

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

Official Report
(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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

Thursday, December 5, 2013

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 33—The Apprenticeship Employment Opportunities Act (Public Works Contracts)

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): I move, seconded by the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Chomiak), that Bill 33, The Apprenticeship Employment Opportunities Act (Public Works Contracts); Loi sur les occasions d'apprentissage en milieu de travail (marchés de travaux publics), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Oswald: The Province, of course, will be continuing to increase opportunities for apprentices, and this bill emphasizes the government's role in promoting skilled trades. This bill makes it a legal requirement, Mr. Speaker, that when contractors using trades are awarded Province of Manitoba public works contracts, they will be required to use apprentices. This will ensure good, high-skilled jobs right here in Manitoba.

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

Any further introduction of bills?

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: We'll move on to petitions.

**East Selkirk Sewage Lagoon Site—
Environmental Licence**

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) On August 12th, 2013, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship granted a licence for the construction of a sewage lagoon on the former CIL explosives plant site in East Selkirk.

(2) This site is located 1,100 feet from the banks of the Red River.

(3) Local residents are concerned that hydraulic pressure from the lagoon and instances of heavy rainfall could cause contaminants left over from the manufacturing of explosives at the site to flow into the Red River.

(4) Upon the review of a soil study conducted on the site, the Water Science and Management Branch of the Department of Conservation and Water Stewardship noted that effluent from the site could negatively affect aquatic life in the Red River and may result in increased risks of cancer in fish.

(5) The chemical dinitrotoluene is present in the soil at the former CIL explosives plant site and is a known carcinogen to fish and other aquatic species.

(6) Soil testing done prior to the environmental licence being issued should've been done at a level consistent with the standards used by the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States, where they have more experience with testing for contaminants at former explosives sites.

(7) The Province of Manitoba has no available guidelines for the assessment of energetic compounds in soil.

(8) There are many other viable, non-contaminated sites in the area which would be better suited for the construction of a sewage lagoon.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship reconsider his decision to grant an environmental licence for the construction of a sewage lagoon at this site.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by A. Ward, E. Ward, K. Palmer and many, 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.

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition: The background to this—oh, sorry.

On August 12th, 2013, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship granted a licence for the construction of a sewage lagoon for the former CIL explosives plant site in East Selkirk.

This site is located 1,100 feet from the banks of the Red River.

Local residents are concerned that hydraulic pressure from the lagoon and instances of heavy rainfall could cause contaminants left over from the manufacturing of explosives at the site to flow into the Red River.

Upon the review of a soil study conducted on the site, the Water Science and Management Branch of the Department of Conservation and Water Stewardship noted that effluent from the site could negatively affect aquatic life in the Red River and may result in increased risk of cancer in fish.

The chemical dinitrotoluene is present in the soil at the former CIL explosives plant site—is a known carcinogen to—fish and other aquatic species.

Soil testing done prior to the environmental licence being issued should have been done at a level consistent with the standards used by the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States, where they have more experience with testing for contaminants at former explosives sites.

The Province of Manitoba has no available guidelines for the assessment of 'energetic' compounds in soil.

There are many other viable, noncontaminated sites in the area which could be better suited for the construction of a sewage lagoon.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship reconsider his decision to grant an environmental licence for the construction of a sewage lagoon at this site.

This petition's signed by J. Curtis, L. Kordalchuyk and R. Novakowski and many, many more Manitobans.

Applied Behaviour Analysis Services

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The provincial government broke a commitment to support families of children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, including timely diagnosis and access to necessary treatment such as applied behavioural analysis, also known as ABA services.

(2) The provincial government did not follow its own policy statement on autism services which notes the importance of early intervention for children with autism.

(3) School learning services has its first ever waiting list which started with two children. The waiting list is projected to keep growing and to be in excess of 20 children by September of 2013. Therefore, these children will go through the biggest transition of their lives without receiving ABA services that has helped other children achieve huge gains.

(4) The provincial government has adopted a policy to eliminate ABA services in schools by grade 5 despite the fact that these children have been diagnosed with autism which still requires therapy. These children are being denied necessary ABA services that will allow them to access the same educational opportunities as any other Manitoban.

(5) Waiting lists and denials of treatment are unacceptable. No child should be denied access to or eliminated from eligibility for ABA services if their need still exists.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Education consider making funding available to eliminate the current waiting list for ABA school-age services and to fund ABA services for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

And this petition is signed by M. Cetkovski, S. Cetkovski, K. Resler and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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.

* (13:40)

(2) Through Bill 20, the provincial government wants to increase the retail sales tax, known as the PST, by one point without the 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 is submitted on behalf of B. Jawoski, C. Klohn, L. Howard and many other fine Manitobans.

Mount Agassiz Ski Area—Recreation Facility

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

For several decades, the Mount Agassiz ski area, home to the highest vertical between Thunder Bay and the Rocky Mountains, was a popular skiing and snowboarding destination for Manitobans and visitors alike.

The operations of the Mount Agassiz ski area were very important to the local economy, not only creating jobs but also generating sales of goods and services at area businesses.

In addition, a thriving rural economy generates tax revenue that will help pay for core provincial government services and infrastructure which benefits all Manitobans.

Although the ski facility closed in 2000, there remains strong interest in seeing it reopened, and Parks Canada is committed to conducting a

feasibility study with respect to the Agassiz site and future opportunities for—in the area.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the appropriate ministers of the provincial government to consider outlining to Parks Canada the importance that a viable recreation facility in the Mount Agassiz area would play in the local and provincial economies.

And to request that the appropriate ministers of the provincial government consider working with all stakeholders, including Parks Canada, to help develop a plan for a viable multiseason recreation facility in the Mount Agassiz area.

This petition is signed by F. Houle, A. Gautron, E. Gautron and many, many other 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 M. Watt, P. Mandys, R. Levacque and many, many more fine Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of the Whole

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered the following bill: Bill 47, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013, and reports the same without amendment.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), that the report of the committee be received.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for the Interlake, seconded by the honourable member for Wolseley, that the report of the committee be received. Is that agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of receiving the report from the committee will please signify it by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please signify it by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

Order, please. The question before the House is the report of the Committee of the Whole. All those in favour of the report—[interjection]—the report of the Committee shall be received.

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Gerrard, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Kostyshyn,

Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 32, Nays 17.

Mr. Speaker: The report of the committee shall accordingly be received.

Mr. Speaker: Any other further committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, we'll move on to tabling of reports.

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the Manitoba Text Book Bureau annual report for 2012-2013.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports?

Mr. Allum: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the financial statements for Assiniboine Community College for the years ended June 30th, 2013 and 2012.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports?

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Manitoba Lotteries second-quarter report.

Mr. Speaker: Further tabling of reports?

Mr. Lemieux: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission quarterly financial report.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any further tablings of reports?

Mr. Allum: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. I table the annual financial report for Red River College, 2012-2013.

Mr. Speaker: Before I close that off, is there any further tabling of reports? None? Okay.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: We'll move on to ministerial statements.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this honourable House today to honour the memory of all women who have died as a result of violence in our province, our country and beyond.

Tomorrow, December 6th, is Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. On this day we remember all women and girls who are murdered or experience violence by partners, family members and strangers throughout our province and country. Also, on this day we recommit to take action against all forms of violence against women and girls in our society until our streets, our homes and communities are safe.

It is a sad reality that we must have days such as December 6th to acknowledge this gender-based violence. Tomorrow in Manitoba, candlelight vigils, memorial services and other events are being held throughout the province. But we also know that violence against women is a serious national and global issue. Across the world women and girls still face alarming rates of violence. This is a serious social problem that negatively impacts us all: women, men, children, neighbourhoods, workplaces and communities.

We must all work together in addressing the gender inequalities that are at the heart of all gender-based violence. We know that even the smallest actions by an individual can make a difference. For example, we can make a difference when we speak out against bullying, harassment, discrimination of any kind. We can make a difference when we raise strong, compassionate children. We can make a difference when we fight for women's equality and economic security. We can make a difference when men, as fathers, friends, decision makers and community and opinion leaders, provide positive role models for young men and boys based on healthy models of masculinity, and, finally, we can make a difference when we stand as allies for women and organizations who are working to end all forms of gender violence.

Tomorrow morning I will attend the sunrise memorial held at the Legislative Building hosted by the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council and do just

that. Sadly, this year we commemorate 11 women that died as a result of violence. I and other Manitobans will state our intentions to speak out against violence, that physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, economic and any other form of abuse are not to be tolerated. Through this demonstration, we will convey that violence against women is never justifiable under any circumstance.

Each of us has a role to play. I encourage all Manitobans to let December 6 not only be a day for reflection and remembrance but a day for everyone to do their part in ending violence against women from now on. Tomorrow and every day, let us all become aware, educate ourselves and others, encourage kindness, support and understanding and teach our children that violence will not be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that, following the statements of my colleagues, we observe a moment of silence to honour their memories here today. Thank you.

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): December 6th, the anniversary of the tragic massacre at École polytechnique in Montreal, marks Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. This horrific event remains etched in the memories of all Canadians, and each year on December 6th we remember the 14 women who tragically lost their lives for no other reason than the fact that they were women.

Today I rise in this House to recognize this day of remembrance that is also called White Ribbon Day in order to acknowledge the impact of gender-based violence. I want to remind all of us today that we must take the necessary steps to protect women and to address the structural discrimination that continues to make women the primary target of violence.

