provide calls to individuals that choose to leave an emergency room without seeing a doctor. The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, through Health Links, evaluates those calls, looks at the reasons and works hard to create programs and policies that will assist with that.

It's why they made a recommendation to us about opening a Crisis Response Centre for those individuals in a mental health crisis. It's why we've worked with them to open QuickCare clinics not only in Winnipeg but outside of Winnipeg, and it's why we work together with the WFPS to create the EPIC program, a paramedic program specifically for those individuals that are high-frequency users of emergency rooms, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, I can quote the minister too, because she said only a few months ago, if there's more work to be done on this, I'm prepared to do it. And then the numbers got worse.

Mr. Speaker, the minister would like this topic to go away, but Manitobans are weighing in on this on Facebook, on chat rooms online.

Karen writes, my husband left HSC ER after waiting eight hours. Four days later he was in a hospital with sepsis and almost died. His gall bladder needed to be removed. Ridiculous.

Sandra said, in the summer my 10-year-old broke his arm. X-rays were taken, the wait was on. We were there four hours, and it would be another nine to be—before we're seen. We left.

The next lady writes and says, broken tailbone and left without being seen, not cool.

Mr. Speaker, sepsis, a broken arm, these people are walking out of ER, not cool. Does the minister still think that this is not serious?

**Ms. Oswald:** Again, I would caution the member about endeavouring to put words in my mouth in addition to the long list of other factual failings that he has brought to this House.

Mr. Speaker, our medical professionals in our emergency rooms take their jobs very seriously. They work very hard to sure that—to ensure that they are doing appropriate triage, and they want to ensure that they're providing high quality care as swiftly as possible.

The regional health authority is doing lots of work to ensure that those individuals that present at an emergency room can get the most swift care possible and that, for those individuals that can seek care in other environments that are more appropriate, like QuickCare clinics or the Crisis Response Centre, they want to provide those opportunities too.

I take this very seriously, Mr. Speaker. The member can be assured of that.

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, I assure the minister Manitobans take this very seriously.

Shelley Anne says, yes, I went to a QuickCare clinic; they sent me to hospital. I waited four hours for stitches, then I went to Shoppers and bought sterile strips and fixed myself. My doctor dragged me back to ER. We waited four more hours without being seen.

From Melissa, when they say the Health Links nurse calls you if you leave ER, I have never got one phone call out of the times I left.

From Michelle, I have left. I waited almost eight hours. Turned out I had a broken foot, plus Health Links did not follow up like the Health Minister said they would.

Mr. Speaker, the minister says we've got it all wrong. My question for her is: What about Melissa, Michelle, Shelley Anne and the hundreds of Manitobans who are having their say? Do they all have it wrong too?

**Ms. Oswald:** Mr. Speaker, when I said to—that the member had it wrong yesterday, I said that the most recent data show that individuals who left without being seen in ER had moved from 10 per cent, as he had cited, to 7.8 per cent as of last month.

The interventions that the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and other regional health authorities are putting forward to divert individuals who do not need to be in an emergency room to an alternate setting like the Crisis Response Centre, like QuickCare clinics and this very important program where paramedics visit the homes of frequent users that have very complex needs, often mental health issues, these interventions are diverting thousands of patients from the emergency room so those in bona fide emergencies can get care as swiftly as possible.

### **Orthopedic Surgery Patient Wait Times**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, not only are the wait times for hip and knee surgery getting longer, as I pointed out on Monday, but when it comes to shoulder surgery, wait times are also very long, in spite of the fact that it's very important to address and treat rotator cuff injuries quickly. In September 2008, I raised a concern about these long wait times for shoulder surgery.

And I ask the Premier now: As this FIPPA I table shows, why do long waits for shoulder surgery matter so little to this NDP government that the Premier doesn't even seem to know what the wait times are? The data's not even collected.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier):** I thank the leader—the ex-leader of the Liberal Party for the question. Overall, wait times for orthopedic surgery are coming down in Manitoba. More procedures are being done in shorter periods of time.

The specific incident that he's referring to in terms of rotator cuff surgeries is—*[interjection]*—thank you—that rotator cuff surgeries require us to release OR time across the system to allow more of those surgeries to be available, but I can tell the member that that's exactly why we've reorganized services to get more efficiency going through our ER system. That's why we have additional doctors in Manitoba, over 520 more, and over 3,000 more nurses, so more of these procedures can be done and more Manitobans can be served.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, yet, as I pointed out on Monday, the wait times for hip and knee surgery

are more than 50 per cent longer than when this government came to power in 1999.

It appears that this government has taken 14 years just to start collecting information about wait times for hip—for shoulder and ankle and spinal surgeries. This is a real problem, because this government should have been doing this starting 14 years ago. The government is clearly not putting a priority on these vital surgeries.

I ask the Premier: When will he have current wait times on ankle and shoulder surgeries in Manitoba?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, I do point out for the member that this is the government that finally, after years of burying information by the PC Party opposite, decided that there should be wait times, starting with emergency rooms; you get wait time updates in emergency rooms on the quarter of the hour. We have wait times for life-saving procedures in Manitoba; heart surgery is one of them, cancer-care treatment, those kinds of issues, best in the nation.

As we get to quality-of-life issues, including issues of rotator cuff injuries, we will continue to drive a public health-care system which is transparent, has standards for wait times and makes that information available to the public so the public can make the system accountable. It is, after all, one of our major investments in Manitoba.

At a time when the opposition wants to make across-the-board cuts, we continue to invest in health care, continue to train and hire more nurses, continue to train and hire more doctors, continue to train and hire more paramedics, all for the betterment of Manitoba health care, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Gerrard:** This problem extends to spinal surgeries as well, which are very important. You know, without surgery, individuals can be greatly disabled and have a tremendous amount of pain with spinal problems, and yet this NDP government is so unconcerned about what's happening that it's not even tracking the wait times.

Perhaps improving the process to reduce pain and disability in our population is not of interest to the NDP government. You can't really fix this problem until you start measuring how great it is, and we know these wait times are long, but the government is doing nothing.

When will the government stop neglecting the critical needs of Manitobans and finally track the wait times on spinal and shoulder and on ankle surgeries, which are badly needed? Thank you.

**Mr. Selinger:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite will know that one of the great innovations we've had in the health-care system is the bringing of the Pan Am Clinic into the public service. The Pan Am Clinic deals with all manner of sports injuries in Manitoba and is doing it at very high volumes with very high quality of service, which has taken pressure off other surgical facilities in Manitoba.

\* (14:20)

Manitoba has moved towards specialization: cardiac care at the St. Boniface Hospital, hips and knees at the Concordia centre, neurosurgery at the Health Sciences Centre, emergent care at the Misericordia centre, freeing up operation room time so that we have more nurses. We have five MRIs in Manitoba that didn't exist when the members opposite were in government. We're doing more volume at higher levels of quality with more physicians and more nurses.

And, of course, we want to prevent injuries. Preventing these serious injuries to rotator cuffs, preventing concussions, preventing injuries from people that participate in amateur sport is also a very important focus in Manitoba, which is why we believe in practices such as fair play, proper training for coaches, proper preparation for young people that participate in recreational leisure activities.

All of these things will help Manitoba have a better quality of life, a more active quality of life—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. First Minister's time has expired.

#### **Early Childhood Development ECD Innovation Fund Launch**

**Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park):** If I were asked where the 92 and a half million savings by the abolition of the Senate would give us, where it could be spent, I'd say, Mr. Speaker, investments in early childhood development can be life-changing with positive impacts on the long-term well-being and success of our children.

Can the Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities update the House on the exciting new partnerships and launch of the early childhood innovation fund announced last week?

**Hon. Kevin Chief (Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question.

I got to travel the province and listen and talk to moms and dads and grandparents and community members and teachers and advocates, and we brought those ideas to an Early Childhood Development Summit last week. I do want to acknowledge the United Way for their leadership, as well as the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council, and I got to stand alongside of the Premier (Mr. Selinger) as well as Stephen Huddart, the CEO of McConnell foundation, who says there's a golden moment in Manitoba to invest. We announced a million-dollar fund. I want to thank, also, Dave Angus from the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and Jim Carr for their leadership, and all members of the community to make this fund and establish this fund through United Way. It's a fund that's going to invest in children and families and help young people get off to a great start.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Heritage Manitoba Elimination of Portfolio**

**Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet):** Well, Mr. Speaker, with all of this, we have 5,000 more kids using food banks today.

Mr. Speaker, the recent NDP Cabinet shuffle was just shuffling the deck chairs, but everyone knows that this government offers nothing to people of Manitoba but disrespect. In the recent shuffle this government eliminated Heritage from the responsibilities of their ministers, leaving this province's history out in the dark.

Mr. Speaker, does this province's history not warrant the respect of this government?

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Tourism, Culture, Sport and Consumer Protection):** You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm actually—you know, I find it passing strange that as a—you know, my critic from Lac du Bonnet, a former schoolteacher—who the opposition tried to get rid of history from the books, quite frankly, in school.

You know, we have a—you know, our track record, quite frankly, with regard to heritage, with regard to culture, with regard to sport, bar none, is one of the top in the country with regard to not only providing financial investment with regard to

assisting in partnership with many communities in the province, but we continue to grow that.

You know, you have the members opposite supporting a Senate, a deadbeat Senate, and many examples of that \$92 million. That \$92 million could go a long way with regard to helping First Nations, young people in sports, helping sports equipment. Come on, get on board. You know, you've got the—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable minister's time has expired.

The honourable—there should have been a few seconds left showing on the clock, so I'm going to permit the question, supplementary question, for the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet.

**Mr. Ewasko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, new letterhead, new stationery do nothing for this province's history, which this government decided is just not important to the people of this province. It is one thing to shuffle ministers and paint new tiles on the doors. Respect for Manitobans is in short supply from this government, and now there's no respect for those that came before us.

Mr. Speaker, why does this government believe that paying for 192 communicators to spin the future trumps preserving Manitoba's past?

**Mr. Lemieux:** We believe in abolishing the Senate and putting that \$92 million to where it's better spent and better invested, in young people and many programs in Manitoba.

**Mr. Speaker:** Time for oral questions has expired.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**Mr. Speaker:** It's time for member statements.

#### Charleswood Art Group

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** I rise today to congratulate the Charleswood Art Group for all that they do in the world of art. We are fortunate to have one of the most vibrant art groups in the province. Charleswood Art Group, in its 62 years, has weathered many hills and valleys of support, but always enjoyed a strong membership that wholeheartedly endorsed the fostering of visual arts appreciation in Charleswood.

The Charleswood Art Group has steadily grown from five members to over 40 during these 60 years, and these past few years have brought a new, exciting approach to artistic expression.

Among the founding members of the Charleswood Art Group are such names as Alma Bentley, Len Van Roon, Wayne Scarrow, Emily Moody, Stella Wicks, Phoebe Herrod, Margot Chester, Quine Lay, Joan Lay, Freda Timmers, Doris Hamil, Helen Coy, June Davidson, Joy Galloway and Rosemary Kowalsky. Hazel Dykes and Elsie Francis were honorary members. Rosemary Kowalsky's talent led her to become an artist of renown here in Winnipeg, and Doris Hamil eventually became the group's instructor.

No longer employing a permanent instructor, Charleswood Art Group books workshops with local artists that stirs the interests of the members. They gather at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church on Mondays to paint in studio, discuss techniques and host workshops.

Their membership is comprised of experienced and emerging artists and they take pride in mentoring and developing the technical skills of newer members, offering several exhibit opportunities for them throughout the year. The group is renowned for its fine water colourists, and now includes many accomplished acrylic, pastel and mixed-media artists. Art by many members can be found in homes and businesses around Winnipeg, including mine, as well as throughout Canada, the US and other countries.

For the recent Charleswood centennial, the Charleswood Art Group organized a month-long June exhibit and sale of paintings of local monuments, historical landscapes and buildings of the past. To inspire authentic compositions, they obtained permission to paint from photographed scenes from the personal collection of the Van Roon family. Len Van Roon Sr. presented a slide show of historical photos to the group and generously consulted with artists who chose to depict particular Charleswood scenes.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the next show that is being put on by the Charleswood Art Group in April, and I look forward to seeing more great work and wish this art group all the best.

Thank you.

#### Holy Rosary Catholic Church

**Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 90th anniversary of the Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church. In the heart of Osborne Village, the church's rich history is deeply woven into the lives of many people in our community.

Originally located in the West End at Sherbrook and Bannatyne, the Holy Rosary Church opened its doors in 1923 to serve Winnipeg's growing Italian community. Thousands of Italians braved a treacherous trip across the Atlantic Ocean, escaping starvation, disease and poverty.

After an extensive journey, the Holy Rosary Church provided new immigrants with a sense of community and a place to practice their faith. The church worked diligently to help new arrivals find housing and work, and to this day continues to assist those making Winnipeg their new home.

The Holy Rosary Church remains at the heart of Winnipeg's Catholic-Italian community, providing a place of worship for more than 800 families. Father Sam Argenziano has been pastor of the church for 18 years, and I commend his incredible dedication and service to the church and community.

To commemorate their 90th anniversary, the church held a gala dinner at the Winnipeg Convention Centre on Saturday, November 16th, which I and the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) were delighted to attend. In the words of Father Sam, that night we ate, we drank and we danced.

The next day the church moved their usual Sunday Mass to the convention centre for a special anniversary service. Children of the church celebrated the anniversary with the creation of a time capsule filled with keepsakes and photos.