Here in Manitoba violence against women is especially prevalent. It is disheartening that our province has the highest sexual assault rates and nearly double the rate of violence against women, in particular as compared to the rest of Canada. This must change. Women must be better protected. Of those who tragically were not protected, we want to remember the women and girls who have been caused pain, who live in fear, who have suffered and who have died because of gender-based violence committed against them. We also remember the families of these women and girls who live daily with their own pain and loss.

Today we continue to see the violence against women, against men, against girls and against boys. And for this reason, December 6th is not just about the Montreal massacre; it's about all Canadians who continue to be affected by gender-based violence and is a day of action to do something about it. We must care to work to get toward ending violence due to gender holistically even while we never forget those who have suffered because of it.

Violence against women and all gender-based acts of violence are complex problems. We can only end this kind of violence if we work together to also tackle the things that perpetuate it, such as lack of access to education, affordable housing, child care, health care, and by ensuring equal pay for equal work and equal representation.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the organizations here with us today and any organizations such—and organizations like The Women's Resource Centre in Brandon, the YWCA in Brandon, North End Women's Centre in Winnipeg and the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata family violence counselling program. The work that incredible organizations like these do across Manitoba to address issues of gender-based violence give me great hope and inspiration that a better future can be created if we all consider it our individual and collective responsibility to act to end gender-based violence, whether it's raising our children to be good role models, getting involved in our community by supporting shelters and women's organizations or knowing the warning signs of domestic violence.

Together we all have a role to play in ending violence against women and girls. We need to exercise leadership and continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders in this province to prevent violence against women.

Today we should remember all of those who have been and continue to be victims of violence, tragically, many at the hands of those whom they should be able to trust, and work towards a world that will be free of violence against women. Thank you.

* (14:20)

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave for the honourable member for River Heights to have—to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I will join others at the sunrise memorial to remember what happened at the Montreal massacre, to get together to see what we can do to remember that tomorrow is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women and to look at what we can do not just tomorrow but in the next year and in the years ahead.

There were 11 women who have died who will—we will particularly remember tomorrow. That is 11 too many. Indeed, as we all know, the statistics sadly show that we have too much violence against women in Manitoba, particularly in comparison with other provinces, and we need to change this.

We need to move beyond just speaking about the problem. We need to act. We need to mobilize people around this province so that, in fact, we can make a difference. We need just not to speak out, we need to have a provincial plan in which we can all work together and effectively implement change in this province.

We have been having these memorials for many years. We have been speaking for many years. It is time to have a provincial plan and to have an effective one which makes a difference, which addresses the basic cause of the violence and moves beyond just, you know, not tolerating violence, as we have said, but moves beyond, looking at how, in fact, we reduce it, how, in fact, we eliminate it. Because we have had too much, we have had more than we should have had, and that must change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to observe a moment of silence? *[Agreed]*

Please rise for a moment.

A moment of silence was observed.

Mr. Speaker: Any further ministerial statements? Seeing none—

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have quite a number of guests with us this afternoon.

First, starting with the public gallery where we have members of the Korean War veterans unit No. 17, along with member from the Korean communities—members from the Korean community,

who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau).

And also in the public gallery where we have with us members from the Manitoba Provincial Rifle Association, who are the guests of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Wiebe).

And also in the public gallery we have with us staff and students from George Waters Middle School who participated in the Philanthropic Sharks program, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Crothers).

And also in the public gallery today we have with us T. Howard Mains, co-president of TACTIX, who is the guest of the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler).

And also in the public gallery we have with us today from the University of Manitoba Program for Newcomers, 22 adult EAL students under the direction of Ms. Lauren Joyce. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Ms. Irvin-Ross).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

PST Increase—Committee Presentations Legality of Increase

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Thank you to our Korean vets, Mr. Speaker.

What have we seen this session? We've seen a reaffirmation of a government that's willing to put itself above the law and above the people of the province, people who care deeply about not only themselves but their neighbours, people who are courageous enough to come forward and oppose a bill that broke a promise to them.

Paulo Cordeiro said at the committee hearings—none of which the Premier (Mr. Selinger) was able to attend—I've come here today to stand up against an injustice the NDP government is trying to perpetrate against all Manitobans. How can you break the law by raising the PST without a referendum? How can you say that you will not raise taxes during an election, only to do so soon after?

On behalf of Paulo and many, many other Manitobans who believe they've been disrespected by this government, I have to ask the Premier and, through him, all NDP members opposite: When was

it that they began to believe that they were above the law and above the people of Manitoba?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Acting Premier): Well, none of us believes that we're above the people of Manitoba. All of us go out and talk to our constituents, listen to what they have to tell us.

And what I will say to the member opposite is we have learned a lot this session. We've learned a lot about his style of leadership. What we've learned is that he does not believe in a plan to invest in Manitoba's core infrastructure. He doesn't believe in a plan to do things like bring Highway 75 to interstate standards, to invest in highways that are the economic engines of this province, like Highway 6 and 9, Highway 10. He doesn't believe in investing today for a future in which all of our kids can live in Manitoba, can get a good job, could raise a family here.

We know that that kind of investment has made some difficult choices. We understand that. Sometimes you make a tough choice because you believe in a future that's going to be better for your kids and better for future generations.

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

PST Increase NDP Election Promise

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): I'm not impressed with the government's indifference to the truth, and I'm certainly not impressed with the government's willingness to disrespect Manitobans and to break their pledge to Manitobans.

Glen Melnyk said, our province deserves better. The law was put in place for a PST increase referendum to allow for a clean, clear, sober second thought, a stopgap for out-of-control politicians to spend their way out of mismanagement, basically a bill to protect you from yourselves. It's funny—well, it's not funny. It's ironic at best that you want to legislate everything else to protect Manitobans but you ignore this most important piece of legislation.

So I speak to the members opposite directly and ask them—I tell them it's not too late, and I ask them to listen to Manitobans. They still have a choice to respect the law. They still have a choice to stand up with the people of Manitoba.

And to the Premier (Mr. Selinger), who should have a crisis of confidence in forcing his own members to vote against their promises to the people of Manitoba, I'd have to ask him: Does he not have a crisis of confidence in breaking his solemn vow to the people of this province?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Acting Premier): I know that what the member opposite would like to see happen is to force our government to make the same bad choices that he made when he had the opportunity. That is what this debate is about, Mr. Speaker. He would like to force us to make the choices that he just recently doubled down on. He would like us to make the choices to cut funding for health care, to lay off nurses, to cut funding for education, to fire teachers. We know that in just this session he has told us that he believes that two-tier health care is a better way to do things. I understand that those are the choices that he would like to force upon Manitobans.

We have decided to take a different route, not an easy route, not an easy decision. But we believe that investments today in that critical core infrastructure is going to mean good jobs today and good jobs tomorrow so that our kids can stay here, can raise their families here, can enjoy—

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

Legislative Session Government Performance Record

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Zero jobs growth over the last year, the worst record in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and this government is not interested in the facts. They cannot be trusted. They say one thing and they do another.

* (14:30)

The Health Minister says she wants transparency but hides the facts on STARS' shutdown. The Education Minister says he wants safe schools but isn't interested in knowing about the incidents of drugs in the schools themselves. The Infrastructure Minister says it's his top priority, but 27 per cent of the budget of Infrastructure for the last four years was spent on other departments. The Finance Minister cries crocodile tears about one decision their Cabinet had to make—not a tough one, an easy one for them—that resulted and is resulting in millions of tough decisions at the kitchen tables of Manitobans every month. And the Jobs Minister

says, in the face of Canada's worst wage and jobs numbers, that Manitobans should just cheer up, don't worry and be happy.

So I have to ask the Premier: When he has his Cabinet meetings, does he turn the lights on or just leave them off?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Acting Premier): That was a question dripping with respect, as always, from the Leader of the Opposition.

I think we can disagree. I think we can try to do it respectfully, but let's talk just about what we've seen from the Leader of the Opposition, what kind of leadership that we have seen from him this session. He had an opportunity this session to stand up, to stand with Evan Wiens, who we all know is a courageous leader when it comes to fighting against bullying. But, no, he stood by his five MLAs that endorsed the candidate who said that Evan Wiens made it up, that it was a staged prop. And then when the MLA for Emerson restated that, after the incident happened, that he stood by that candidate, we have not seen any leadership from the Leader of the Opposition to take those members to task.

This is a Leader of the Opposition who has said he believes that two-tier health care is something that Manitobans need.

We have made tough—

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

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

Mr. Pallister: Evan Wiens didn't make it up, Mr. Speaker, and this government can't be trusted. They raised the PST despite telling Manitobans that it would be nonsense to believe they would. They treat Manitobans like P.T. Barnum treated his customers—or was it PST Barnum?

They have 175 ribbon cuttings. They do an historic vote-buying tour to try selling Manitobans on the idea that the PST's in their best interests, and nobody's buying. The tour doesn't work. Manitobans aren't buying it. No sale.

So then they trot out excuses instead. They say, well, it's the federal government's fault. Transfer dependency is at record levels in this province, but we are going to blame the federal government. No

sale. And then they blame the flood, and more dollars came in to this government this year than went out because of the flood. No sale.

Would this government and this Premier (Mr. Selinger) stop blaming everyone else and finally accept responsibility and admit that their high-spending problem is creating a high-tax problem for the people of our province?

Ms. Howard: Well, this government has accepted responsibility. We accept responsibility when we face the future and make the difficult choices today that we believe are going to mean economic growth today and tomorrow, that are going to mean good jobs today and tomorrow.

We sat down before this session started. I was fortunate to be able to sit down with economic leaders in our province and listen to them, and what they told us is that investing in critical core infrastructure like Highway 75, like upgrading the southwest Perimeter Highway, in-making those investments meant that Manitoba would be in good shape economically today and into the future. And so we took a difficult choice to be able to make those investments without jeopardizing health care and education.

We take responsibility every day we've been in government. That's not always easy. Sometimes it means difficult choices, but we believe that we are standing to make a better Manitoba for—

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

Mr. Pallister: But this government didn't make a difficult decision; it made a lazy, selfish decision. It gave itself a 17 per cent raise. It gave itself 17 per cent more revenue before the next two years is up, the highest raise, the highest increase in taxes of any Canadian province, and even without the PST, Mr. Speaker, it would be the second highest raise in Canada. Meanwhile, cross-the-board cuts at Manitoba's kitchen tables are occurring as a result. That's not a difficult decision; that's a lazy, selfish decision.

This government goes back to the '90s to try to distract attention from its own record, an indefensible record. After 14 years, this government is bottom of the barrel: social services, child poverty, last; public safety, violent crime, last; health care, last; waits for treatment, ER closures, ambulance waits, wage growth, job creation, inflation, last.

Now, what this government is looking for is so impossible for them to believe, they're looking for an improvement, and they got it yesterday when they found out that education, we're ninth. When you're bottom in everything else, I guess ninth looks good.

Is this Premier satisfied with his education performance, or is he going to aim a little bit higher?

Ms. Howard: I think, as the Premier has said, as the Minister of Education has said, nobody is satisfied with those results. Nobody thinks it's acceptable.

But I tell you what will not work, Mr. Speaker. What will not work is taking money from the classrooms, taking money from teachers to spend on other priorities.

What we believe we need to do is be able to invest in growing the economy while we protect those services, while we make sure that we have the ability to improve our schools so that our kids have a better chance. That is what we're about.

We don't have to go back to the '90s to see what the members opposite would do. When they had a chance to put forward their plan, their plan looked very much like it did in the last millennium. Their plan is still deep cuts across the board to the things that matter to Manitobans. Layoffs and firing staff, that is a plan that did not work in the no-growth '90s; it's a plan that will not work today.

We have a plan that means difficult choices, we understand that, but it is a plan that we believe—

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

PST Increase Manitobans' Right to Vote

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Back to the '90s and disrespecting Manitobans today, Mr. Speaker. Every other provincial government faces these challenges. No other provincial government's jacking up their PST. Only this lazy government is doing that, and it's an agenda of disrespect.

Local governments deserve respect; they get arrogance from this government. Flood victims deserve respect; they get broken promises from this government. Residents of Morris deserve their democratic rights, and they get ribbon cuttings over their right to vote. Manitobans were promised no new taxes, and they deserve respect, but what they got was new taxes.

Now, how does the Premier (Mr. Selinger) defend his jacking up of the PST? He fails to listen, he snaps his fingers and he takes away Manitobans' right to vote. Now, this Premier promised no PST hike, so which word better describes this government's agenda: Is it disrespect or is it nonsense or is it both?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Acting Premier): I think what best describes what we are trying to achieve is a Manitoba where our kids can live, can get good jobs, can raise a family; a Manitoba where our parents can get good home care, have access to personal-care homes; a Manitoba where our kids can go and have early childhood education and get the best possible chance in life.

We are doing that. We are not perfect. It does not mean easy choices. It means difficult choices. That's why all of us, I believe, run for election, because we know there will be days when we'll be faced with a tough decision, and we have faced those days and we will continue to.

I believe Manitobans are far, far more optimistic than members opposite. I believe they want a province where we look after each other while at the same time investing in the future so we can have a strong economy so our kids can have good jobs and live here. And that's the Manitoba we'll bid—we'll build together.

PST Increase Request to Reverse

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, there was a letter to the editor to the Premier, and it was from a senior named Shirley Evans.

And she said to this Premier, have a heart. Since you have been elected at—as our Premier, there has been nothing but trouble in Manitoba. Raising the PST to 8 per cent has brought a lot of hardship on a lot of people, especially the seniors. You give all your employees raises, but I see we get nothing. All you keep doing is taxing us to death. If you were any kind of a human being, you would not just think of yourself. Think about all the pensioners who live on a mere thousand dollars a month.

So I would like to ask this Premier if he's prepared to have a heart and do the right thing today, show these seniors that he's on their side and indeed listening, and will he stop the PST hike?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): We're absolutely on the side of seniors and other people who live on fixed incomes.

We're on their side when we stood—when we were in opposition and we stood opposed to what the Leader of the Opposition wanted to do by privatizing parts of home care, selling off part of the home-care system, something that failed because they couldn't find anybody in the private sector who could deliver home care better than the public system was delivering. But that didn't stop them from trying.

* (14:40)

And it hasn't stopped the Leader of the Opposition from, just in the last few days, doubling down on his belief in a two-tier, American health-care system. If he will check Hansard of December 2nd, he'll find himself referring to the American-style US health-care system as a better way to do things. I believe he's alone in that.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister has just made a lot of statements that are absolute nonsense, and she's trying to deflect from their record and their promises.

I want to finish reading Shirley Evans' letter to the Premier. She said, I find that you are a very selfish person who only thinks of himself, so if you have a heart in your body, you will think of the people of Manitoba. We are the ones who put you there and we are the ones who will take you down; remember that. So please drop the PST hike.

They promised Manitobans not to raise the PST. They broke the promise.

Will they now listen to Shirley Evans and a lot of other Manitobans and do what they said they were going to do, not raise taxes? Will they stop the PST hike today?

Ms. Howard: And I know when I talked to many people in my constituency, many folks who are seniors, one of the things that they're concerned about is what's going to happen for their grandkids. Are their grandchildren going to be able to stay here? Are they going to be able to graduate and get a good job and live here and raise a family here? I know that that's what they're concerned about.

And I believe that by making these kinds of investments in core infrastructure and doing that without robbing health care and education, I believe that means we will have a Manitoba where we can have a strong economy, where we can have future

generations have the good life that we have enjoyed in this province and at the same we can continue to have a province where we care about each other, where we look after each other, where we don't try to sell off parts of home care, where we don't believe those who have the most money should get the best health care. That's the Manitoba we stand for.

Lake Manitoba Flooding (2011) Housing for Evacuees

Mr. Ian Wishart (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, since 2011, over 2,000 people have been displaced by the Lake Manitoba flood. Many are still living in temporary accommodations or staying with family and friends. This is two years and eight months later.

Last September, the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Robinson) said progress was being made on re-establishing these communities.

What progress? How soon can these displaced persons expect to have somewhere to call home?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): Mr. Speaker, it—indeed, one of the biggest challenges facing people of the Lake St. Martin area, particularly First Nations, has been the chronic flooding that they've experienced, not just in 2011 but impacts of water on those communities that go back decades.

Now, one of the reasons for that, Mr. Speaker, is that we're—there were—never was the construction of an artificial outlet from Lake St. Martin. I want to put on the record again that in the 2011 flood, one of the most significant accomplishments was the fact that an emergency outlet was built, something went—that might normally take six to seven years, it was built in three months. That provides the long-term mitigation.

But what the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has been doing, he's been working very closely with the federal government. One of the key issues was that there was not the homes for those people to return to.

We have made significant progress. The federal government has been engaged, First Nations engaged, and we fully anticipate, Mr. Speaker, in the new year they will be going back, not only to flood—

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

Mr. Wishart: Mr. Speaker, it seems this government cannot get anything done in a timely manner. They

can get an emergency channel done in a hurry, but they can't get these people returned to their communities. Moving forward, rebuilding programs or implementing flood mitigation seems to take forever for this government. The only thing that didn't take forever was the government's push to illegally raise the PST. I think this fact tells them—tells us an awful lot about their priorities.

When will this—these displaced families be back in their homes? By Christmas?

Mr. Ashton: I want to put on the record that one of the key elements of the tough decision we made to raise the 1 cent on the dollar was that we needed to follow up on the Manitoba model. What is the Manitoba model, Mr. Speaker? You know, in the 1960s it was called—we had a premier then that put in place a sales tax and built the floodway.

And I want to put on the record that every one of the MLAs on this side stood to vote for a budget, vote for the Throne Speech, that will put in place, yes, 1 cent on the dollar, and the first priority is to protect Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. Those members opposite voted against that. They have no credibility when it comes to talking about floods.

PST Increase Impact on Families

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye): I'd like to also remind the members opposite they're the ones that went door to door and promised no tax increases.

The Christmas season is here and families are out buying presents. This year, however, their hard-earned dollars buy a lot less; inflation is three times the national average, the PST is 14 per cent higher. Families that were struggling before the tax increase are struggling even more. They have to make tough decisions at this time of year while the NDP takes presents out from under their tree.

Mr. Speaker, why is this NDP government punishing Manitoba families during the Christmas season with their illegal PST hike?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): Well, it is the Christmas season and is a time for families to come together and to celebrate. And it's also a time when we know many families face challenges with loved ones who are sick or need health care.