Mr. Speaker, this is a historic milestone for Holy Rosary. The Holy Rosary Catholic Church has been an important part of Winnipeg's cultural and spiritual fabric for the past 90 years. Congratulations to Father Sam and his parish for decades of exceptional service to the Catholic community and to the community of Fort Rouge.

### **Hanukkah**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Today, I rise to pay tribute to a vibrant Jewish community in Manitoba, many of whom live in the wonderful constituency of Tuxedo, Mr. Speaker.

\*(14:30)

Today Jewish people around the world will start celebrating Hanukkah, also known as the festival of lights, beginning tonight at sundown until the evening of December 5th. Hanukkah begins on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev, which can fall anywhere between November 27th and December 26th. This year it falls on the earliest

possible date and the second night of the holiday coincides with Thanksgiving and what is being called Thanksgivingukkah. The next time the secular and religious holidays will overlap will be in at least 70,000 years, according to some estimates.

Each night for eight nights, Jewish families light a branch of a menorah from left to right. The middle and tallest branch of the candelabra houses the attendant candle, known as the shamash, that is used to light the other candles. On Hanukkah, children play with dreidels, which are square tops. Each side is marked with one of four Hebrew letters: Nun, Gimel, Hei and Shin, which stands for Nes Gadol Hayah Sham—a great miracle happening there.

Mr. Speaker, fried foods are a must for Hanukkah since the story focuses on a small drop of oil that lasted eight nights. Latkas, also known as potato pancakes, are a popular dish served throughout the holiday.

Mr. Speaker, today as we join together to mark the beginning of Hanukkah, we join with all Manitobans in celebrating the achievements and contributions of Manitoba's Jewish community and we look to our shared future with a sense of hope and optimism.

On behalf of all members of this House and the constituents of Tuxedo, I wish all Jewish people a very happy Hanukkah.

### **Kayla and Kelly Sutherland**

**Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake):** Providing kids with hands-on learning opportunities is an essential part of any young person's development. Fostering opportunities to learn at-local issues through science, engineering and technology, is invigorating for students. This is the case with two students from Peguis Central School who've taken their passion for science international.

This November, Kayla and Kelly Sutherland were nominated to represent Canadian First Nation students in Denver, Colorado, at the annual High School Science and Engineering Convention. Their project involves studying concentrations of nitrates and phosphates in the Fisher River and comparing them with levels in Lake Winnipeg. Their research is helping students-scientists determine the extent that the Fisher River contributes to nutrient accumulation in the lake. Kelly and Kayla, with help from their teacher and mentor, David Smith, discovered that nitrate and phosphate levels were

lower than expected in the Fisher River and lower than in Lake Winnipeg.

Kelly and Kayla were nominated by the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre to present their project at the convention, which was sponsored by the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. Their project was one of only 17 selected to present and the cousins were the only Canadian students. The young women will continue to collect data for their project and are participating in the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre's science fair this winter.

Education isn't limited to what you can read at your desk. Learning is so much more than that, and studying your natural environment is a way to encourage active engaged students. Kelly and Kayla are fantastic role models for all students who want to use the science and technology they learn in the classroom to study natural resources in their own environment. These two young people are working to save the rivers and lakes their community has depended on for generations.

Congratulations, Kelly and Kayla, on your success and good luck with your fascinating research.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Gender-Based Violence**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge three significant events in our lives on this date. First, as we know, Monday was the international day against violence against women and this date signified the start of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. Gender-based violence affects us all, destroying families and communities. We all deserve to live with dignity and in safety and we need to continue to take actions to eliminate gender-based violence in all its forms.

In Manitoba this effort is particularly important as we have one of the highest rates of violent crimes against women and almost double the national average. Indeed, to focus on sexual assaults, Manitoba has highest rate of all Canadian provinces and essentially double the national average. We need to look more closely at what's working elsewhere and improve what we're doing here in Manitoba.

Second, today is National Physician Assistant Day. From a profession that evolved in response to a shortage of primary care physicians in the United

States in the '60s, to the first class of physician assistants graduating at Borden, Ontario, in 1984, today I'm honoured to acknowledge the contribution that physician assistants are making to improve health care and access to health care in Manitoba.

Third, at sundown this evening, Jewish people around the world will begin celebrating the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah, commemorating the victory of the Israelites, led by the Maccabees, and the liberation of the temple. Each night for eight nights, the miracle of a small drop of oil lasting eight days will be celebrated by lighting a branch of the menorah.

I wish a happy Hanukkah to all Manitobans beginning their celebrations tonight. Thank you.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Mr. Speaker:** Seeing no grievances, we'll call orders of the day.

#### **House Business**

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business, I'd like to call Bill 2 for second reading. Bill 2 is The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones).

So, Mr. Speaker, could you verify whether the Opposition House Leader is in agreement with proceeding in this fashion, as required under sessional order 11, which was adopted this September and, if so, we'll then proceed with second reading of Bill 2.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that our critic has provided a series of questions to the minister responsible for the bill—has not received a response on those questions. I'm sure when the government wants to make it a priority, they'll send those answers back, and then we can deal with it at that time, but not prepared to until those questions are answered.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay, it appears that there's no agreement at this point in time.

**Mr. Swan:** I would ask, then, we call report stage amendments on Bill 36, 38 and 46, and we proceed to a third reading of bills 11, 32, 39 and 20.

**Mr. Speaker:** So we'll call the following bills, in this order: Bill 36 followed by Bill 38 and then Bill 46.

And then we'll do concurrence and third reading of bills 11, 32, 39.

#### DEBATE ON REPORT STAGE AMENDMENT

##### Bill 36—The Public Guardian and Trustee Act

**Mr. Speaker:** And we'll start with Bill 36, The Public Guardian and Trustee Act, and the honourable Minister of Justice has nine minutes remaining.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, and as I just began to say the other day when time ran out, there's certainly significant concerns with respect to this amendment proposed by the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

The explanation is as follows: The Public Trustee makes many decisions on behalf of its clients on a daily basis. These decisions range from small day-to-day decisions to matters of significant impact, including medical treatment decisions and decisions dealing with where a person should live or even whether a significant asset should be sold.

The proposed amendment would provide that any family member or close friend of an individual could seek mediation through Family Conciliation services for any issue involving the Public Trustee that the person may dispute. And I think it's very clear, Mr. Speaker, that such a provision would severely restrict the Public Trustee's ability to make decisions on behalf of clients and to administer its clients' affairs in a timely way. Such an amendment would have the potential to delay all aspects of administration to clients' affairs, and of particular concern is that, in the context of time-sensitive decisions, such as medical treatment, such a delay has the potential to represent a serious risk to the physical well-being of the client.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the amendment proposes that Family Conciliation services would then be tasked to provide a written report containing a recommendation for resolving the dispute to the minister, and it's unclear—it's not clear at all whether this provision is intended to limit the decision-making power of the Public Trustee in favour of the minister. Quite frankly, I don't think elected officials should be making individual decisions about people under the care of the Public Trustee, so we do not support this amendment.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further debate on the amendment?

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

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** I hear a no.

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment will please signify by saying aye.

**An Honourable Member:** Aye.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those opposed to the amendment will please signify by saying nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Speaker:** Opinion of the Chair, the Nays have it.

**An Honourable Member:** On division, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** On division.

\* (14:40)

#### REPORT STAGE AMENDMENTS

##### Bill 38—The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now proceed to call Bill 38, The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act, under the report stage amendments.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** I move, seconded by the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler),

*THAT Bill 38 be amended in Clause 111(a) of Schedule A (The Provincial Offences Act) by striking out "and" at the end of subclause (i) and by adding the following after subclause (ii):*

(iii) requiring enforcement officers mentioned in subclause (i) to undergo specified or approved training, and

(iv) specifying the content of the training to be undergone by enforcement officers mentioned in subclause (i) or approving a course of training for that purpose;

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm moving this amendment on behalf of the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer).

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable member for Steinbach on behalf of the honourable

member for Brandon West, seconded by the honourable member for Lakeside,

*THAT Bill 38 be amended in Clause 111(a) of Schedule A (The Provincial Offences Act)—dispense?*

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

The amendment is in order.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward this very important amendment on behalf of the member for Brandon West. I want to commend him for the good work that he's done on this bill and other bills, ensuring that there's good scrutiny around these bills and all the amendments that he's brought forward. And I suspect—I know that this one falls in the same category, strengthen the bill or intended to ensure that the bill is strengthened and is bettered. And I know that the government has accepted some of the previous amendments brought forward by the honourable member for Brandon West. I certainly hope that this will follow within that line, knowing that he did so with all the right intentions and in consultations with those who are impacted by the amendment. And I suspect and I—that this bill—or this amendment, when it is approved by the government, will strengthen the bill and make it a better bill and improve the function of the bill in the days ahead.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I in no way hold the member for Steinbach responsible for the amendment. I can tell you the department has significant concerns with the proposed amendment, and so we will not be supporting that amendment. Given the number of different enforcement officers, which, by definition, includes police officers, anyone appointed or designated under an act to enforce that act, anyone appointed under The Municipal Act or The City of Winnipeg Charter to enforce municipal offences or any other group designated under the regulation, it would be impractical to specify and approve the training requirements for each of these potential groups.

That being said, I am advised that when the legislation comes into effect, the department will certainly assist with training to ensure that enforcement officers are familiar with the new process, with the issuance of tickets and everything else related to Bill 38, which we know will be a very positive bill for municipalities. That'll be done as a

matter of good practice, but I am concerned that specifying how that ought to be carried out, as proposed in the amendment, would be difficult. So we will not be supporting this amendment. Thank you.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I do want to just put on the record here very briefly, as the opportunity for the member from Steinbach that brought the resolution forward on the amendment, I know that a lot of thought goes into developing an amendment and I know the staff put a lot of work in to ensuring that it was worded properly, made sure it made all those—met the criteria that we needed in order to see that it moved forward. So I want to commend the member from Brandon West on the hard work that he did in moving this amendment forward. And we know that, you know, the government has made it very clear they're not prepared to accept that amendment, but I do know that, whenever we're looking at the laws of this great land that we live in and when we're trying to develop the best policies, we need to look at all those options. I know that was thought out very carefully when we got ready to bring this amendment forward, so I do want to thank the government for that opportunity to present it. I know that was thought out very carefully when we got ready to bring this amendment forward.

So I do want to thank the government for that opportunity to present it. I know that when we have this opportunity we need to take advantage of it to make sure that we have that debate. So, certainly, I know that all members of this House want to ensure that the best debate is brought forward on those amendments and, of course, the bill as they move forward.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further debate on the amendment?

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

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** I hear a no.

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment will please signify by saying aye.

**Some Honourable Members:** Aye.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those opposed to the amendment will please signify by saying nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Speaker:** In the opinion of the Chair, the Nays have it.

**Mr. Goertzen:** A hearty division, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** On division.

**Bill 46—The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2013**

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now proceed to call on report stage amendments, Bill 46, The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2013.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard),

*THAT Bill 46 be amended in Clause 79(3) by striking out "October 1, 2013" and substituting "April 1, 2014."*

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Justice, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance,

*THAT Bill 46 be amended in Clause 79(3) by striking out "October 1st, 2013" and substituting "April 1st, 2014."*

The amendment is in order.

**Mr. Swan:** One of the provisions of Bill 46 deals with increasing the length of time in which a constitutional question, primarily in a criminal case, must be brought. The coming-into-force date proposed by the legislation was October 1, 2013, when there was some expectation the session would be finished well before that date. Because the session went on longer than expected and because the legal opinion was that the legislation being retrospective could cause some difficulties, this amendment would be made to change the date to April 1, 2014.

Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Any further debate on the amendment?

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

**CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS**

**Bill 11—The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now proceed to call concurrence and third readings of Bill 11, The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), that Bill 11, The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les procédures contre la Couronne, reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

*Motion presented.*

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

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy):** That's what I like to hear, Mr. Speaker. The rest of you could really pick it up around here, to be honest.

Okay, Mr. Speaker, it is—*[interjection]*—there's two of them on today because of the wind chill.

I'm very pleased to speak—stand up as Minister of Jobs and the Economy and speak to a bill that was brought forward by my predecessor and take—just take a few minutes to speak about Bill 11, The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act.

\* (14:50)

Mr. Speaker, as you know, we have one of the most affordable costs of living in the country, a fabulous quality of life that makes our province a great place to live and work, to invest and to raise a family, contrary to what we hear from members opposite. Certainly, we know that we have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and our economy steadily continues to grow.

We know that here in Manitoba there are many opportunities for good jobs, Mr. Speaker, and, as a result of the plan brought forward in this year's Throne Speech, we know that those opportunities are going to increase as we make investments with the 1 cent on the dollar being collected with the PST, when we make those investments in core infrastructure to ensure that we have that kind of infrastructure that will help our economy continue to grow. That is to say very good roads, safe bridges, clean water—all of those things that help an economy thrive and grow; that we're going to continue to have good jobs available to the people of Manitoba in creating that important infrastructure, and working hard, of course, to secure our position as a trade and transportation hub.