And in this province, we believe that you should not get access to health care more quickly because you have more money. That is in stark contrast to

what the Leader of the Opposition went on the radio and said when he was asked, should it be the case that if you have \$200 you could get an ultrasound more quickly in Manitoba? He said, that's the kind of system I think Manitobans need.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, with respect, he is wrong. I believe that kind of approach to health care would be extremely punishing for families in Manitoba.

Mr. Smook: Under Manitobans' Christmas tree this year is the illegally raised PST, record-high inflation and less presents. Under the NDP Christmas tree, however, is a million-dollar vote tax, more money for their pet projects, more orange ribbon than they know what to do with.

The things that families need now cost more than ever. This government is hurting Manitoba families in this province at the most important time of the year. The NDP is more worried about their gifts to themselves than the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, when will this government start helping families by reversing the PST increase?

Ms. Howard: I'd like to ask the member opposite which one of these projects would he cancel then, or maybe all of them. Is it the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Finance, to continue.

Ms. Howard: Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is Highway 75 that they don't believe in. Perhaps it is Highway 6 that they don't believe in. Perhaps it is Highway 9 that they don't want to see improved. Perhaps the upgrades to Highway 10 is what they would like to cancel or maybe upgrading the southwest Perimeter Highway.

These aren't anybody's pet projects, Mr. Speaker. These are investments in the core critical infrastructure of Manitoba that we have heard from economic leaders in this province will make a tremendous difference not only today but to the future economic growth of this province, Manitoba. And that will mean that families can have confidence that when their kids graduate, they can stay here, they can get a good job here, they can have a good quality of life here. That's what we are trying to accomplish.

PST Increase NDP Election Promise

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, during the 2011 election, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) went door to door and promised the people of this province no new taxes. He called the idea of a PST hike nonsense.

Kevin Shumilak believed him. He thought this government was telling the truth. He needs to live within his means each and every day, Mr. Speaker, yet the government that he voted for believes that they don't have to.

Why does this Premier believe he is above the law, or is he just going to call that idea nonsense too?

* (14:50)

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): Well, one of the things that I don't recall the members opposite campaigning on in the last election was their commitment to bring in a two-tier health-care system. I don't recall hearing about that in the election.

I don't recall hearing about that when the Leader of the Opposition was running for the leadership. But it did not take very long, Mr. Speaker, to see the true colours of the Leader of the Opposition. It did not take very long for him to say clearly on the radio, when asked, do you support a system where if you have \$200 you could get an ultrasound more quickly in this province, he said, yes, that's something that we need.

When we got into the debate about that just recently, just this week, Mr. Speaker, he was talking about the need to be open to these ideas, to be open to the idea of an US American-style health-care system, two-tier health care. He said he thought that that was a better way of doing things. I wonder if the thousands and millions of families in the US that have gone—

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

Mr. Ewasko: Door to door, and 57 spendDP candidates lied to Manitobans at the door, Mr. Speaker, in the last election.

Chris Dsovza believed the Premier too. He's a resident of Point Douglas. He believed this government when they said they would not raise taxes, when they said that the very idea of a PST hike was nonsense. The best indicator of future

performance is past behaviour, and this government lied to Manitobans before and they will lie to Manitobans again.

How can Chris Dsovza, Kevin Shumilak and many, many other fine Manitobans believe this NDP government, trust them when they say no more tax hikes?

Ms. Howard: Well, let's look at the past performance when the Leader of the Opposition had his opportunity at the Cabinet table. What are the kinds of things that he advocated for? He advocated for selling off part of the home-care system, privatizing it, bringing in fees for home care. In fact, under—when he was in the government, under that government, this province was being penalized by the federal government for allowing two-tier health care under the Canada Health Act.

Is that something they've disavowed? No. Is that something they campaigned on? No. But you'd better believe that it's something they are absolutely—absolutely—committed to. They have said so. They've said so this week. They've said so last week.

It is something that they believe in, and we on this side of the House will continue to stand against that kind of health-care system. Charging families to get faster access to health care? That's not a Manitoba value.

Education System—Performance Results Government Improvement Plans

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the legislative sitting will end today. It has been a year of broken NDP promises. I want to focus my questions today on the poor performance of the NDP government, starting with education.

We are seeing declining student performance in mathematics, in reading and in science to the extent that even the Premier (Mr. Selinger) and his Minister of Education acknowledged on Tuesday that this government has unacceptably harmed the young people of our province. The NDP plans to improve education have, in fact, been a disaster.

I ask—Mr. Speaker, I ask the government: What measures will the government now take to immediately address this epic failure?

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): I thank the member for the question.

As I said in the House the other day, and it's been reflected several times, we do find the results unacceptable. We took them very, very seriously, and we're going to work on making improvements in the system. We want to make sure that we get back to the basic skills that kids need so they can do well, succeed in math and reading, writing and science.

And one of the things, one of the steps we've taken, Mr. Speaker, is to reduce class sizes so that there's more one-on-one time between a teacher and a student, so that they can have an opportunity to begin to understand concepts more closely, so—and that's so the student can begin to evolve, grow and develop as a fine and outstanding citizen of the province.

That's what our position is on this side of the House. I doubt the—

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

Manufacturing Industry Saskatchewan Comparison

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, no government which has failed for 14 years should be given another chance.

I now raise another example of poor performance in relation to our manufacturing centre. This time, for the first time in history, manufacturing in Saskatchewan grew so that Saskatchewan's manufacturing output is now greater than that of Manitoba. For decades, Manitoba and manufacturing here has been at the centre of who we are. But under the NDP management, even J.R. Richardson, our Manitoba company, chose to invest in a company in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, rather than in our province.

Why has the NDP government so let manufacturing slip here in our province?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): I can provide for the member a fact, actually, which might be useful in this conversation, I would think, and, in fact, manufacturing capital investment in Manitoba is above the national average.

We know that we have innovations here in Manitoba. The Composites Innovation Centre just celebrated their 10-year anniversary and they are indeed, in fact, showing imagination and innovation in the aerospace industry and in a variety of industries, in bioscience, leaders in the nation.

We know that we want to continue to invite people to come to Manitoba, make that investment. But I would say to the member, of course, that manufacturing capital investment, above the national average.

Middle-Class Manitobans Effects of Government Policies

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, 14 years of doing poorly doesn't make—doesn't compensate, doesn't address what needs to be done now.

In Manitoba today, Mr. Speaker, two-income and single-parent families in our province are losing ground, and because they and others in the middle class are losing ground, our tax base is threatened. Indeed, the poor performance of the NDP government has created a vicious cycle in which the middle class are continually burdened with new NDP cuts and yet their incomes are falling further behind.

When will the NDP end the vicious cycle they started by attacking the middle class in our province?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): I find that question to be a titch ironic coming from the former federal Cabinet minister that cut the health and social transfer to people. Really?

Mr. Speaker, we know that we can continue to invest in our EIA program and, indeed, to continue to invest in programs that have supports that are portable.

The most important thing that we can provide for those individuals that have been disadvantaged or under-represented in our workforce is to provide them with opportunities to acquire essential skills and further their skills and invite them into the workforce, Mr. Speaker, and it's on that level I would send a special love note to the Conservatives to speak to Minister Kenney about his ill-advised changes with the Canada Jobs Grant.

Northern Manitoba Highways Upgrade Announcement

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, we know that when it comes to improvements to infrastructure, the Leader of the Opposition does not have a plan, unless, of course, doing nothing can be called planning. This do-nothing style of planning was certainly evident in my riding, the Interlake, when he sat as a member of Cabinet in the Gary Filmon government. We saw virtually no

improvements to highways whatsoever in this region in the final dark decade of the 20th century.

In contrast, this NDP government has set the bar to a new level on the building front.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation inform the Assembly of an important announcement made this morning in regard to our \$5.5-billion plan to improve core infrastructure?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the member for the Interlake, the member for The Pas (Mr. Whitehead), the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Pettersen) and the member of Swan River for their strong advocacy for the need to improve Highway 6. And I'm—was very pleased to join with the Premier (Mr. Selinger) to announce \$225 million for Highway 6, 373 and 374 that will bring Highway 6 to national highway standards and finish surfacing to Cross Lake and Norway House.

* (15:00)

Manitobans said they wanted to see results for their 1 cent on the dollar. They're seeing the results, Mr. Speaker, to the point—and I want to say this one more time, and we'll be saying this time and time again—they are going to, in the upcoming construction season, they're going to see, they're going to feel, with the amount of asphalt we're laying down they're going to be able to smell the difference from their 1 cent on the dollar.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Arborg Business Community Small-Business Development

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Well, Mr. Speaker, this is from a minister that no one believes at all. This is the one that knocked on the doors and said, we won't raise the PST. Well, let's talk about what they haven't done.

Pro-Fab, a manufacturing company in Arborg, is moving 25 jobs to the United States. Some of the employees will be moving with the job to Tennessee, while the rest will be unemployed. In the last two years a hundred jobs have left from that very same company to the United States thanks to the NDP government.

Their MLA, the member for the Interlake, blamed these businesses for not building in the right

place. Now, along with his government, the member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff) has provided these employees with a terrible Christmas present: a 14 per cent PST hike, no jobs, no services to their employer.