Now, the Agreement on Internal Trade is, of course, intended to eliminate trade barriers and promote labour mobility across Canada. This

particular bill amends The Proceedings Against the Crown Act to enable any order against the government of Manitoba under the Agreement on Internal Trade to be enforced as a court order. Under the direction of the Council of the Federation and the Committee on Internal Trade, all governments across our nation agreed to strengthen the capacity to resolve disputes between individuals and companies—between individuals or companies and the government, I should say. The—this change strengthens the enforcement of resolutions to disputes.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, all parties to the Agreement on Internal Trade, including Manitoba, have agreed to take these necessary steps to implement this change, and this bill before the Legislature lives up to our obligations according to the agreement among provinces. Person-to-government dispute settlement procedures mirror a previously agreed-to improvement to the agreement's government-to-government dispute procedures.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, about this bill is in the fact that for the average Manitoban we're not going to see a significant impact. Manitoba already meets its obligations under the AIT and we intend for that to continue, that's what that—this bill will assist in doing.

The Agreement on Internal Trade has been an exceptional tool for decreasing trade barriers amongst other provinces and certainly does provide a forum for resolving disputes. Strengthening the mechanism for resolving person-to-government disputes makes the AIT even stronger, which is in all of our interests.

Manitoba's geographic location, as I've said before, Mr. Speaker, is key, of course, to ensuring that we take full advantage of the opportunities that are before us for being at the heart of the continent, the centre of Canada, with trade links to the east and the west and the south and the north. We were very, very pleased that last week the Prime Minister was here to join with the Premier (Mr. Selinger) to open CentrePort way, because, of course, we know that, as CentrePort is developed even further, it's just going to reinforce our opportunities to take advantage of our location and to ensure that whether it is air, rail or on the road, that Manitoba can serve as that hub.

I also wanted to let the House know, Mr. Speaker, that we are pursuing opportunities with our provincial partners through the Agreement on Internal Trade. Manitoba was a leader and a driver of

the labour mobility deal in the AIT. In 2009, we were the first province to pass labour mobility legislation and we continue to advance the AIT with legislative amendments.

Mr. Speaker, federal, provincial and territorial trade ministers recently approved amendments to the AIT, which now allow for full labour mobility for financial services occupations this year. Ministers at that meeting also endorsed an action plan to simplify the corporate registration and reporting processes to government, and they're continuing to discuss options to strengthen and improve the person-to-government process in the AIT's dispute resolution chapter. So Bill 11 will indeed make amendments to improve the AIT's dispute resolution chapter, to enhance and ensure effectiveness in the dispute procedures.

Since 2008, Mr. Speaker, we've also made substantial progress on the Council of the Federation action plan on internal trade. A revised labour mobility chapter providing for full labour mobility in Canada was added to the agreement in December '08, as I said. In addition, the dispute resolution chapter incorporating monetary penalties and an expanded agriculture chapter have been added, as well. These, of course, represent significant improvements that eliminate barriers to labour mobility, strengthen the AIT and improve on internal trade.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has a highly diversified economy, which has served us well over the course of the global economic downturn. And our diverse export base, with the highest share of exports to the rest of Canada and a below-average reliance on the United States and other international exports, has been helpful to us. But we know that any interventions that we can make to ensure that trade becomes more seamless, that there are fewer barriers, we want to engage in those discussions and indeed implement those action plans.

Speaking of CentrePort, Mr. Speaker, I neglected to mention, of course, that CentrePort Canada is Canada's first foreign trade zone that provides duty and tax relief that supports Canadian business. And I recently had the opportunity to meet and, indeed, travel with the CEO of CentrePort and see first-hand and hear first-hand her pitch to other jurisdictions concerning the advantages of CentrePort. I think she's an excellent ambassador for Manitoba and for CentrePort, and certainly did capture the imagination and interest of individuals

outside of our country in looking at the advantages that Manitoba has for investment and the advantages that we have specifically related to CentrePort Canada.

Manitoba Trade and Investment supports Manitoba businesses, Mr. Speaker, to become even more trade capable and to diversify into domestic and international markets by delivering a variety of targeted programs and services. It also promotes investment to increase and, indeed, to enhance opportunities for employment. Manitoba Trade works with over 400 companies and organizations annually to diversify their outputs to new and to existing markets. Manitoba Trade continues to partner with industry organizations which will enhance Manitoba's ability to be competitive. Manitoba Trade operates the Trade Assistance Program to assist businesses to market their business and their products for trade.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear, then, of course, that the Agreement on Internal Trade is, in fact, an agreement intended to eliminate trade barriers and promote labour mobility. Manitoba and other provinces have agreed, as previously stated, to take these steps to implement mechanisms to address person-to-government disputes with enforceable resolutions. So, by enacting this legislation, it will fulfill Manitoba's commitment to implement the changes to the AIT.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's critically important that we take a look at our best opportunities for trade and for inspiring investment in our province and in our country. And so, of course, we're going to continue to work with our partners to the east and west in our own country, in addition to working with investors that come from outside of our country. Manitoba has so very much to offer to investors.

\* (15:00)

We know, of course, that the existence of our very low-cost hydro is a very significant interest to those that are considering investing and those that are considering bringing their industries to Manitoba. And, certainly, in speaking with individuals from the United States just last month, there were many, you know, positive things that Manitoba had to offer. But, certainly, the existence of the low cost for hydro, certainly, was something that was of great interest to those individuals that were taking a very close look at Manitoba, not simply because of the cost—although let's keep it real, that was something that was very inspiring—but the fact that the nature of

the energy itself, the clean, green nature is something that many industries, many businesses around the world now are seeking. They're looking for options to be able to increase their output and increase their industries' potential while at the same time not doing damage to the planet. So the existence of hydro and all of the benefits that it brings to bear in terms of its low cost and its green nature are very attractive to those individuals that are looking at what Manitoba has to offer.

Certainly, another really important factor that became very clear to me in speaking with these individuals from outside of our country, Mr. Speaker, is our skilled workforce. We know that as a result of investments that our government has made in training, in education from K-to-12, but also opportunities at our universities and our colleges, doing what we can to improve access to apprenticeships and encouraging businesses to hire apprentices, you know, all of those initiatives across the spectrum positions Manitoba very well to have a workforce that is ready and open for business. We know that we have a very low unemployment rate and we have a segment of the population that has not traditionally been well represented in the workforce that is eager to work if given the appropriate chance. And the work that is being done by a variety of community organizations through funding coming from the labour market agreements is making significant inroads into inviting those individuals that have been, over time, significantly under-represented in our workforce into the workforce by providing basic, essential skills and leading through into developing more fully developed skills specifically targeted to industry and to components of our economy that are seeking a skilled workforce.

And so those potential investors from outside of our country look very closely at the kind of workforce that Manitoba would have to offer, and they were very, very interested and impressed with the investments that have been made. And, in my view, it's just the beginning. We know that we have made a commitment to the people of Manitoba that we will increase our skilled workforce by 75,000 by the year 2020, and to do that we know it's going to be an all-hands-on-deck approach.

But there are many innovations going on already today, whether it's the aerospace industry, whether it's, you know, in the—at the Composites Innovation Centre. You name it, there is imagination and inspiration going on across the province to ensure that not only are those individuals that are already in

the workforce but want to change careers, that want to pursue a different path, not only are there training opportunities available to them, but, indeed, as I mentioned earlier, those that are traditionally under-represented in the workforce have an opportunity to come into the workforce.

And I would say on that subject, Mr. Speaker, that I have spent, in my first weeks in this role, a significant amount of time in working to ensure that our federal government has a full understanding of what the implications might be of their proposed implementation of the Canada Job Grant. While I think all members would agree that having an opportunity for Canadians to have good jobs is a good idea—I would be among those people that would think that—it is the journey that the federal government is proposing to take to implement their Canada Job Grant that will, in fact, decimate a number of the programs that I've just spoken about that are currently funded through the labour market agreements. And, because of the structure, which, I believe, and, I would have to think that any person has looked closely at this agreement—I believe, was hastily designed and not particularly well thought out. Because of that structure, the labour market agreement, the funds that flow now to those organizations that are reaching out and supporting those that are under-represented in our workforce, those organizations are going to have their funding cut off with virtually no warning.

And, in fact, individuals that are already in the workforce may, indeed, through the existing structure of the Canada Job Grant, find that they are able to move up in the workforce, if you will, but those individuals that are not in the workforce will not be able to come in. And we know that, here in Manitoba the nature of our population, the nature of our low unemployment rate—we will have—we will be directly, profoundly, negatively hit as a result of these changes to the labour market agreement. And those very individuals that are getting support and that are getting training of essential skills to move into the workforce will be left at the side of the road, and those that, one would argue, already have some advantages will just have further advantages still.

Now, it's my belief, Mr. Speaker, that with some flexibility on the part of the federal government, that we as provinces will be able to assist in helping a federal government reshape what it is that they may have intended so that there is an opportunity for both things to happen: for those currently in the workforce to move up and for those not in the workforce

to move in. The No. 1 concern of industries and investors, whether it's in Canada or internationally, is a desire for a skilled workforce, and if we aren't working together to go after the segments of our population that need to be included in an authentic, respectful and meaningful way to be brought into the workforce, I think that we are going to be set back for years and years to come.

So, Mr. Speaker, whether it is on the subject of our fantastic location in the heart of the continent, making us a—historically, we have been, of course, a trade and transportation hub—but going back to those roots with the development of CentrePort, with the development of core infrastructure that's going to assist in moving product and helping our economy soar, whether it's on the subject of our location or the subject of our people, Manitoba is extremely well positioned to be a real force in the Canadian economy. And, by continuing to work forward and assuring that we're living up to our obligations on the Agreement on Internal Trade and, indeed, coming forward with Bill 11, The Proceedings against the Crown Amendment Act, which allows us to fulfill our agreed-upon process, a process that's being followed by every jurisdiction in the land, we're ensuring that we continue to live not only by the law, but the spirit on the Agreement on Internal Trade, making sure that opportunities continue to increase for the people of Manitoba, for our young people so that they have even more opportunities than they ever have had before and so that we can ensure that our young people will stay right here in Manitoba, raise their families, buy their homes and be here for Christmas dinners, for Hanukkah celebrations, for what have you, for years and years to come.

Thank you very much.

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to make a few comments about this bill, and I'd indicate that it amends The Proceedings Against the Crown Act to enable any order against the government of Manitoba under the Agreement on Internal Trade to be enforced as a court order. And I'd like to take a few moments to talk about this government's attitude toward trade within Canada because it is the focus of this amendment and I think it's important to the future of our province.

\* (15:10)

Mr. Speaker, the Agreement on Internal Trade is an intergovernmental trade agreement signed by Canada's first ministers that came into force in 1995.

Its purpose is to reduce and eliminate, to the extent possible, barriers to the free movement of persons, goods, services and investment within Canada and to establish an open, efficient and stable domestic market.

But, Mr. Speaker, this government's record on trade and commerce is not one that they have anything to brag about, and I'm going to discuss for a little bit of time one specific example to demonstrate what I am meaning by those comments. And all we have to do is look at where this government's position is on the New West Partnership, and I would point out that this government failed to become part of the New West Partnership. If they were really committed to looking at improving trade in Canada and strengthening Manitoba's position as a trading partner, they would have certainly done something to try to get into the New West Partnership.

Now, either those three other provinces that are in it don't want Manitoba there or Manitoba doesn't want to be there. And it would be interesting to know which part of that is really part of the equation.

Now, I know that there are a number of members on that side of the House that don't like the New West Partnership. I recall earlier this year when the member of Concordia indicated that the—it wasn't something that he supported, and I believe it was the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau) also indicated that being part of the New West Partnership would hurt Manitoba. And I don't think these members particularly understood what this particular partnership is all about, because if they did, I don't think they would have been making some of the comments that they made. And I know they went off script when they were standing up to do their speeches here and they did take some little side notes from their speaking points, but I think what it pointed out and it did show just exactly how the NDP truly do feel about the New West Partnership.

And I was really quite shocked that the member from St. Norbert said that the New West Partnership would hurt Manitoba. He obviously does not have a good grasp on what the New West Partnership could do in terms of the benefits for Manitoba.

And, you know, his comments were that it would hurt Manitoba, and I think he was just shooting from the hip. He didn't do his research, he didn't do his homework, he didn't read anything, he doesn't understand it. It was just part of his rhetoric which he tends to, you know, sometimes lose control

of here in the House, and he just spun off with some comments.

But I really think that, you know, he should have taken more time to delve into it a little bit more and try to understand it. The member for—Concordia said that the New West Partnership is simplistic and disingenuous. And, again, another really shocking comment from a member from the NDP government. And, you know, when you've got members like that that are speaking up, you know, either they're renegades from the rest of government or else they're speaking, you know, and reiterating the points that they hear within their own caucus discussions.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think it shows us really where the NDP government stands in terms of trade and free trade. So we heard a—quite a lot of rhetoric from the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald), you know, when she stands and talks about, you know, the importance of trade and the significance of it, and yet we haven't seen, in the last 14 years, this government really demonstrate a solid commitment to there. And so, obviously the NDP are still in the dark days where they really dug in their heels about having anything to do with free trade. And, you know, we can go way back in time, too, where a lot of negative comments were made by the NDP. And it looks like they're still living in those dark times where they think that they can go this alone.

And I think Manitoba needs to have better representation than that, than what this government is saying about it. Manitoba needs to be a player, and in order to be a player, you can't be an island. Manitoba needs to be part of the New West Partnership, and the world has gotten very global. And what is happening with the New West Partnership is Manitoba is being left behind and Manitoba is being left in the dust because of this NDP government. They're keeping us isolated, they're keeping Manitoba isolated. We're not seeing the bang for the buck that the other western provinces are seeing, because the NDP won't allow Manitoba to become part of that NDP partnership or they haven't been invited because other provinces recognize that the attitudes of an NDP government would just hold them back from some of the things they are trying to accomplish.

And I look at CentrePort and, you know, and the potential of CentrePort and what it could do for this province, and it is significant what can happen if that

is allowed to evolve and develop to the extent that it can. But with a NDP government, with the kind of attitudes they have about business and economic development, I don't think we're going to see CentrePort have the ability to do all of the things that it can do. And, you know, certainly, the government should, you know, become much more aware of what those opportunities are and look more closely at getting into the New West Partnership, and they're just not doing that.

Now, it's interesting what has happened in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Alberta when they got together and they launched the partnership, what they have created is a powerhouse. They have created an economic powerhouse of nine million people with a combined GDP of more than \$550 billion. That makes them a player. And, Mr. Speaker, for Manitoba not to be a part of that is really doing a disservice to Manitoba because, in this case, bigger is better. You have more clout. You have more of an ability to make an impact around economic development. And, instead, the NDP government has chosen to be an island unto itself.

And it's interesting, because Ontario is now talking about wanting to be a part of the New West Partnership because they see that there are some significant benefits happening because of that. What's going to happen if somehow that New West Partnership includes Ontario, and Manitoba is going to be the lone province stuck in the middle there and not having the advantage of these other provinces? And this government is going to be trying to paint it all as if, you know, there's great things happening; they can do better. And I guess they've got to stick to their lines because, you know, I mean, what else are they going to say? But, I mean, behind closed doors, I really do wonder what the conversation is because there's a very, very strong relationship between the three western provinces.

We know that there's a trade relationship between Ontario and Québec, and here's Manitoba, an island unto itself, left in the dust by other provinces. Now, I'm wondering why this government is so hesitant to try to form a better relationship around trade with some of these other provinces because this agreement between the three western provinces is something that I do believe this government should pay more attention to, because it does create the largest interprovincial, barrier-free trade and investment market, and it will see all of those three provinces work together in an unprecedented way. And it benefits workers, it

benefits businesses and it benefits investors in all three provinces.

Manitoba could use more investors. Manitoba could use people that are more confident, to want to come here and invest their money, but that is not happening under this NDP government. People want to be part of success, and if there was more success happening, people would want to be here. But this government holds that back and, because of that, Manitoba's economy is not moving at a pace that it could be if it had a government with a different attitude.

And so I really don't understand the comments that have been made over time by the NDP, especially the new members from Concordia and St. Norbert, who might have been better off listening to this debate in the past, instead of trying to speak up, and then going off with some shocking comments about, you know, how bad being part of the New West Partnership is.

But, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the world and we look at a global economy, we don't need to have more barriers for trade set up by this government. Those barriers need to be taken down. And we need to have more open trade within our borders to build a stronger Canada and a stronger Manitoba. And I just don't get what this NDP government does not understand about that.

You know, what they have in the three western provinces, if the government would just put on their eyeglasses and have a look west, are three provinces with very vibrant economies, and they're working together.

\* (15:20)

I mean, Saskatchewan is starting to do phenomenal things, and part of it is an attitude there about what can benefit the people of that province. They're not letting politics or partisanship interfere with their decision making. They are doing things that would make sense for the people and the economy of their province, and they're creating lasting prosperity over there. And, Mr. Speaker, people here are starting to worry very, very much that because of what this government is doing, Manitoba is being left in the dust.

And, you know, they've got a model through the New West Partnership that cements the west as an economic powerhouse of Canada, and we are not part of that economic powerhouse. We are left as an island, and I don't understand why this NDP

government just does not have the ability to grasp that and understand the value of moving in the direction of the New West Partnership. You know, certainly, they're looking at this bill and it, you know, gives them an ability to talk about trade and agreement on internal trade and it's allowing them to, I think, go forward with their rhetoric. But somehow in all of the discussion we have to really wonder with this new government—or with this government why they haven't really embrace the language of trade by looking more fully at the New West Partnership.

You know, Mr. Speaker, as I alluded to earlier, the tenets of the Agreement on Internal Trade provide that Canadians should be able to work anywhere in Canada in the profession of their choosing, and I would note that last session the former Finance minister, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), said in this House, and I quote: Manitoba is a net exporter of babies. And it seems strange to me that this is a fact the member is proud of, but something definitely not worthy of touting is Manitoba's record as a net exporter of jobs.

This government tends to talk about jobs and the economy and trade and how they seem to favour it, but their numbers aren't even matching up with what we are seeing in reality. If we look at what Stats Canada is saying or we look at other economic factors that are happening out there, the rhetoric from the government is not matching what is happening. We're not even sure where the minister of the economy and jobs is getting some of her numbers, because it certainly doesn't—it certainly—*[interjection]* Well, the chirping from the other side says Stats Canada. Well, that's not the numbers that they are using. We are using the numbers from Stats Canada and we're not quite sure—and the member wouldn't table the numbers that she was indicating.

But, Mr. Speaker, I read somewhere the other day that over the last 10 years 56,000 people, it's a net loss of people from Manitoba, 56,000, and Manitobans are continuing to leave this province and this NDP is doing nothing about it. They're just chirping and they are trying to have their own spin, but what they are doing is not doing all that they can to keep Manitoba people staying in Manitoba.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Stats Canada said for 2012-2013, 4,221 people left Manitoba for another province. That is what Stats Canada number says, and if we look back year over year, in 2011-2012, 4,212 people left Manitoba for another province. In 2010-2011, 3,517 people left Manitoba for another

province. By comparison, in 2010-2011, Ontario, a province with a population more than 10 times larger than Manitoba, lost 4,000 people, less than 500 more than Manitoba. These numbers are telling a story. We lost more people this year and last year than a province 10 times larger than us, and this is simply unacceptable. This is a clear indictment of the NDP's failed time in office. They need to pay more attention to the charts and numbers that are being put out there instead of trying to invent their own that makes their numbers look better. Manitobans pay high taxes, they're receiving poor services, and it's no wonder that people are choosing to leave this province. The PST hike is certainly one of the things that is making it hard for working Manitobans, and it's making it hard for people in this province to achieve financial security.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has such huge potential. And it is sad to see that people are feeling they have to leave this province in order to do the best that they can for their families. And we would want them to stay here. But when you've got a government that is doing what it is doing, when it is failing the people, when it is misleading the people, when it is dishonest about the information that they're putting out there, people here are not wanting to be in a province that has a government that behaves that way. And I think if we want to keep Manitobans in this province, I think it's going to have to be a new government that comes in with an attitude of working more on behalf of the people. And what this government has now done, because they've been in power so long, they have forgotten who put them there and why they are there. They have forgotten that they're here to work for the people and not just get up and put a bunch of rhetoric on the record or mislead Manitobans. Right now, everything they're doing is looking at trying to stay in power at any cost. And the cost, unfortunately, is being borne by Manitobans.

And the—you know, Mr. Speaker, I think what this government is continuing to do with legislation is trying to distract from the bigger picture. And I think we can expect over the next number of years to see legislation coming forward that is nothing more than a distraction. We will see that; we've seen it already in the last several days that we have been sitting. And, you know, basically we're seeing a government that no longer respects Manitobans. And, you know, I think it's really disillusioning for a lot of people. We're certainly hearing that. And I think legislation like this, you know, while trade is important, I think it just shows how out of touch this

government has been for just such a very, very long time. And, you know, if they were really serious about wanting to get rid of trade barriers, if they were really interested in trying to strengthen the economy of Manitoba in a really significant way and take advantage of the opportunities that are out there in Manitoba to create a province that has a lot of entrepreneurs that want to come here and do business—instead, they set up their own barriers, and a lot of the barriers are, you know, barriers that are the result of an attitude of this government.

And certainly we can look at taxes as being one of the very, very significant barriers that this government is putting up. And the fact, I think, too, they don't listen to people anymore. And that's becoming more and more prevalent. And then they'll bring legislation forward that now tries to show people, well, yes, we're listening. But their track record has now really, really shown the true side of the government. And so it's hard to respect some of the—you know, the comments that come from the government in the legislation when we know right now it's all about trying to hold on to power for any—you know, at any cost. And, you know, there could be some potential for better legislation and strengthening Manitoba, and maybe getting into the new trade partnership would be one of the—or the New West Partnership might be one of the ways, if they really want to show they're serious about trade, is to move in that direction.

So, with those few comments, Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address this legislation.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I, too, want to put a few words on the record in regards to Bill 11 and pick up a little bit where my colleague from Charleswood had talked about the New West Partnership and, in particular, with trade. And I remember very clearly when we were talking about the development of CentrePort and what that might look like, and at that time our new-elected, minted MP, now Larry Maguire from Arthur-Virden, was a critic at that time, and we talked about making a trade-free zone, which is an important aspect of exactly where we need to be going in regards to bringing about more trade, more initiatives, create those jobs that we talk about here in Manitoba.

\* (15:30)

And I know that, you know, the folks out at CentrePort are working very hard, they're working diligently to make that become more of a reality.

*Mr. Mohinder Saran, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

I know that we've had a tough time, a tough time to develop a water strategy. We know that it's encompassing the RM of Rosser, which is in the great part of my riding, the southern part of my riding. And I know that we went around that debate many, many times, whether to expropriate, and we were assured not only by the government but by the City and by the Province that that would not happen. So we did not anticipate—I don't think anybody did—about the results of supplying water to CentrePort. I'm glad to say that my understanding is that we are now going to bring that from St. Eustache. I have had the opportunity to tour that facility whereby we're going to be able to bring the water from Grosse Isle down the railway tracks right into CentrePort. So I think that's a great step, a great option. I know there's lots of water that we're going to be able to flow into that particular development.

And I know—I had the opportunity just a couple of weeks ago to attend the Manitoba Trucking Association's award gala dinner, and I can tell you there was a number of business people there that were actually talking about CentrePort and how they want to see it grow, how they want to see it prosper. The biggest stumbling block that they had was water, because we all know you can't survive without it, so a lot of them have brought in holding tanks to build—temporary holding tanks to store water for their businesses, and I know that they're very relieved. I know that we're going to see significant growth in that area as a result of now being able to move the water in, hopefully, within 2014–2015 at the latest.

And, when I was at that event, the number of businesses that they talked about and the future of where CentrePort needed to go, come back to, again, what my member—my colleague from Charleswood had talked about, and that was with the New West Partnership, whereby we can create more trade and knock down those barriers in regards to ensuring that we do more trade not only internationally and nationally, but also with our partners to the west and also our partners to the east.

And, as you know, I've stood up in this House and advocated for this province to join the New West Partnership, not only through the trucking regulations but also through processing plants for our livestock, whereby we're able to have some of those products that are processed in Manitoba, that—where they can be sold legally, legally within Saskatchewan, legally within Manitoba, legally

within British Columbia. We know how important our products are to be sold outside the borders of Manitoba.

Now, I know in Ochre River during 2003 when BSE had broke out, we had seen a new processing plant be developed there. He was an older gentleman but persistent and innovative and wanted to make sure that we were able to 'pross' some of that—process some of that beef right here in Manitoba. One of his biggest stumbling blocks was the ability to be able to sell that product outside the province of Manitoba. Because it was not a federally inspected plant, he had to stay within the boundaries of the province of Manitoba, and which—you know, it was interesting, because he can sell the meat to a customer in Manitoba—we'll say that they have a cottage in Ontario, or in Saskatchewan, for that matter. They buy the product, they take it over, they can use it but, yet, if they live in Ontario or Saskatchewan, they can't come here and buy it, and we can't sell it there, unfortunately. It's a barrier that we need to knock down. We need to work with the other provinces in order to ensure that we have those relationships, have those markets that's available to us.

And I said just a couple of weeks ago in regards to MCOOL that was being brought forward by the United States government and put up more barriers, more red tape for us as Canadians to ship our livestock down to United States to have it processed. In fact, I'm very proud of the fact to be part of an organization that's taken this on, and I know that the government, the Minister of Agriculture, him and the minister from Saskatchewan, the minister from Alberta, also has made commitments and steps in this direction. A lot more to do, but we need to look at markets at the international level and national level at—whenever we're looking for products to ship over.

I did talk about HyLife, one of our great success stories, along beside Maple Leaf, that we are proud to lay the groundwork as in the last depths of our 1990 program when Maple Leaf moved in and we saw an increase in the processing plants along the pork side of things at that time. In fact, it's a major employer in the province of Manitoba. It creates numbers of jobs, and this is the type of thing we need to see more and more of.

But I know that we need also to take that leadership role, a role whereby we're going to be able to look for those markets outside of Canada, outside of United States whereby we're going to be—reach

over to the China market, to the Japanese market, the Korean market. HyLife has reached out to the Russian market, and I can tell you, as I said before, there's some exports in excess about \$90 million a month going over to that country whereby we're able to supply a product to them. Also, we're knocking down some barriers in regards to innovation and feeding programs and growing operations, and we have that ability because we have some of the most economical, safest food right—grown right here in our back door. We have so much to be proud of, and I know that those farmers and producers take it very seriously and they're also capitalizing on that opportunity to be able to teach some of these underdeveloped countries whereby we'll be able to go in and show them how to grow some of those livestock and also process it, and it's going to make us better as a province because of it.

I know that because when MCOOL was instituted and brought into effect—fact, in November the 1st, I believe that was the last shipment of beef that was sent down to the United States because of the barrier that was put up in regards to MCOOL—certainly has 'significance' to Manitobans in regards to where we're going to be able to process our beef. And when they run two lines we know it's not feasible, and so whatever we can do to knock down more barriers, whether it be with the United States, whether it be with some of the other countries, we're looking for trade, and I encourage the members opposite to ensure that we do have those barriers knocked down in order to do that.