Mr. Speaker, does this government believe that Manitoba is the wrong place to build small businesses?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): Well, not at all, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, we know that Manitoba, in fact, has the third lowest unemployment rate in the nation. We know, Mr. Speaker, that over the same period last year we have seen an increase of 8,300 more jobs, and those jobs are in the private sector. We know that we are seeing Manitoba, on economic indicators, rank above the national average: private sector employment, building permits, exports to the US.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened to this member's negativity now for a month. It's enough to make Cindy Lou Who quake in her nightgown.

Mr. Graydon: Really, Mr. Speaker? She thinks that her spin doctors got way better numbers than the Statistics Canada. Try again, Ms. Minister.

The minister lost 143 jobs on her first day, and for 30 days after. She lost 25 more jobs the other day because she refused to pave a road to these businesses and because her high-tax agenda makes these businesses uncompetitive. It's clear that the government believes that these businesses shouldn't have been built in Arborg, shouldn't have been built in Manitoba.

When will this spenDP government learn it's much easier to keep the jobs and the businesses that we have than it is to replace them? Mr. Speaker, when will the spenDP government stop discouraging small businesses in this province? Will they call that referendum today, reverse their PST hike?

Ms. Oswald: Well, yes, Mr. Speaker, I will reiterate—for the three-hundredth time—that, in fact, the numbers I'm providing to him are from Stats Canada.

Furthermore, I'd reiterate for the member, in his own riding, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate at present sits at 3.1 per cent in his own riding, which is in stark contrast to when members opposite were in power last. The unemployment rate was at 7.6 on average, skyrocketing to 10.3 per cent in June of '93.

Mr. Speaker, I'm more inclined to believe the individual who says, we have communities across this province who are firing on all cylinders, where the population growth, according to Stats Canada, exceeds 20 per cent on the last five years. That was the member from Morden-Winkler.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member for River East has the floor.

Tax Increases Impact on Manitobans

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Well, but Manitoba families will be handed a Christmas present from this NDP government. Mr. Speaker, on Christmas morning they'll wake up to a lump of coal in their stockings.

As a direct result of a government—[interjection] Members of the NDP government may think that this is funny, but Manitoba families who were lied to by this government before the last election when they were told that there were going to be no tax increases aren't going to be laughing on Christmas morning.

Mr. Speaker, what does this government have to say to Manitoba families who were misled by this government before the last election? What do they say?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): What we will say, Mr. Speaker—what we do say is that when things get difficult, when there are difficult choices to be made, we aren't going to throw up our hands and say, you're on your own. We got elected, we got into this job because we knew there would be difficult choices to make, and we accept that responsibility. We won't leave Manitobans on their own to wrestle with those choices by themselves.

We will take the responsibility to make difficult choices even when they're unpopular in the short term, because we believe that we can build a province with a strong and growing economy, where our kids can work and raise a family, and we can do that while investing in health care, while investing in education, while making sure that our parents have health care, while making sure that our parents have a hospital, have a personal-care home that will look after them.

We believe that's the kind of Manitoba that all Manitobans are proud to call home, and that's the Manitoba we'll continue to build.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: It's time for members' statements.

Emergency Room Closures

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, a lot was made about my last end-of-session member's statement, and I want to assure this House that I won't be singing again. And because I had 56 critics, what I'm going to do is give them the opportunity to put music to these lyrics.

Here, however, is the NDP plan for closing emergency rooms in the province. Here's the Minister of Health's (Ms. Selby) rendition of Closing Time, says:

Closing time, / another ER closure and we don't know where to go. / Closing time, / the roads are all covered with snow and the helicopter is stuck on the ground. / Closing time, / one last call to the hospital, but they won't pick up the phone. / Closing time, / you don't have to go home, but you can't stay here. / I know where I want to get health care, / I know where I want to get health care, / I know where I want to get health care. / Here at home.

Closing time, / the NDP closed another ER and we just don't know where to go. / Closing time, / the ER won't be open until the PST is nine or 10. / So gather up your scrubs and tools and move it to the exits. / I hope you've found somewhere to go. / Closing time, / more taxes for less services, / just the NDP plan. / Yeah, I know where I want to get health care, / I know where I want to get health care, / I know where I want to get health care. / Right here at home.

Closing time, / time for you to go back on the highway to where you came from. / Closing time, / every new tax increase comes with more service cuts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Korean War Veterans Association Unit No. 17

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert): This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Korean War ceasefire, an important event that affected our country and many others.

Today, in the gallery, we are honoured to have the Korean War Veterans Association Unit No. 17, along in attendance with Won Jae, publisher of The Korean Times.

The Korean War lasted three years and almost 27,000 Canadian men and women served. During this time, 1,588 were wounded and 516 Canadians were killed, including 37 Manitobans who gave up their lives to stop this war of aggression. In the Manitoba Room, across from this Chamber, there's a book containing the names of those 516. This is one of five books of remembrance that commemorate Canadians who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share a recent quote from Harry Lee, president of Winnipeg Korean Seniors Association, who's here with us today. Mr. Lee showed Korean veterans his appreciation at the recent gathering by stating, this reality of liberation would be impossible without someone like you volunteering to sacrifice your own life to defend the South Korean territory. Mr. Lee also spoke about his boyhood at the front lines of war. He said without the sacrifice of Canadian soldiers, he would've grown up starving, sleeping on a mud floor instead of a warm bed, living without basic human rights under a regressive regime. Instead, South Korea is now a democracy and an economic powerhouse.

* (15:10)

Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to bring greetings recently at the veterans' reception of the screening of *The Front Line*, a movie commemorating the Korean War veterans. This war is often referred to as the forgotten war. However, this event was an opportunity to reflect on the impact of the Korean War through the perspective of film. We are recognizing Korean and Canadian people's gratitude and appreciation for the sacrifices of veterans in defending the freedom of Korea, which still impacts families today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Bothwell Cheese

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise the members of this Legislative Assembly that Bothwell Cheese is back on top of the cheese world. Bothwell Cheese, located in New Bothwell, Manitoba, recently took first place at the 86th annual British Empire Cheese Show for its marble cheddar cheese. It is the seventh time in eight years that Bothwell Cheese has won this distinguished award.

In addition to winning the top prize for its marble cheese, Bothwell Cheese also won first place in the American-style category for its Monterey Jack

cheese, and second place for smoked parmesan, a new line of cheese for the company.

New Bothwell cheese began in 1936 and for the majority of its existence was a co-operative. Today, Bothwell Cheese is a modern, state-of-the-art cheese-making company, but still maintains close connections with the community it calls home and local farmers who provide milk. While Bothwell Cheese has long been a local success, it is now well known nationally for its high quality and taste, and the most recent round of awards are proof of this.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate all of the employees of New Bothwell cheese and all of the retailers and restaurants who purchase and sell this high-quality cheese. A special thanks to Bothwell Cheese president and CEO, Ivan Belonovic.

On behalf of myself and my family who have strong connections to Bothwell Cheese, and all the members of this Assembly, we congratulate everyone at Bothwell Cheese who have shown they are among the best cheese makers in the world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Philanthropic Sharks Program

Ms. Deanne Crothers (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate some exceptional students from George Waters Middle School who take part in the school's Philanthropic Sharks program. Through fundraisers, donation drives and awareness events, this program has helped students at George Waters make an impact on the world over the last five years.

The Philanthropic Sharks program uses an open format that allows any student in the school to participate. They come and go depending on the event the group is planning and the interests the student has. On average, 30 students participate in the club at any given time. The projects the Philanthropic Sharks choose to work on are completely up to the students. Every event the group plans or cause they support begins as their idea.

These students are empowered to find what they are passionate about and work with staff to make their dreams a reality. It could be something simple like handing out free cookies on antibullying day to brighten someone's afternoon. It could be collecting donations for the Make a Wish Foundation, Winnipeg Harvest, the Terry Fox Foundation or Koats for Kids.

Last year the Sharks partnered with neighbouring St. James Collegiate to host a mini We Day. This event celebrated the achievements of the school's student groups and promoted local social programs with guest speakers from the United Way, Red Cross, Winnipeg Harvest and the Winnipeg Jets

Mr. Speaker, these students perfectly embody their school philosophy: get involved, stand up for others, be a philanthropist. They are creative individuals who when inspired by a moral cause take action into their own hands to help others.

I would also like to acknowledge the support and leadership of Principal Andrew Mead who is absolutely committed to the students of George Waters. He consistently finds new opportunities for his students to experience the world and enrich their life perspective.

Thank you very much to the Philanthropic Sharks for increasing kindness in St. James. I also ask leave to table the students' names, Mr. Speaker, so that they may appear in Hansard.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House for the names of the individuals mentioned in the member's statement to be included in today's Hansard?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Philanthropic Sharks (Students):

Briana Ehrmantraut, Bostyn Evans, Mouna Zeid, Mary McPherson, Torey Eidse, Tina Williams, Aman Saini, Jaide Williams, Camisha Pruden, MacKenzie McLeod, Jayna Dodd, Gwenyth De Guzman, Meghan Fast, Amalie Herath, Ayoub Moustarszak, Zachary Caithness, Jennifer Lansang, Ellaine Capistrano, Francesca Allora, Jared Salvador, Adiam Negash

Philanthropic Sharks (Staff):

Myriame Orloff, Glynis Zubec, Cara Harland, Kiara Solomon, Shelley Riddell, Jaine Martin, Dina Coutris

Manitoba Provincial Rifle Association

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Mr. Speaker, today, I'm very excited to recognize the Manitoba Provincial Rifle Association. The MPRA is a non-profit amateur sports organization. The rifle association is the sport governing body for rifle shooting in Manitoba, representing and serving target shooters throughout the province. The MPRA's

enthusiastic membership loves the sport, and they help promote and encourage target shooting as a safe, recreational and competitive sport. The MPRA has a rich history in our province. The association was formed in 1872 and annual rifle competitions began in 1873. The Hudson's Bay Company presented the first sterling silver trophy, which is still in use today, demonstrating the association's rich history in Manitoba.