So Manitoba can do it alone, which the government's decided they—that's the route they want to take, or they can join forces. And I can tell you, talking to my counterparts, my agriculture colleagues across Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, we're having a conference in January where we're getting together and talk about some of those strategies, and I'm pleased that our Minister of Agriculture is going to join us at that table and take part, and maybe we can come forward with some ideas, work together. I would prefer that we be at the table with those provinces so that we could, in fact, make sure that Manitoba's going to be part of that agreement if we do get to the part where we actually will start signing some contracts with those other under-developed countries.

Now, Japan alone could handle all our beef just with the number of people that live in that particular continent, and I know that we have that ability. It would make a huge economic impact on us as

Manitobans, and we have seen significant numbers come down in regards to where we're at as a beef population.

I'm also very concerned in regards to our pork production, which, at one time, prior to Bill 17, that the minister of Conservation at the time, the minister now for local government and Hydro brought in Bill 17. We've seen a lot of those barns, now, be to the state where they're beyond repair and with the moratorium we're not going to see any new barns built. We're not going to be able to encourage growth in that sector, which, by the way, created more jobs than Manitoba Hydro did, as well, and we certainly know that we need to look at options. A lot of those barns were not state of the art and we totally agree that they need to be upgraded. They need to have the technology, the checks and balances in place to ensure that phosphorus does not get into our lakes. We know how important that is, and the farmers get it and they have the technology.

\* (15:40)

In fact, a great professor, Don Flaten, and number of other member-teachers and instructors from the University of Manitoba have the science; they have the data; they know what they need in order to ensure—ensure—that no phosphorus gets out into the water through the growth of the hog production. And we've seen an exodus of those jobs, and because now with the MCOOL, we need to be looking at those. We need to be looking at those options whereby we're going to be able to ensure that we'll be able to work with them.

And I know that, you know, I focus a lot of my comments in regards to the livestock, but I want to come back to my other critic role in regards to the New West Partnership, whereby they—we talked about the regulations—the regulations in regards to wheel-base alignments, for example, and we're talking about trade; we're talking about that as being part of this discussion. And I know very clearly a number of these trucks that not only go west, they go east, and a lot of them go south, and we're going to have more of that with CentrePort and we're going to have that as part of our trade. And, whenever we look at them, we need to make sure they're right, make sure they're harmonized, knock down those barriers, ensure that we're ready.

So part of that is working with our cousins to the west and, of course, to the east. We need to be very clear in that direction where we want to go. In fact, I know one of the trucking companies that I

talked to at the awards gala just a couple of weeks ago, they were talking to another major company wanting to come to Manitoba, and they said, well, you know, we're not real sure; we're not a hundred per cent sure they'd open for business. We keep telling them that we are open for business. We want to ensure that we have all the checks and balances in place. We're very proud of the fact, and I know every member of this House is, that CentrePort can and will be—if given the right tools to succeed, that we will be able to make sure that we are going to be open for business. And my comments to those fellows that—and gals that we're at the gala dinner, ensure the fact that we are open for business.

So we encourage the government to do just that. And I know my colleague from Charleswood talked about the number of people that are leaving the province, and I know the government talks about, well, you know, look at all the numbers of people that come in as well. And so whenever we're looking at numbers and we see the overall population grow in Manitoba, I get that; I understand that, but how many of those tradespeople are actually coming here, getting their training and then leaving? And I can tell you, you know, the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald) talked about that as well, and I can tell you, when she was minister of Health, I know very clearly that a lot of doctors that come in to Manitoba, they were immigrants; they were great people; they were glad to be here, but here's what happened: they trained and they left—they trained and they left. And they want to be around their particular energized friends where they want to go back and live, so they come here, get their training, and they leave. They either go to British Columbia or they go on to Ontario.

So it's not only just about bringing people in to Manitoba. We want to keep those trained people, ensure the fact that they're going to be here for those jobs, those opportunities, so that we all have those for our families, and we want to be able to keep those trained people here. So I encourage the government to make sure that we do, in fact, have that opportunity for all Manitobans. We don't want to just be known as a training province. We want to be also known as a province that's going to keep those folks here, keep them employed.

In fact, I know that one of my friends that have a business in the city here and they're very disappointed in the apprentice program. Whenever they look at the apprenticeship program, what they've done now has just become a stumbling block

for these tradespeople. They come in, they get their training and then they leave. So they said, I just can't afford to be part of that program no more, where we're just being used as a training joint whereby we will lose those folks over to—whether it be Saskatchewan, whether it be Alberta, whether it be Ontario, wherever they're going, but they're certainly not staying here. And my friend is very concerned with the fact that he just can't afford that anymore. So he's got to make a decision—either he stays status quo with where he's at, if he can retain enough employees to keep his business open, but he's certainly looking hard at it in regards to whether or not he's going to be able to sustain just his business, never mind being part of that training program.

I do want to also talk in regards to this Bill 11 in regards to the proceedings against the Crown amendment and how the PST's going to impact businesses that want to come here. Whether they want to do imports, whether they want to do exports, we got to be competitive, and the only time we're going to be competitive in the trade free zone in regards to CentrePort is without the taxation. So—but there's other things that impact them. Whether it be the fuel costs, whether it be the cost of doing business within the province of Manitoba, we know how important that is. So we need to make sure that—and I know the government has said that it was a hard decision for them to make, but it's a hard decision for businesses to decide whether or not they want to actually come here and take that chance on the province of Manitoba with the uncertainty of whether or not they do, in fact, want to come and locate here, make roots here, create jobs here, and I know that's so important to see our province grow and prosper.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

So I do want to close, Mr. Speaker, in—with this. It's that if we're going to be open for business, we need to show very clearly we are open for business, and I don't think Bill 11 is going to do that. I think the jury will still be out on it.

I look forward to this bill going to committee. I want to hear what the business folks have to say about it. I know whenever we listen to the public—I know I have brought forward several amendments on different bills through my short time here. In the short 10 years that I've been elected, I can tell you that there's a lot of bright minds out there. There's a lot of innovative people that have some advice to give us. So I know that once we get to committee

we're going to hear from hard-working Manitobans on how they see this bill impacting them, what it's going to do for their business, whether it's going to make them competitive or not competitive, and that's what it's all about, is listening to the folks.

So, with that, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to talk about Bill 11.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move that debate on Bill 11 now be—  
*[interjection]*

**Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald), that debate be now adjourned.

*Motion agreed to.*

### **Bill 32—The Manitoba Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Amendment Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now proceed to call concurrence and third readings on Bill 32, The Manitoba Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Amendment Act.

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that Bill 32, The Manitoba Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Institut manitobain de l'Association canadienne de gestion des achats, 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.*

**Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, before I begin my comments on this bill, I just want to respond to some of the things I was hearing from the opposition in terms of population changes, and I know I am a new Minister of Finance, but I have come to understand that when more people come here than leave, the population grows, as it has been doing since 2004. Since 2004, the population of Manitoba's grown by over 100,000, population growth not seen in this province for the last 40 years or more. That is the equivalent of adding two cities the size of Brandon since 2004. Now, we certainly hear evidence of that growth when members opposite take off their partisan hats for a moment and talk about the growth that they see in their own communities. So the population is

growing. There are more people coming to Manitoba and building a life here than there are leaving.

\* (15:50)

That is in contrast to what was happening during the 1990s. During the members' opposite time in government, 33,000 more people left the province than came; that is a net loss. So I just want there to be no doubt in anyone's mind that there are more people in Manitoba today than there was in the past. The population has been growing and our hope is for that population to continue to grow, because people will continue to find that Manitoba is a good place to come to raise your family, to find a job, to build a home, to own a home, to do all of the things that families all across our province and our country dream about.

In fact, we know from a recent Bank of Montreal study by the chief economist there that Winnipeg is one of the most attractive cities in Canada to attract new workers, and that's because of our affordability, that's because of our low unemployment rate and it's because we have a great future to offer people here. So I wanted to start with that.

This bill changes the title of The Manitoba Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Act to The Supply Chain Management Professionals Act. And, Mr. Speaker, other amendments include replacing the professional designation of certified professional purchaser with supply chain management professional and adding a provision referencing the institute's obligations under The Labour Mobility Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Institute governs the qualifications and registration of certified professional purchasers in Manitoba, currently about 300 members in Manitoba. And in June of 2009, the Purchasing Management Association of Canada, the national body, approved the replacement of the designation of certified professional purchaser with supply chain management professional. This better reflects the evolution of their members' practice beyond just procurement to include transportation and logistics operations management. This accreditation is already in use and recognized in the USA and the UK and is now recognized elsewhere in Canada.

Bill 32 will more accurately reflect the nature of the work performed by professional purchasers and will be consistent with similar changes made in other

provinces and internationally. In fact, with the change in the institute's program designation, the number of annual graduates in Manitoba has increased by 40 per cent.

We know and we've heard a great deal of debate this afternoon, and probably will hear more, that Manitoba is part of the global economy and we are uniquely positioned to take advantage of that global economy by the nature of our geographic location in North America. I may have referenced this before in the House, but recently when we held a round table discussion with business and labour leaders across Manitoba to talk about the needs for renewed investment in infrastructure, one of the things that I remember somebody saying there is that our geographic location is something nobody can take away from us. And many of the investments that we are making and will continue to make are designed to take advantage of that as we continue to look for ways to grow the economy so that we have prosperity, not only in our own lives, but we make sure that there's prosperity for generations to come.

The kind of things that professional purchasers or supply chain management professionals, as we're going to be calling them now, do: logistics and supply chain management—these are key components of CentrePort Canada's objectives to promote the development of and investments in the Winnipeg-based inland port. And, of course, we've heard from members opposite their support for CentrePort Canada. CentrePort Canada is going to require investments in infrastructure. It is going to require that. And so as they say today they support the idea of it, I support—I hope they will also support those investments. I hope they will also support the payment for those investments, because that is what is required if we want to see that kind of economic development in Manitoba.

So, with this piece of legislation, we recognize those people involved in logistics and procurement and others with the more internationally recognized supply chain management designation. We know it's important to have those people here to attract prospective international investors to Manitoba and to CentrePort Canada. Additionally, Manitoba graduates will also now be recognized internationally for their skills and knowledge respecting the distribution and transportation of Manitoba products.

So I'm sure there are many members eager to speak to this bill, and I will now sit down and afford them that opportunity.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I do have a few things to say in regards to Bill 32. I know that, you know, I listened very carefully to what the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard) had to say, and I guess the concern that I have here, the most in this regard, is the fact that when we're looking at this particular piece of legislation and all legislation, for that matter, that comes forward—is the impact it's going to have on various sectors. And I know very clearly that, you know, the supply chain professionals, they control about \$130 billion in annual spending, and I think that's a significant amount of money that we're talking about.

And whenever we're looking at other jurisdictions on how they're going to be able to handle legislation similar to this, and usually we'd look at what happens in any other provinces and how that impacts them, and I didn't once hear where the minister had actually referred to any other province, whether or not this legislation was, in fact, part of their legislation, what impact it's going to have on those folks. So I am very concerned about that.

I know that, whenever we're looking at these folks in regards to their own budgets, they have to follow very closely what they want to do, in order to control their spending also, not only in private enterprise but public enterprise, public sector, as well, and what impact that's going to have on them, as well. I know that whenever we look at any organization in regards to that impact, I just want to make sure that we do have that. And I also didn't hear the Minister of Finance talk about consultation in regards to who she got this idea from, how it come about and I think that's pretty important.

And I encourage the minister, and I encourage the government when they bring this forward, and any legislation any of us bring forward, is done in consultation with those impacted the most. So I know, again, as I said in my comments before, that it's about consultation, and I know that when this bill does get to committee, we'll be able to hear from them in that regard and have that opportunity to have that dialogue and—

**An Honourable Member:** It's third reading.

**Mr. Eichler:** Oh, so we're already right there. There we are, yes. So, I guess that's out of the question, so. Anyway, I guess that's not going to happen, Mr. Speaker, but—[*interjection*] Surely they did, surely they did. Let's hope that it's there and that it is good legislation.

I know that whenever we're talking about that, it—that it will impact us forever, and it will impact the next generation and a generation after that. I know that, even if governments change, even if governments change, whether that is what the people of Manitoba want, you just don't wave a wand and have legislation go away.

And so whenever governments make a commitment to do certain things, we know it takes time. It's a part of the process whenever we do that, whether or not it's going to impact them in a way that's going to be significant or not, we certainly want to make sure that it's going to be achievable, make sure it's going to be sustainable for the next generation to come.

So, with that, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors within the Department of Health):** I actually move—I would like to move that debate be adjourned on this bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Seconded by?

**Ms. Blady:** Seconded by the Minister for Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald).

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors, seconded by the minister of jobs in the economy, that debate be now adjourned.

Is that agreed? [*Agreed*]

**Bill 39—The Government Efficiency Act (Various Acts Amended or Replaced to Consolidate Boards and Agencies and Eliminate Government Appointments)**

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll now proceed to call concurrence and third reading on Bill 39, The Government Efficiency Act (Various Acts Amended or Replaced to Consolidate Boards and Agencies and Eliminate Government Appointments).

**Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), that Bill 39, The Government Efficiency Act (Various Acts Amended or Replaced to Consolidate Boards and Agencies and Eliminate Government Appointments); Loi sur l'efficacité gouvernementale (modification ou remplacement de diverses lois—fusion d'organismes et non-participation aux nominations), as amended and 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.***

\* (16:00)

**Mr. Speaker:** Any debate?

**Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance):** It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill 39, The Government Efficiency Act.

This bill makes the legislative amendments needed for government to move forward on our commitment to reduce government-appointed agencies, boards and commissions, ABCs, by 20 per cent. This bill amends various acts and repeals others in order to reduce the number of government boards and agencies and eliminate the government's involvement in the appointment of public representatives to the councils of certain professional associations.

This bill builds on other efficiency initiatives that we have undertaken to make sure that we continue to strive to deliver high-quality services to the people of Manitoba as efficiently and as cost effectively as possible. And, of course, one of the stand-out examples of the measures that we've taken to do that were the reduction of regional health authorities from 11 to five, and this was a—this is a further reduction. There have been past reductions, certainly, in the number of regional health authorities. I remember when we took office in 1999, I think at that time there were 13 regional health authorities. There were two regional health authorities in the city of Winnipeg alone at that time, and over time we have reduced again and again the number of administrators, the number of people overseeing the health-care system and tried to take those savings and put them to the front lines of health care.

And one of the good examples, I think, from the move to reduce the number of regional health authorities was that that reduction saved about \$10 million, and at the same time as we saved that money on the administrative side we were able to invest about the equivalent amount of money in making sure that people who were at home had access to cancer-care drugs. That is what we've tried to do in our time in government to make sure that we continue to redirect the savings that we make in government to increase front-line care, to increase front-line services. We know that through those reductions to regional health authorities we've seen

results, some of the results that I just spoke about. We have seen through those mergers the elimination of more than a hundred board and executive positions. We said that we would save \$10 million over three years through these mergers, and my understanding is that those savings have been achieved in the first year, two years ahead of schedule.

So, when we looked at the number of agencies and boards and commissions that we appoint, and I think it bears saying that we know that the people who are appointed to those agencies and boards and commissions, they do that because they believe in public service. And I know there'll be much made, as there was today, about who gets appointed to those things, but we have shown, I think, certainly more than any previous government, a willingness to appoint people who bring the skills needed to those boards regardless of their partisan leanings.

I know that previously we appointed the member for Agassiz (Mr. Briese) to a board. The member for Agassiz, before he was elected, was appointed by our government to a board. I don't think that was based on his membership in any political party. We appointed the member who now sits for Portage la Prairie. He was appointed to serve as the member of an agency, board or commission by our government. So, of course, when you make those appointments, you want to appoint people who share the values of the government, who know that they have a role also in supporting the policies that are put in place by government. But we have not let partisanship blind us to the fact that there are people with good skills who desire to serve the public who come from many different political beliefs, and I think that is more true of our government than it certainly was of the past government.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we took a look at agency, boards and commissions, we identified about—over a hundred, and after talking to departments and talking to those boards and commissions themselves, we figured that there were about 23 of those that we could dissolve or amalgamate. These either have functions that can be moved into government or aligned with functions of other agencies, boards and commissions, and in some cases it was just decided that really provincial involvement wasn't necessary. And so, in addition to our commitment to reduce these boards by 20 per cent, we identified some with external and provincial appointments and others—and some external and some internal that could be amalgamated or could be dissolved. Not all of those

reductions require legislative changes. Not all of them will be found in this act, but some do, and that is why we're bringing this act forward.

We are trying very hard in our government to take a balanced approach to the economic conditions that we're faced with, and it is true that the Manitoba economy is a strong and resilient economy. As I've come to understand more so than ever before in the last few weeks—and I think it was probably well put by somebody who I spoke with about the economy in Manitoba—that when you talk about our economy, it most resembles the economy of the country as a whole because it's well-diversified. If you look at all of the different components of the Manitoba economy, there is no sector that is far and away the largest sector. It is made up of many sectors that contribute overall to the economy, and that means that it's resilient. That means that even in times of economic downturns, Manitoba is well positioned to withstand those things.

But the reality, also, is in our time that we are affected, as every economy is affected, by what happens to the south of us and what happens in the world around us, and so as we're facing those challenges we are trying to look at how we deliver services to Manitobans. We want to make sure that as we are trusted to spend money that Manitobans work hard for, that we spend that money on things that get results for Manitobans. And so that means that instead of embracing the failed policies of the past where it was thought that the best solution to economic challenges was to reduce the number of nurses and doctors who were being trained, we, instead, have taken a different course.

We have decided that we want to make sure that there are more doctors and nurses who are being educated and trained in Manitoba, that they are there to take up the challenge of those who will lead the profession, that—you know, on the radio not that long ago, I heard the story of a nurse who recently won an award. I think she was named the Canadian Oncology Nurse of the Year, and when she talked about her story about what brought her to nursing and why she had picked that field, it was reminiscent to me of a different time. She graduated from nursing at a time in the 1990s when there were no jobs here for her. So she left and she went to Britain to become a nurse, and she had a choice between nursing in a ward that had many, many beds or nursing in a smaller ward that specialized in cancer care. So she decided to do that, and that put her on a career path. Now she has come back to Manitoba and she is

celebrated as a leader across the country in nursing for those people who are struggling with a cancer diagnosis. But this was a nurse who perhaps showed great promise as a young person and could not find a job in Manitoba, was forced to leave and look globally, and now she's come home and we're grateful for that.

We're also making sure that we continue to make investments in education. We know that a key part of what we have to do is ensure that Manitobans have the skills they need to take advantage of the jobs that are available today and the jobs that will be available into the future, and that's why we continue to make those key investments.

And that has meant some difficult choices, some choices that we will certainly talk more about, I know, as the days and weeks go on. But it's also meant that we have had to look at the budgets of many departments. And we have made sure that in some of those departments they are held to zeros, that they are held to look in their departmental budgets to be able to prioritize for the things that they want to do. It is meant that we are looking at how to deliver all kinds of programs more efficiently. We're looking at the results that we get for those governments. It's not a one-time thing to review your spending for efficiencies; it's something that you have to do ongoing. It's something that you have to bring to this job, I think, every day, a desire to get the best results for Manitobans and an awareness every day that you're spending their money to get those results, and we continue to do that.

\* (16:10)

We've made a commitment to reduce the size of the civil service by 600 over three years, and we're on track towards realizing that goal. And so this bill builds on many of the other things that we're doing to take a hard look at what we spend money on and make sure that when we spend that money that we're getting value for it.

Not only, as I've said, are we looking at the reduction of regional health authorities, we've also merged Manitoba Lotteries and the Manitoba liquor commission, two Crowns that we've merged into one organization. We believe that that will enable us to get many efficiencies, but it will also enable us to ensure that, as we're moving forward to deliver those goods and services to Manitobans that they value, that we can do it in a socially responsible way.

Just this morning, Mr. Speaker, I was talking to somebody who was on their way, I think, tomorrow to a meeting or gathering that talks about corporate social responsibility where Manitoba Lotteries was featured, and he had a lot of praise and a lot of good things to say about the leadership that our Crowns have taken in being socially responsible organizations. And that's something that all Manitobans should be proud of. That is something that we all have a share in, because those Crowns are ours; they belong to us.

So what I would say to members in this Chamber as I take a look at this bill, that this is not a bill that solves every problem. There were some, perhaps, who would say, you know, you shouldn't look at the small things; you should just look at big things. But these things matter: being able to deliver services more efficiently, taking the time and taking the initiative to look at what we're doing, to look at how we're spending the money of Manitobans and where we can do a better job of that. That is important as we move forward.

And it matters that we have the provision of public services, whether that is by making sure that we can eliminate regional health authorities, that we can deliver health care more efficiently, whether that means that we're looking at how our Crowns operate and taking the initiative to merge two of our Crowns together so that they can operate more efficiently, or whether it means that we have fewer people appointed to fewer boards, those are all important steps to take. They're not the whole picture. There is much more to do, and this is something that we have to bring a renewed energy to every day that we're here, every day that we're in government. And we will continue to do that.

I think it is also in this spirit that we have moved forward on municipal amalgamations—something that I know the members have heartily opposed. But we know that there are good reasons that municipalities who have higher population bases can do a better job of delivering quality services to their citizens as efficiently as possible.

The time is here for all of us to sharpen our pencils and do a better job of being as efficient as we can. There are many lessons we can learn from the manufacturing industry, who've embraced the principles of lean management to look at how we deliver services and to make sure that we're doing that efficiently and effectively and with high quality to Manitobans.

That's what this bill is about. That is what much of our strategy as we move forward with our fiscal plan is about. We don't have to go back to a time where we make deep cuts that affect Manitobans for generations. We can—if we have the willingness to do it, we can look at how we do things in government. We can do it more efficiently, we can do it more effectively and we can make sure that Manitoba continues to be the province where we all want to stay, raise our families and make sure that we have a good life.

Many of us, if not all of us, in this Chamber choose to live in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. It's something that sets our province apart. People who stay here choose to stay here, because we know we have a great thing going. And things like this bill make sure that we are able to continue to have a great province with high-quality public services delivered cost-effectively and efficiently, and that we don't have to resort to the failed policies that members opposite put in place in the '90s.

So I would recommend this bill to all members in this House. I think it is a good step forward—not the whole marathon, Mr. Speaker, but a good step in the right direction.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** It's a pleasure to speak this afternoon on this bill. I've been looking forward to putting comments on the record regarding this particular piece of legislation.

I listened to the Minister of Finance closely and intently and I'm not sure if she's had a conversion on the road to this Wednesday afternoon, Mr. Speaker, or what has happened in the NDP caucus office to have her bring forward a completely different view of reality than is actually reality. I mean, we only need to look at the NDP record, that they are not serious about cutting back on anything in terms of bureaucracy.

Let's talk about the 192 communicators, the 192 communicators that are populated throughout the land in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, to try to put a pleasant face on all the difficult things that the NDP government is doing; the 192 communicators that are there to try to spin positively the PST tax increase, which this government promised that they wouldn't impose on Manitobans in the 2011 election; the 192 communicators which are out there trying to explain to Manitobans why a transmission line would go on the longest, most expensive, least environmentally friendly route imaginable, on the west side of the province, as opposed to the side that

Manitoba Hydro has long planned for and long preferred. Those 192 communicators are doing that work every day.

The 192 communicators was rushing to the hallway when statistics like—which were brought forward by the member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen) on the issue of people who walk into an emergency room and ultimately the 10 per cent of them who ultimately leave that emergency room without being seen for the reason that they came, Mr. Speaker. Those 192 communicators are trying to put a positive spin on that, the 192 communicators who are busy trying to tell Manitobans that, in fact, we are a less violent province, when we continue to see a gang membership at a significant level in the province of Manitoba.

In fact, we had the president of the Manitoba—or the Winnipeg Police Association, Mr. Sutherland, have to come forward and refute the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), had to come forward and correct the Attorney General, who had hung up the mission accomplished sign on gang activity last week and, thankfully, Mr. Sutherland came forward and said that that's not correct, there's much more work to do on this and to put a—a not a pleasant face on the situation, but an accurate 'flice'-face, a reflective face on what is happening in Manitoba.

Those 192 communicators are busy doing those sort of things. So I didn't hear the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard) talk about reducing the 192 communicators.

Now, why is it that those massive amount of communicators, the bureaucracy that they built for government communications, why wouldn't she look at any of those positions, Mr. Speaker? I imagine that if you talk to most Manitobans and you ask them whether or not the government communicators are what you would consider to be front-line services, that they would say no. Now, I'm open to an opinion survey they says something different, if the government wants to produce that, or if we want to go out in the street and do what's known as a streeter and ask, you know, a hundred people on this snowy, blustery day, whether they think cutting government—whether they think cutting services for—or cutting communicators would be cutting front-line services. I think most Manitobans would say no, that that wouldn't be something that they would consider to be front-line services, that you could actually save money there without hurting

Manitobans in the services that they need to have performed from the government.

Now, we didn't hear the Minister of Finance talk about that at all; she didn't mention those 192 communicators at all. That's an 'efficienshe'—efficiency that she is not willing to touch, that she is not willing to look at, Mr. Speaker—[interjection] I'm glad I managed to get the member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau) to smile. I haven't seen him smile like that for the last four weeks.

I—but that's the kind of efficiency, Mr. Speaker, that is needed—that is needed in Manitoba, but she won't look at that. She won't talk about those 192 communicators because it impacts not on people, not on the average Manitoban, but it impacts on the government. It impacts on the political operations of this government, and that's something they simply don't want to touch.

Now, when she was talking about their new-found desire to find efficiencies in government, she also didn't talk about the vote tax. She didn't talk about the million dollars that is coming out of the coffers of Manitobans, out of the pockets of Manitobans, and going into the coffers of the NDP party, Mr. Speaker. The money that is going to be allocated from Manitobans, from the kitchen table, onto the political boardroom table of the NDP, that's an efficiency that the Minister of Finance doesn't want to touch.

\*(16:20)

Now, again, the minister in Finance and I, we could head out onto the street, onto Broadway, or head over to Osborne Village, if she'd prefer, and we could ask people who are walking down the street whether or not they think if we did away with the vote tax as an efficiency measure; whether or not they would think that that would be a cut to front-line services; whether or not they would believe that that would be hurting them by eliminating the vote tax. And, again, I've always—knowledge or aware that I might be wrong; I don't pretend to have all the answers. But I do think that if we went out and did that survey that those Manitobans that we were speaking to would say, well, no, I don't think it would hurt me if you did away with the NDP vote tax.