This past summer, members of the Manitoba Provincial Rifle Association competed in the Shooting Federation of Canada national matches held in Beachburg, Ontario. After a week of intense competition, athletes from Winnipeg and Brandon brought home several medals, displaying the competitive talent of our Manitoba shooting association. Overall, the MPRA members returned with nine medals, including three gold.

I'm very excited to announce that Falcon Lake's Megan Imrie, a long-time member of the association, will also be representing Canada at the next Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

Mr. Speaker, one of the elite marksmen and members of the MPRA is Henry Gerow, who has won countless provincial titles, national championships and international gold medals. He's regarded as one of Manitoba's best marksmen to ever compete in the small-bore rifle category. He has now joined the province's most elite athletes of all time in the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame.

The MPRA small-bore committee is excited about developing a new high-performance training and coaching program. Hopefully, they will continue to develop excellent Manitoba competitors that will represent Manitoba in the competitions not only across the country, but across the world.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Grievances?

Seeing no grievances, I'd like to remind honourable members that since the Assembly will be recessing today until the new year, and particularly because we will have our Youth Parliament meeting here in the Chamber later this month, I'm asking that all members empty the contents of their desk before leaving today. I encourage members to use the blue bins on either side of the Chamber here to recycle their Hansards and any copies of bills or other papers, and any other material you have that you wish to recycle can be placed also in the larger blue bins in the two message rooms.

I thank honourable members for their co-operation.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(Continued)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, could you please call for third reading, Bill 2.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

Bill 2—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones)

Mr. Speaker: I will now call, under concurrence and third readings, that Bill 2, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones), as amended in the committee.

Is there any debate?

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Braun), that Bill 2, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité des travailleurs dans les zones de construction), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Hon. Erna Braun (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise for third reading on the highway traffic amendment act.

This bill is an integral piece of Manitoba's five-year plan for workplace injury and illness prevention. It brings in enhanced enforcement tools and clear requirements to help keep serve-workers and motorists in construction zones safe. We believe this bill will help Manitoba continue building on the significant progress we've made in reducing workplace injuries and illnesses to date.

* (15:20)

I would like to thank industry, labour and members of the public who have provided input into the development of this bill. Their contributions are greatly appreciated and we look forward to continuing to work together to improve the safety of Manitoba roads. In particular, I want to thank the

family of Brittany Murray. They have pushed for many of the changes that we are making today. They have been through so much. Thank you to the family.

When you enter a construction zone, you are entering someone's workplace. Every person who is working on our roads is someone's mother, father, son or daughter. Every family deserves to have their loved ones come home from work safe.

In 2005, we increased the fine for speeding in a construction zone. This legislation will double fines for speeding in a construction zone compared to speeding elsewhere. We've heard from families and from workers that we need better, clearer signs on our roads. These proposals would also allow for clear signage indicating when reduced limits are in effect, what they are and when they end. Bill 2 will also enable the creation of regulations that will clarify the plans for road construction sites and the kinds of traffic control devices that should be used in specific circumstances.

But legislation is not our only route to making construction zones safer for workers and for drivers. Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health will be stepping up enforcement measures to ensure that worker safety standards are maintained at the highest level during construction. The Premier (Mr. Selinger) has been outlining our major commitment to building core infrastructure in Manitoba. We are going to have a lot more workers on the roads over the next five years; these women and men deserve a safe workplace as they help, as they build to help our province for, to build our province for the future.

But it still baffles me, Mr. Speaker, that this bill almost didn't make it. If not for the efforts of members of the public, the family, industry and labour, I do not know that these measures would have been in place for the next construction season. Thankfully, that is not the case.

What is clear to me is that we are a government committed to making workplaces safer and to protect every day hard-working Manitobans. Our members opposite have voted repeatedly against rules that would make work safer for Manitoba families. In 2002, they voted against safer workplaces for workers and their families, saying the new rules would punish business. In 2010, when our government increased fines for serious violations of The Workplace Safety and Health Act, the members opposite voted against it, calling the fines nothing more than red tape, regulation and bureaucracy. Just two months ago the members opposite pressed for

changes that would increase proposed speed limits from 40k to 60k for cars passing emergency vehicles and emergency staff in residential areas.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment is clear. It is to keep Manitobans safe. We are committed to ensuring Manitoba workplaces become among the safest in the country. After all, as we've said many times over, we want our fathers, our mothers, our sons and daughters to come home safe after the end of their workday, and we will continue to enhance safety for workers as we have with Bill 2.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): It's a pleasure to put some words on the record with regard to Bill 2, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones).

Mr. Speaker, a lot of these employees that work in construction zones are our brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, and all deserve, as was shared at committee the other night, that they deserve to be respected and deserve to be protected and deserve to return to their families without worry or fear of injury or death. I believe the presentations at committee were very well done; I think the individuals who presented provided us with various scenarios of why workplace safety along highways is important and critical.

I appreciated the comments in discussion with Charlene Harrison, the mother of Brittany Murray, who lost her life in a construction zone when an individual is travelling faster than was safely warranted in that area. And I believe that Charlene, through this bill, did find, and will find, some closure with regard to the painful loss of her daughter. And I look at Charlene Harrison, and I realize that she's—she looks, and is likely, younger than I am, Mr. Speaker, and it just really brought home to me how difficult this would be to live with knowing that your child died in a senseless accident on—in highway construction.

I listened to the words of the minister, and I again am concerned that they're playing politics with this, and I thought of that at committee that night. When I was looking back at Charlene and her family and I thought, you know, we had never indicated we would not pass Bill 2. There's an agreement within the House that was in place and, Mr. Speaker, and even before they even had an opportunity to discuss that, they were indicating to the media that we would not support this bill, and I found that extremely

distressing and very, very disappointing because they were playing politics with Charlene Harrison and her family. And I think that is just outrageous, because this family had been just—had just gone through a court case where, as Charlene has indicated, was very disrespectful to the family, in their eyes. And then to have government play a game with the decision of Bill 2 is totally inappropriate.

So I just wanted to put that on the record, because I think it's very, very important that we respect all Manitobans and actually reflect on the decisions we make to ensure that we are not disrespecting families who have gone through something as horrible as the Murray family have.

So this bill does have a number of things in it that will provide assurances that families who have family members working in construction zones will have protection. The speed limits will be reduced. Fines will be increased, you know, Mr. Speaker.

But we really had some serious concerns with the liability, and that was addressed by the minister and I appreciated that, because municipalities don't want to see a tragedy happen, such as Brittany Murray's situation. They want to be assured that whoever is responsible for the signage and the processes involved in ensuring that that work area is safe, that they know exactly who is responsible for that section of highway. That's a very legitimate concern.

And I asked the minister and I asked in the briefing for that information, and they indicated they'd get back to me. It took a week—it took a week, but we got the answers. And, during that period of time, they played the politics.

What we want to make sure is all Manitobans are protected. We want to ensure that legislation that goes forward doesn't create more liability for one municipality over another. And, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that once we receive the information and clarification that we believe that municipalities would be fine with Bill 2 and moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, the reason that this bill has come forward is because of accidents that have happened, such as Brittany Murray's situation. And others that presented—a few citizens who work for MIT—indicated that they are very concerned about their workplace and the safety there with, so I believe that that provided some very solid information and solid background to support this. They also indicated that there has to be some teeth to this, and that, you

know, that if they are going to enforce it, to do so. Because they have said that, you know, in the past, there have—things have been brought forward with regard to workplace safety that hasn't materialized, hasn't provided the necessary supports or the resources in place to make that happen. In other words, they want this to be more than words from a government, more than spin from the 192 spinners. They would like to ensure that this is actually going to provide the supports that is indicated by this government.

* (15:30)

So, in closing, I believe that Bill 2 is a step in the right direction. It's unfortunate that it was introduced so late in this session, and I just feel that it would've respected the family if we would've had the opportunity to have all the answers upfront with regard to concerns listed. But, Mr. Speaker, in the end, Bill 2 will pass. Charlene Hamilton—Harrison and the Murray family will get an opportunity to realize that there will be safeguards in place so that Brittany's death through this accident are not in vain, and I believe that we look forward to this government taking action with regard to Bill 2. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 2, and I want to first of all recognize the family, the relatives of Brittany Murray, who came to present at the committee stage and to pour out their hearts about their loss of Brittany Murray and, at the same time, to recognize that in such a situation it is important to make changes which will prevent such problems in the future. And it is in the spirit of preventing such problems in the future that all MLAs here have worked together to enable this piece of legislation to pass. And I think that it is important for the member for Rossmere (Ms. Braun) to recognize that there were exceptions made with this legislation which have enabled it to speed up and to get passed.

I want to make a couple of comments. We also heard at the committee stage of concerns that the legislation was a bit rushed, that there weren't some details there which should've been there with regard to barriers, with regard to the use of buzz strips or rumble strips and so on. And we've been assured, we think, by the minister that these details may be compensated for by what is put in the regulations. And we look forward to seeing those regulations, and, hopefully, they will reflect the comments that have been made.

It was also commented at the committee stage that the fines which were there were somewhat out of line to other provinces. And we want this—fines to be high enough so they send a strong message, but we would prefer that the signage be so clear and so loud and so in people's face that people will always recognize when there's a construction zone, and they will slow down in the future, and we won't have these accidents. That would be a far better result. We don't want people to be saying that this NDP is just jacking up fines because they're running short of money. Now, I don't think that's true, but there would be a lot of people who would be saying that, right? And the important thing here is that we prevent the accidents and that we are not, you know, seen as just money grabbing, you know, here in this province.

I think that it's worth thanking all members for their support in getting this bill which will pass and become law today, which is a good thing. I would caution the member for Rossmere (Ms. Braun) just one last time in terms of trying to take some snipes. Sometimes I have to be a bit of an honest broker here. You know, you can complain about some things which might've slowed down this a little bit, but it would be very easy for people to stand up and rail against your party because you wouldn't allow a measure this morning which supports soldiers to pass—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Gerrard: —or a measure this morning which was designed to help the poorest in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I've obviously got people roused up a little bit. I've said enough, I think, at the moment, and I just want to thank all members for getting this measure to this stage and, hopefully, with royal assent later today.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words after the honest broker from River Heights and I appreciated some of his comments.

First of all, on this bill, I think all of us have expressed our sympathy to the family of Brittany Murray and I've had an opportunity to speak to members of that family as well. I think all of us—well, I was going to say, we all recognize how difficult it must be, but I suspect few do know the difficulty of the situation that they are going through. I think it's almost impossible to put ourselves into their shoes, so for that reason I'm glad that this bill is moving forward. But I would say that I don't think—

I don't think—this bill would be moving forward today if it wasn't for the member for Riding Mountain (Mrs. Rowat) and I want to commend her and thank her for her comments on this.

The member for Riding Mountain, earlier on, had a few questions about the bill and brought them to the minister and to the department, and it took about a week for her to get the responses to those questions. And, once she got the responses to the questions that she had, she came to me and she said, how do we ensure that this bill get passed this session? I said, well, I'll take a look at it, and the difficulty was that the government had signed and structured a deal that didn't allow any legislation to come forward and be passed this session that weren't part of the last session. I double-checked the agreement that was signed by the government. It wasn't signed in disappearing ink, even though they might think it was. The member—the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard) put her—signed on an agreement that said that there shall not be any new legislation introduced and passed in this session. That was her signature on that agreement.

But I said to the member for Riding Mountain who asked whether or not there were things that could be changed, I said, let me look at it over the weekend. And so we did, and I came forward with three suggestions to the government about how we could move outside of that agreement to have the bill passed, and the government selected the one option of swapping out a different piece of legislation. So I'm glad that they chose that option and managed to get around the agreement that the government actually signed, and I appreciate the member for Riding Mountain doing that and making it a priority, because if she hadn't I don't think that this bill would have passed. And I'm glad that we could move past the agreement that the government House leader—the former government House leader had actually signed on to.

Now, there was a juxtaposition, and I'm glad the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) brought it forward, that we actually had a bill this morning that I believe that if it was in place and if money was raised through the sale of licence plates for veterans, it could possibly save a life, that money. It could—and if the member for the Interlake says, if it saved even one—or Lakeside, sorry, the—I wouldn't want—think that such common sense would come from the member for the Interlake, but the—as the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) said, if it even saved one life—if it even saved one life—would it not be worth it?

And I asked the Government House Leader, you know, why don't we at least move this forward because it might save a life? Well, no, we don't want to work outside the agreement, I suppose, wouldn't want to do that, wouldn't want to do that. And yet we showed, and I want to commend the member for Riding Mountain (Mrs. Rowat), that sometimes, you know, it's better to take the high road and to look for something, to do something, that it's going to be helpful and it's going to be beneficial. Even though the government put forward an agreement that wouldn't allow it to happen, I commend the member for Riding Mountain who said, let's find a way, and we did find a way.

I only wish it would have been an example for the government this morning when they decided not to do the exact same thing, to perhaps save a life of a veteran. And maybe they still have time to reflect on that before the House adjourns today. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on Bill 2?

House is ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 2, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones), as amended.

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

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Is it the will of the House to make it unanimous?

Mr. Speaker: Is there will of the House to let the record reflect that the passage of Bill 2 was unanimous? *[Agreed]*

* (15:40)

* * *

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, on House business, could you please call for third readings of the following bills: Bill 22, Bill 27, Bill 41, Bill 42, Bill 43, Bill 45, Bill 36, Bill 38, Bill 46, Bill 6, Bill 7, Bill 47, and Bill 20.

Mr. Speaker: So, as announced, we'll be calling bills in the following order, starting with Bill 22, followed by bills 27, 41, 42, 43, 45, 36, 38, 46, Bill 6, Bill 7, Bill 47, and then finally Bill 20.

So we'll start by calling Bill 22, The Planning Amendment Act (Subdivision Approval), as amended.

Bill 22—The Planning Amendment Act (Subdivision Approval)

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister for Municipal Government (Mr. Struthers), that Bill 22, The Planning Amendment Act (Subdivision Approval); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (approbation de lotissements), 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.

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Municipal Government): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand in third reading and speak a little bit about The Planning Amendment Act, Bill 22. This bill amends The Planning Act to shorten the process a rural municipality needs to go through to approve minor subdivisions. The amendments further expedite the process by making the municipal decision on a minor subdivision the final decision.

The act is also amended to provide a legal mechanism to ensure areas of significant interest, such as sensitive riparian areas, will be protected now and into the future through a development agreement signed by the land owner and a government authority.

Our government is committed to modernizing how we do municipal planning because good planning helps grow our economy and create good jobs. Municipalities and subdivision applicants asked us to make the process shorter, and this amendment shows that we're listening.

Bill 22 will reduce the initial processing time for simple, one-lot subdivision applications by about half. By implementing best practices and streamlining the review process for single-lot subdivisions, we are reducing red tape for municipalities, planning districts and land owners. That sounds great, too, Mr. Speaker. There is no need for simple subdivisions, such as basic farmyard splits, to go through the same review process as complex subdivisions. This amendment reduces the workload on municipalities, planning districts, and the Department of Municipal Government, giving them time to focus on their many pressing priorities.

But, Mr. Speaker, this doesn't mean we are walking away from the process. A single-lot subdivision would be eligible for the shortened process only if it meets the following criteria: It is consistent with the provincially approved development plan, no new public road is created and no change is made to access on a provincial road or provincial trunk highway.

Mr. Speaker, consultation is an important part of this legislation. The Association of Manitoba Municipalities, along with all government departments and agencies involved with reviewing subdivisions, sit on a joint technical advisory committee to make sure this shortened approval process is implemented properly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I recommend this bill to the House.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Midland): Mr. Speaker, Bill 22, it's—this bill is interesting, to say the least, as a government that—that talks about cutting regulations takes a minor, minor step towards cutting regulations for municipalities. This only—this bill only addresses existing subdivisions within a municipality in a residential subdivision. It does not address if a farmyard wants to be subdivided out of an existing quarter section. Apparently, municipalities don't know best as to what they should be doing, according to this government.

So, while this bill is a small step towards lessening regulations, they could have done much better had they actually waited for the report that the AMM was part of and government was part of; however, they decided to introduce the bill prior to the report being issued. So, if they had waited, perhaps it could have even been a more extensive bill in terms of actually cutting regulations for municipalities.

So, you know, we understand their dislike for AMM and their—so, having said that, this bill does, is one small step towards reducing regulations. They could have done much better, and perhaps knowing how this government acts in small incremental steps, perhaps when they do see the report come in, they can actually address the existing problems that are out there with the regulations that municipalities deal with each and every day.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, we'll look forward to passing of Bill 22.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this measure which gives additional

authority to municipalities, and, appropriately so, under these circumstances. I believe that this is a worthwhile measure and look forward to being implemented shortly.

Mr. Speaker: Any further debate on Bill 22?

House ready for the question.

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: Question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 22, The Planning Amendment Act (Subdivision Approval), as amended.

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

**Bill 27—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act
(Charter Bus Service)**

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to call Bill 27, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service), as amended.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), that Bill 27, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (services d'autobus nolisés), reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Swan: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be quite happy to give way to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton), but I just did want to put a few words on the record about the, certainly of the challenges with respect to maintaining bus service in a very large and very dynamic province.

And we know that, of course, although fewer people may be taking bus services these days, continues to be an extremely important mode of transportation. And certainly one thing that I've learned is that many departments in government rely upon reliable bus service to be able to move things back and forth. I know, within the Department of Health, the health authority relies upon the bus service to transport a lot of information, samples, a lot of important things, and certainly we want to see that that continues. As well, I know within the Justice Department often documents are sent using

bus service, and I know that other government departments always require useful bus service.

But, of course, beyond that, we know that it's people in Manitoba in rural areas, especially in northern areas, that count on having bus service to allow them attend medical appointments, to visit family, to do any business they may need to do in larger centres.