I don't think it would hurt me if you eliminated the money going from our pockets to the NDP party. So that's an efficiency that perhaps should show up in this bill. That's an efficiency that we could

reduce the cost of government without hurting Manitobans who are relying on services. But, again, the government doesn't want to talk about that, doesn't want to include that as an efficiency because it hurts them politically. It hurts their political operations. They're not able to raise money at the level that they maybe once were because Manitobans have come to see them for what they are: a government that likes to tax and spend. And so she doesn't want to have that in there because it would hurt them politically. It's not about preventing Manitobans from getting hurt, as the minister was trying to say; it's about trying to prevent their party from getting hurt. And that's what she's truly protecting.

Now, she talked a bit about patronage appointments, and I appreciated that, Mr. Speaker, that she would raise the issue of patronage appointments. And the name Scott Smith came to mind. I don't know if members here remember Mr. Smith. You know, pleasant enough guy. I didn't get to know him long because of him losing his seat. But, you know, a decent enough fellow in talking to him personally in this Chamber and since those times. But the new members of this House may not remember that Mr. Smith, when he was defeated as the NDP candidate for the riding of Brandon West, after his severance pay, I think, expired with the Province of Manitoba—or maybe his severance pay hadn't even expired—he was hired on into government into some sort of special consulting role. I don't remember the exact title of it. But he was given some sort of one-year contract by this government. Now, if that's not a patronage appointment, I don't know what is. A defeated candidate—a defeated candidate—and if the minister or the former minister, the member from Assiniboia, wants to stand up and wants to defend that patronage appointment, it might've been—actually been in his department; I'm trying to remember. Was it? I think it was—well, it was into one of the financial departments. I think it was in Entrepreneurship or something like that, and he was appointed. I don't know, because it was some made up position to allow him to come into government and to draw a salary. Now, that is clearly the definition of a patronage appointment.

**An Honourable Member:** Are you going back to this chestnut?

**Mr. Goertzen:** It's—you know, I see that the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald) is interested in this because she's thinking, that's probably the only job that the NDP created, the one that they

created for Scott Smith. So she's—I've gotten her attention because she's thinking, oh, that's how we should create jobs. We should get all of our defeated candidates and put them into made up positions within the Economy. And that's not what I'm suggesting that she do. I'm actually suggesting the opposite.

**An Honourable Member:** You have more defeated candidates than we do.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Well, we do have more defeated candidates, and, strangely enough, none of them have shown up on the government payroll, Mr. Speaker, so.

**An Honourable Member:** The minister makes the point.

**Mr. Goertzen:** In fact, she makes my point—she makes my point for me that only the NDP defeated candidates end up in these made up positions because they are patronage appointments.

**An Honourable Member:** What about Bonnie Korzeniowski?

**Mr. Goertzen:** Now, I had it on my notes, but the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) is sort of pre-empting my thunder, Mr. Speaker, when he talks about Bonnie Korzeniowski, the former member for St. James. Now, of course, she had a very unique situation. Not only did she—she wasn't defeated, she retired, but before she retired, she had a unique offer—a very unique offer. I searched the handbook for MLAs to see if this was a common practice. I looked in the legislative rules. I looked in the transition pay and such things. But she got a unique offer. She was told by the government she could continue to be an MLA, even though she wasn't an MLA anymore. But they would let her—they'd let her keep her office and they'd let her keep the same pay and they give her a title, and the title was of military envoy, which is normally held by a backbench government MLA. But she didn't barely have to work for it. I mean, we were able to get, I think, freedom of information requests on how often she was in the office and, to use a phrase exposed yesterday, was—it was not less often than Halley's Comet coming around, but she certainly wasn't there very often, on a very, very part-time basis. But she got to keep that nice office and got to keep all the trappings of the office and the pay, Mr. Speaker. Now, if that wasn't a patronage appointment, well, I don't know what is. I mean, it's the definition of a patronage appointment.

So you have defeated candidates getting put into government in made-up positions by the government, in the name of Mr. Smith. You have candidates who decide to retire and then who or—and I'm not going to speculate on how she decided to retire—there's all sorts of conspiracies that could be floated on that—but you have candidates who decide to retire and then who are put into a position that is normally held by an MLA and then given the same pay as an MLA. I also suspect she's probably also got the—a lot of the same sort of benefits, Mr. Speaker, and was able to keep her office. Now, that is clearly a patronage appointment.

Now I know that that situation has now changed. I think the government was sort of shamed out of it at some point. But they weren't so ashamed not to do that, and so it is kind of the height of hypocrisy to listen to the minister speak about how this government is trying to eliminate patronage appointments or reduce them and trying to find efficiencies within government, when everything that you look at, in terms of their record, points to a government that is more than willing to have patronage appointments.

There was a time that I couldn't find a board that didn't have Eugene Kostyra sitting on it, Mr. Speaker. I mean, we went back in the day, and I'm not sure if it's the same exactly now, but there was certainly a time when every time we'd see a board or some sort of significant appointment, there was Eugene Kostyra's name popping up over and over again. And yet this is the government that is saying, oh, no, that's not the kinds of things we're doing; in fact, we're bringing in a law, we're bringing in a bill that is going to correct that sort of thing.

Well, it doesn't take a bill to correct those sort of things, it has a lot to do with your individual perspective, your individual philosophy and the government simply has to be able to control itself. But nothing in this legislation would stop another defeated candidate from getting—now the only thing that's going to stop their NDP defeated candidates from getting appointed is a new government, and that might be the solution. But nothing in this bill is going to stop defeated NDP candidates from getting these patronage appointments. Nothing in this bill would stop Bonnie Korzeniowski, or someone like her who retires, just sliding into another made-up position to allow her to continue to be the 58th MLA of this Legislature. Nothing in this would stop the continuous appointment of someone like Eugene Kostyra, Mr. Speaker, where there certainly would

be questions about whether or not the positions are being granted from a patronage perspective. Nothing in this requires the government to act more efficiently by having less communicators, less than the 192 that tried to spin every imaginable issue that they have, and nothing in this bill would eliminate the vote tax.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I conclude my comments, I simply want to say that this bill is obvious for what it is. The government is trying to pretend that they are—oh, man, the government—*[interjection]*—the member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) just made a bad day worse.

I—the nothing in this bill would prevent this government from doing the exact sort of things that they did, Mr. Speaker, and so I would encourage them to look more internally, look more into themselves to try to ensure that they are controlling the cost of government without hurting Manitobans. It doesn't take a bill to do that; it takes a government who has a willingness to do that, and clearly that isn't reflective of this government.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, I do want to also put a few things on the record in regards to Bill 39, The Government Efficiency Act.

In fact, I remember when this bill was introduced in the House, and they talked about different boards and certain other government agencies that they were going to be having a look at, and we're not really sure if they went far enough or they didn't. And the member from Steinbach brings up some interesting points in regards to appointments. And whenever we look at those appointments, we look at what the government really wants to do in regards to efficiencies. There's certainly lots of advice out there that I know they probably could've received and had an opportunity to take a few more actions in regards to ensuring that there was more efficiencies that did or should've actually taken place.

\* (16:30)

So I know that, whatever we are in committee on this particular piece of legislation, when we were trying to decide what we're going to be doing on this particular bill, I know that I did reach out to a number of the Crown corporation groups that we're talking about, and some of those were involved in agriculture, and I know that the Manitoba Beef Producers, the KAP organization, has been trying to set up a meeting—set up a meeting where they're

going to be able to reach out to the Province of Manitoba, in particular, the Minister of Agriculture.

Of course, we know how important it is in regards to community pastures, and the federal government, in their wisdom, decided that they wanted to get out of the pasture business and they handed the ball off to producers and to the provinces and let them decide what role they wanted to play in regards to moving forward on that—on community pastures. So we know how important that is. In fact, I've had a number of calls, and one of the boards that they—the government decided to eliminate was one of those producer boards that could have provided some impact on how it would impact community pastures. So we know how important, for all members of the agriculture society, to have that input. So we're not saying that it was wrong to eliminate the board. What we're saying is that was—is—was the timing the—right to eliminate that board? Whenever you have a number of issues and whether or not that's going to be handled through another department, because then you'd also know that there are some decisions that's going to have to be made not only by the minister, the Agriculture Minister, but also those that are impacted through it, be the Manitoba Beef Producers, whether it be the Keystone Ag Producers.

And, of course, we know what's going on with Bill 33, I believe, on the amalgamation bill and that impact through the AMM. And it's going to impact them because a lot of these municipalities have land that they own within these community pastures, so it's not just a matter of just a wand or a check mark saying, that one in, that one in, that one in—because it's not. Because if we go through the name changes, it's problematic in a way that whenever we look at those community pastures, if they merge with another one, how's that going to affect the community pastures? So it's not just a simple matter of saying this is the way we want to go, because we have to get all those dots in the right place and the t's crossed in the right place in order to ensure that, in fact, we are doing what's best for the livestock producers in this regard.

And also there's the money side of things, on how that's going to be rolled out, whether that's done through a co-op or whether it's done through funding through MAFRI—which there's no MAFRI no more. The government decided to change their name on that and take off the FI and add RD through Rural Development, so we're not sure how that's all going to work out, as well. I know the member from Lac du Bonnet talked about Heritage today and talked about

changing the name on Heritage, and the stationery cost on that alone is going to be significant, but I know in regards to MAFRI and the departments, the way it rolls out in regards to the financing of these community pastures, in that regard, can be significant.

So I'm encouraging the government, whenever they get through this piece of legislation, they want to make sure there's enough boards left to deal with this in a way that's going to have them have the authority to be able to deal with it, whether it be through the AMM or whether it be through the Manitoba Beef Producers, whether that be through other organizations such as KAP or any of the other organizations, for that matter. But I know, in consultation at some of the beef meetings that I've been at, this has been a hot-button issue. And whenever we look at next year, what that might look like, these producers are now just trying to determine where they're going to be putting their cattle, so that is a decision they need to make fairly soon. I don't think we can wait until spring for that, because it'll just be too late.

And the last thing we want is to have another exodus of our beef sector move out to another part of the province. In fact, I have talked about this as well, and it is also one of the boards that may be impacted through this particular piece of legislation, and that's in regard to land use. Land use is also an important part for our beef producers. There's a lot of marginal land up through the Interlake, down over there in the southwestern part of the province, of course, up even through parts of my riding, through Lakeside. And I can tell you there's—it's ideal land for cattle pasturing, and that's where a lot of the community pastures are at. So, with those either going idle or going to be retained and be part of the Community Pasture Program, we need to make sure that we do, in fact, have that in place for them. So I think that we need to, you know, look at efficiencies. There's no doubt about it, but we got to do it in a way that's going to be sustainable. And I look forward to seeing what the government has in place to ensure that those checks and balances are going to be looked after.

I do want to come back to another agency that may be impacted, and we know that we got to look for efficiencies, that there's just one taxpayer out there. We need to be remindful of that when we're looking at cost and budgetary items. We're very much in favour of impacts, ensuring they're getting the best bang for our buck. And there are multiple boards whereby we have different sectors, different

commodity groups, sitting and representing, whether it be the chartered accountants, whether it be the dairy producers, whether it be the canola growers, whatever sector you want to look at, whether or not we're going to have just a meeting to hash the same thing over again, and we need to make sure that those, in fact, are not duplicated as well.

So we're very much in favour of efficiency. We're just not sure how that's going to roll out and actually what the government's plans are. They haven't been clear in regards to leadership on how they want to roll this out for the next generation or the next time that they're going to be bringing forward new boards or whether or not they're going to bring new boards forward at all. So I know there's a lot of groups that meet on a monthly basis, whether it be the Winnipeg chamber, whether it be the Manitoba chamber, we reach out to those organizations who, again, have a number of boards, and they are, in fact, as well seeing a lot of the same problems. And that problem is on people having enough time to sit on these boards and have the opportunity because we know it takes time to do the research, it takes time to draft the agendas, and lay out these things, whereby we're able to have that discussion in order to be sustainable. So we're very much in favour of, in fact, seeing that efficiencies are put in place, but in a way that's going to be sustainable for the next generation.

There's another sector that I don't believe has really been impacted the way it probably should have, and that's the mining industry. I want to talk about that just for a few minutes, and I know through negotiations—one of my previous critic roles as Aboriginal and Northern Affairs—and the mining sector alone and how that's going to impact the future of Manitoba and whether or not that's through a board level or whether that's through an appointment or just negotiation, sitting down with the Aboriginal folks and talking about how that looks. And, of course, there's other things that come into it as well with infrastructure. That's also very important, how we're going to get that product in and out of that particular mining facility, and we know how important that is.

So how does that look, Mr. Speaker, in regards to this particular piece of legislation? How's that going to impact those negotiations? And we know how important it is to—for all sectors to have a voice at the table. It may not be necessary through an appointed board, but it would be through some other area where we're going to be able to have those folks

provide that input. In fact, I know I just got a call the other day in regards to another issue in regards to innovation, and they wanted to know how to go about it. And I said, well, you know what, we're not real sure about this particular piece of legislation, this Bill 39, in regards to how it might impact innovation and technology. As we move forward, we know that there's a minister in charge of that, but does that give us the opportunity to have the right input, the right debate whenever we're going to have this information flow through, either through to a minister, or through to a critic?

And we know, as us as opposition on this side of the House, our job is to hold the government to account, and we know that, as the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard) stated, there's people on both sides of the House that are on some of the boards, not very many from this side of the House.

\* (16:40)

I know, in particular, my IREHA health board that's been supposedly modernized and more efficiency brought forward supposedly by the health in regards to the merger of those boards from, I believe, nine to five, and I can tell you that we can find it's not. I've got numerous, numerous calls saying that, look, this was going to save us all kinds of money.

So mergers and amalgamations are not necessarily always the answer when we look at this type of legislation because we need to make sure that, in fact, it is going to be the best thing. In fact, I know, going back to the amalgamation of school boards and the dilemma that put a lot of folks in because it was a huge—I believe it was Prairie Rose School Division in that regard, where they were forced to merge. And I can tell you that we were very concerned—very concerned—about how that looked, and, of course, now we're concerned about AMM with their role. In fact, today they talked about taking the government to court on forced amalgamation. So, if that would've worked through a board, I don't know if that would've saved us anything, really don't know. But I can tell you this: it's a situation where we don't need to be going down. I don't think the government needs another lawsuit. I don't think we need to have one more area where we need to be questioning whether or not we did the right thing. And, in fact, it comes back to lack of consultation. And I know very clearly when the minister at the time announced it at AMM almost a year ago, now on the eve of AMM, I can tell you that

the minister, current minister now, is trying to repair some of the damage caused by this government. If maybe they would've talked to the AMM and maybe they had a board or committee—not saying that's the answer again—but maybe we wouldn't be in the position we're in today.

So sometimes we try to be too efficient and not necessarily for the betterment of all Manitobans. And I know that this will be the final little say I'll have on this piece of legislation, but certainly wanted to make it very clear that when we're looking at efficiencies, sometimes we need to look within rather than look from inside out; I think that's really important.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul):** Mr. Speaker, I also would like to have a opportunity to debate Bill 39, and it talks about various savings, and we were wondering maybe perhaps the government would be willing to make a few amendments, and now would be a good time to recommend some of the savings that we feel that the government could make in regards to Bill 39. Perhaps they would be agreeable to add a few other points onto that legislation.

For instance, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start with the vote tax, something that the government actually didn't run on and had previously declined and said that they felt in the current climate they couldn't actually take the vote tax. And yet we find that each and every NDP MLA will be taking \$5,000 a year and putting it into their political coffers. Very hard-earned and hard-fought-for taxpayer dollars are now going to be going to the NDP party. And, you know, perhaps they should've waited until after the next provincial election, and instead have decided they're going to take it now because clearly they are running short of money.

So, you know, on Bill 39, perhaps they could put the vote tax—defer that until after the next election, or it could be one of their election platforms, and they could get elected on it, and then it would be something perhaps that they could be taking. But, you know, as a cost-saving measure, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that could be one of them.

The next one, and this is certainly one of the biggest savings, would be the bipole route. Only under NDP world could you actually take a hydro line that has hydro produced close to the Ontario border; from the Ontario border you would run the line all the way to the Saskatchewan border going west; then what you'd do is then you run it down

south, almost down to the US border. And then after that you run it east, just sort of under where the electricity is being produced. And then it is converted, and from that point on, it is then sent further east—actually further east than where it's produced; it is sent southeast.

Only under this NDP government would you not take hydro from one point and take as straight a line down and then send it southeast where it belongs. That would be—*[interjection]* And, you know, we hear the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) crying, you know, they want to privatize it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we now have high-ranking officials of the NDP party outing the NDP as wanting to privatize Manitoba Hydro—a concern to Manitobans, because in the last election the NDP ran on not raising the PST, calling it nonsense, and raised it; saying they wouldn't raise taxes and raised it; said they wouldn't sell Manitoba Hydro and now we find out from high-ranking officials within the NDP that that is actually something they are also planning on doing is getting Manitoba Hydro ready to be sold.

So what we actually should learn from the last campaign is that everything a New Democrat says—they won't say—it's actually the opposite of what they're going to do. So I thank the member for Wolseley for pointing that out that part of their mantra is that they wish to sell Manitoba Hydro.

But, in the meantime, they could sell—before they sell Manitoba Hydro, they could actually find a \$1.2-billion savings by bringing the route directly south and into the Riel converter station and, from there, sending it on southeast to various markets. But, Mr. Speaker, that would be an amendment we would—we'd agree to that, if they would make amendment to this bill.

Bill 39 could also address the fact there are 192 communicators. I'm always surprised when I go out into the hallway after question period to go to my office and get some papers, and I do a very casual count, and most days NDP communicators outnumber everybody else in the hallway. On most days, you will find that the NDP communication staff far outnumbers the number of politicians out there that are speaking to the media, certainly outnumber the media and outnumber basically everybody else. Now, you would think that at some point in time even for the NDP that would become a little much; it would be a little rich, but seemingly not. So perhaps an amendment to Bill 39 could be that the number of communicators be brought under

control, and there would be a really good cost-saving measure for the NDP.

And, as has been mentioned before, we—you know, we had the military attaché, our good friend Bonnie Korzeniowski—now, we understand that she has now been moved out of that position, and for years we've been calling on that position to be eliminated. I don't think the military attaché position was meant to be a position of soft landing for NDP MLAs who quit from this Chamber, but we find that there are all kinds of others, and I won't go into it. The member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), I believe, covered it off quite well, where there would be savings on dealing with individuals in the public service who are either failed or retired politicians and Bonnie Korzeniowski was one of those. We're pleased that now that position has been again given to a member of the Legislature.

There's the next one, Mr. Speaker, and it's the Northgate Shopping Centre where the government leased several offices, renovated those offices, furnished those offices, and I'm not too sure if we ever got a full accounting of how much that actually cost. And the interesting thing is that never once were these offices used. No chair was ever sat in; no desk was ever worked at; there was never a meeting at one of the boardroom tables; the lights weren't turned on. But it was renovated—beautifully done. I've actually looked into it myself. It was nicely furnished at one point in time and then it sat there. Now, I would suggest if you're looking for savings, maybe an amendment to Bill 39 would be that the government not make these foolish, foolish mistakes and spend so much taxpayers' money for an office that was renovated, furnished and never used.

Now, from what I understand is actually the furniture is now gone. There is no more furniture there. They've papered it over. I believe the government sign, the last time I was there—anyway, the government sign was still there. And maybe they could find somebody or someplace that could use that space, and perhaps they could sublease it or sublet it and recoup some of their investment, because, Mr. Speaker, there again is where the government could be saving money. And under Bill 39 that would be a great amendment. And I—you know, I venture to say that the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) would even be willing to second that amendment.

\* (16:50)

**An Honourable Member:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Schuler:** And she says absolutely, and I'm pleased to hear that. So, if members opposite wanted to still bring in an amendment on that one, we would like to see the Northgate Shopping Centre fiasco brought in and that be cleared up. I suspect it costs a lot of money to renovate that space and furnish it, and there would be a great savings for Manitobans.

Then we have the other one. The—another place we could save a lot of money would be the Slurpees and sports tickets for criminals. Great to see the Minister of Justice here to hear this. You know, there, too, we could save money. You know, maybe there'd be a way that we could save money. I'm not too sure if the best expenditure of dollars is Slurpees and sports tickets for criminals. You know, there would be another amendment to Bill 39 that perhaps would be warranted, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure if the government were to bring it forward, would find support on this side of the House.

And, Mr. Speaker, we've had, in the past—in fact, the member of Assiniboine, when he was the minister for business and—small business and entrepreneurship, actually helped to fund a porn shop, of all places.

**An Honourable Member:** It was not.

**Mr. Schuler:** And, you know, now he's a little touchy on this one because I understand that it doesn't exist anymore. It's not there anymore.

But, you know, perhaps we could have an amendment to this legislation, Bill 39, that the government no longer fund porn shops, of all things, that maybe that would be an amendment that would be worthy to support. *[interjection]* Perhaps—well, the minister is raising some very valid and important issues that—sorry, the member for Assiniboine—and, you know what? Perhaps I'll give him a few moments and he could put those on the record. He could get up and tell us how it is that all kinds of money went into this porn shop which now seems to have gone bankrupt. So, you know, perhaps an amendment to the Bill 39 could be that we no longer fund those kinds of organizations.

And then we have where government Cabinet ministers and members of the NDP and hangers-on and hacks and flacks availed themselves of all kinds of Jets tickets and lived the high life. In fact, I believe it was the member for Assiniboine was the minister responsible for the Crown corporation when I raised the issue and I asked if that—*[interjection]* I can tell the member for Assiniboine, he's asked if

I've availed myself of any of these tickets, and I want him to know that I have yet—I have yet—to make one Jets game, Mr. Speaker. With—I'd have to say these Jets tickets are way above my pay grade. The best I can get is I stand out on the sidewalk and I can smell the popcorn. That's about the closest I seem to get to a Jets game. Seems to be everybody else in this Chamber has gotten here—and everybody on the NDP benches seem to have availed themselves of free Jets tickets except for myself; I never seem to get any.

But it was actually the member for Assiniboine was the minister, and I raised the issue about free Jets tickets, and he said to me: You know, I'll get back to the member for St. Paul. I will get back to the member, and I will let him know who got access to the Jets tickets and what happened to them.

So we waited a week. Then we waited two weeks. Then we waited three weeks. Then we waited four weeks. Then we waited five weeks, and finally my patience ran out and I asked the question in this Chamber, if the minister, the member for Assiniboine, could tell us who, out of the Crown corporation that he was responsible for, had gotten Jets tickets, and his answer was: You know what? There's so much work to be done on that; we would need to use so many resources. I can't get that information for you. And I then asked him—it's all in Hansard, Mr. Speaker. I then asked him if—if—there were so many Jets tickets being used by New Democrats that maybe he needed a whole department to track them.

Anyway, I would suggest that members on this House would be more than agreeable to a friendly amendment by the government, and I'm sure some of—one on our side would even be willing to second the motion that, from now on—from now on—the NDP be disallowed from taking any more free Jets tickets, and we could save a lot of money that way. Now I'm just saying that that would be a very healthy amendment that could be made.

Mr. Speaker, we could also have a friendly amendment, and, you know, I would say to the member for Assiniboine, I'd be willing to second his amendment if he were to put in there that the NDP not be allowed to have the same kind of debacle that they had on the Crocus fund, which cost taxpayers millions and millions of dollars and cost 60,000 Manitobans their pension funds. So, you know, there are all kinds of areas, and I know government members have been wondering where it is that they could save money. And it is important

that we as an opposition point out some of them to them, like what we've done right now.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that there aren't just in these areas where savings could be had; there are probably a lot of other savings where New Democrats, perhaps—member for Steinbach raised some of the political appointments to boards, and boards and commissions. You know, perhaps, there we could have some savings. And we know for a fact that, on a lot of the boards and commissions, it seems to be there's a correlation. And I'm sure it's just a by-chance correlation that some of these appointees seem to be paying a lot of money into NDP coffers and then seemingly they get an appointment onto a board. Now, I'm not saying that there's a direct tie-in there. I wouldn't want to go that far, but you know what, perhaps there would be another opportunity for the government to save some money.

Now we—now I hear all kinds of members from the opposition benches. I hear them talking about they're sharpening up their resumes to get appointed to the Senate. In fact, the Minister of Justice yesterday, you know, if you think you've heard it all—if you think you heard it all, in the morning he was calling for us to lobby that Manitoba gets two senators appointed and by the afternoon he was abolishing it. Only this Minister of Justice and you know, I think what he was first of all calling for in the morning was that to him and another colleague be appointed to the Senate, and when that one didn't fly, he got so angry—the Minister of Justice got so angry by that afternoon he said, well, fine, if I'm not going to get it, then let's scrap it. Then we'll just abolish it. It ain't going to be me, it ain't going to be anybody was sort of his approach. And, you know, it was intriguing, I mean, to hear the Minister of Justice get up in the morning and say, you know, instead of calling for two by-elections—these are his words: instead of calling for two by-elections, you should be calling for those two senators to be appointed. Those are his words.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, perhaps, perhaps what he was suggesting was then, you know, to he and one of his colleagues, then there would have been four by-elections and then it would have been—I guess he felt maybe there was a cost saving there. But in either case, I was just really surprised that he wanted both senators to be appointed to something that in the afternoon that he wanted to abolish.

And, Mr. Speaker, perhaps what we could have is the government call the by-elections, because, you

know, maybe that could be a good amendment to Bill 39, and it would help—we wouldn't necessarily have it a private members' bill, I'm sure the mover of that bill would be fine with it being an amendment to Bill 39 because we know now that the by-elections federally are over and, you know, we don't want to pour any salt into open wounds. The fact that the two NDP candidates in Provencher and Brandon-Souris aren't going to get their deposit back because they didn't even get to 10 per cent.

You know what, maybe now the NDP would have two candidates they could run provincially. You know, maybe they could go for, you know an 0-for-2 campaign, and perhaps they're willing—you know, they certainly know their constituencies a little bit better. Nice to see a New Democrat actually out campaigning. You know—*[interjection]*

You know, my colleague from Lakeside said evidently they can't run, they probably got an appointment already to something, so, you know, they'll have to find somebody else. But, in either case, you know what, perhaps the member for

Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) would agree that we would make an amendment to Bill 39 and we would have that the government now call the by-elections in Morris and Arthur-Virden.

Perhaps that's what we could have as a friendly amendment to Bill 39, and I'm sure—I'm sure just like the, you know the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) is willing to send—to second one and I'm willing to second one and member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) and, you know, probably the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), and even the member for Steinbach and we'll find one for the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger). We'd be prepared—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please.

When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler) will have 12 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 27, 2013

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are also available on the Internet at the following address:

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