And, certainly, I know that it has been a challenge for the past couple of years in maintaining chartered bus service and other bus services within the province of Manitoba. And I know that the minister has been working very hard on making sure that we get the right balance to allow charter bus companies to continue to operate at a reasonable profit, but also open up the field to allow some other smaller operators who are very keen and very excited to be providing service in certain areas. And it is the kind of balance that can sometimes be a challenge for government, but I believe that this bill meets that balance very, very well.

* (15:50)

Now, of course, we know that things have changed in the province of Manitoba. Once upon a time, of course, you could take a train to just about any small community you could want. We know that passenger train service, especially in western Canada, fell away as more and more people began driving, and we know that that suffered. And we know the passenger train service, frankly, in the west continues to suffer, and I know that we'll hopefully have some better alternatives one day.

In terms of bus service, of course, that then became the next way for people to move back and forth. Certainly, the improvement of roads across this province—a process which, I may add, continues today—and the advent of more and more people having cars meant that fewer people were able to—or fewer people needed bus service. But we know that it's still a very vital and important service for people to be able to take the bus to get them around to various activities.

And, you know, of course, different provinces went in different ways. I know the province of Saskatchewan actually has a government-owned bus service, STC, the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, and perhaps the government could have possibly—could possibly have been done some time ago in the province of Manitoba. Maybe having a

publicly owned bus company was a missed opportunity, but we can't turn the clock back now.

But, certainly, we know that being able to have bus service across the province, to allow people to have the ability, again, to get to medical appointments, to visit loved ones, to do business in various centres, is very important to the province of Manitoba and to Manitoba residents. I'll certainly be interested to hear what the opposition have to say, and I'll also be very interested to hear what the Minister of Infrastructure has to say on this very important bill.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I want to put a few things on the record.

As we know, in this House I did bring an amendment forward on this particular piece of legislation, and we heard loud and clear not only from the member from Brandon East, his people that were here—the mayor presented on this particular bill—and they said very clearly that they did not support the bill in the way it was written. And also, the member from Seine River had people there, as well, that talked about the bill, and they also said that they were assured by the member from Seine River that they would bring amendments forward on this bill. It was a small amendment, but it didn't go far enough.

And this bill is about safety, and the safety part of it that I brought forward in my amendment, I have to take the minister at his word. He said he's going to put those into regulation. Whether or not he does or not—this is the same government that also said they would not raise taxes in the last election. But we certainly saw that this government can't be trusted. So, with that, we know that whatever the government says, they may or may not do.

So, having said that, we can't support this bill in its entirety.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a few words on this piece of legislation. I think it's been recognized for some time that there needed to be some adjustments that would serve people better in Manitoba in terms of bus service. And it is right that there should be some changes, but, clearly, with the changes that have been brought in, there are, as people raised at committee, some major concerns that service will actually be better, some major concerns that companies in Manitoba will be disadvantaged as a result of the way that this bill has been put forward. And certainly, if this bill passes, as

we expect today, we will need to watch things very, very closely and bring up concerns and be ready to listen to people and, if needed, be ready to make some further changes, because I'm quite concerned about some of the things that were said at committee and some of the potential fallout as a result of this bill. Thank you.

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to also rise and talk a little bit about this bill, and I want to just reflect on the commitment of the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton) on resolving what has been a very challenging issue. Members will remember that this issue really began when Greyhound decided to pull back from servicing many communities that, for whom, really, bus service was their link to many other communities.

We know that, I think, as the Attorney General (Mr. Swan) had mentioned, buses in Manitoba—they're not only used for people to go and visit other communities, but they are also used in large measure for people to go and be able to get the kind of health-care services that they need. We know that those buses are often used for children who are going to visit parents who have been separated and divorced and live in different communities. I know, as the former minister of Family Services, the bus system would sometimes be used for children who are in foster care in one community who wanted to make visits back to their family to try to mend some of that relationship. They also used those buses.

In my own life, growing up in Brandon, I travelled many, many, many times on the Greyhound bus to Winnipeg, and it was, at that time, you could get up and you could get on the bus at 6:30 in the morning, you'd come into the city, do the business that you had to do and catch the 7 p.m. bus back to Brandon. And that was just what you did, because you had to come into the city and go to meetings or do whatever kinds of things that you had to do. And it was always a very good service and it was an affordable way—if you didn't have a car, it was an affordable way to get around.

So I think that the minister has worked very hard to find some solutions to this problem.

* * *

Ms. Howard: The other thing I'm going to say and, hopefully, no one will challenge me on relevance, but I just wanted to share with the House the sad news that I just received by BlackBerry that Nelson Mandela has passed away today. And I was recently—

had the tremendous opportunity to travel in South Africa, and I feel very fortunate that I was there when he was still alive. And part of that journey was to go and visit Robben Island, which is—was where Nelson Mandela was, of course, imprisoned, and we got to see the cell where he lived for many, many years; 27 years he was in prison with nothing but a mat and a table and a bucket. And we also got to see the limestone quarry where he and other political prisoners of the time, who became leaders in the movement to free South Africa from apartheid—they worked together in this quarry. They cut—came to call it the university of the movement. And many of the problems he's had in later life, in terms of breathing problems and vision problems, were because of the work that he had to do in that quarry.

So I know we're going to get on with the business of the democracy that we get to be custodians of, all of us in this House, but I thought it would just be appropriate to—for the Chamber to know that today we lost a tremendous champion of freedom and democracy in Nelson Mandela, and I know we all feel that loss. And I know we all would want to extend our sympathy to all the citizens of that country who, I'm sure, will be in mourning today, as well as his family. Thank you very much.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member—

An Honourable Member: Yes, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order, the honourable member for River Heights.

Mr. Gerrard: I want to thank the Minister of Finance for bringing up the sad passing of Nelson Mandela. This is—he has certainly made an incredible contribution to the whole world and particularly, of course, to his own country of South Africa. And I would wonder if there would be leave for everybody to rise to have a moment of silence on the passing of Nelson Mandela.

Mr. Speaker: Official Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I also appreciate the Minister of Finance raising the issue, and I certainly would never call her on relevance on something so important, because that is important. It's important to us, all of us who, in many ways, rely on others in the world to also defend democracy and to defend rights in countries that we don't have as much involvement

in, so we all share in the passing of Mr. Mandela. I would also support the call for the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) for a moment of silence in recognition of that.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to observe a moment of silence? [*Agreed*]

* (16:00)

A moment of silence was observed.

* * *

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I was planning on speaking on this bill, but I do want to add my words of condolence to people of South Africa and, I think, people throughout the world who will be mourning the passage of a tremendous figure of inspiration and history.

I had the opportunity on a personal visit to visit South Africa very shortly after the fall of apartheid. I—it was always my dream, Mr. Speaker, to go to South Africa for the end of apartheid. I never thought I'd see it in my lifetime, and what struck me about that visit, and certainly any of the contacts that I had with many people who were involved with the anti-apartheid movement, the sense of reconciliation I saw in South Africa that moved to a Rainbow Nation, respecting the rights of all its citizens, the progress from probably one of the worst forms of institutional racism that we will have seen anywhere in the world, to a model—I can't say enough about how much that was very much the legacy of Nelson Mandela. And I also was struck by how much it is a model.

Some members may know I'm very proud to point to the degree to which I've certainly been inspired by Mahatma Gandhi and Gandhian principles and particularly Gandhi's view of the world that stressed the transformative element of non-violence. And what's striking to my mind is will we ever see someone like Nelson Mandela, who, after 28 years in a South African jail could come out and see a non-violent transformation of South Africa in an incredible spirit of reconciliation. I—Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we will have other great figures in history—Gandhis and Mandelas—in the future, but few will leave the kind of impact that they did. So I'm very proud to stand today and reflect on his passage.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: But, of course, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure Nelson Mandela would've been the first to expect to

hear in our Chamber that we would have vigorous debates. South Africa's pretty vigorous when it comes to debates, a very lively political circumstance. And what does strike me about this Legislature—I'm trying to recall—I've had a few sessions—I'm trying to recall a few sessions that would've actually resulted in this many sitting days, this much debate. I'm trying to recall, actually, when we actually first introduced this bill. It's some time ago. I know it's been on the Order Paper for a significant period of time. And I think that one of things that we should be reflecting on as we wrap up this portion of the session, this rather unique element of this session, that we—it's the end of one session and it's also been the beginning of another.

I would like to suggest in a lot of ways, Mr. Speaker, that if I could sum up what this bill and other bills in this session reflect, in terms of our highways and how many of the issues we've debated, I think it's probably the end of the beginning, the end of the beginning in the sense we've had a debate in this Legislature on bills such as this. We've had a debate on funding issues, budgets, throne speeches. And when I say the end of the beginning, I've very proud of a lot of the work we've done on our infrastructure over the last number of years. And I don't think people realize just how far we've come.

In 1999, when we took office, our capital spending on our highway system was less than a hundred million dollars. It was as low as \$85 million. Now, early on in our mandate I can tell you what we did. We recognized that had to change, and we immediately increased that. But, Mr. Speaker—and you know this very well—we also understood we had to have a plan. There was no plan. A plan, a long-term plan, might've been the next year or the year after.

So we put in place Manitoba Vision 2020. And, Mr. Speaker, you chaired that process. We had significant involvement from stakeholders, and I remember when you delivered the report of a four-recommending a \$4-billion, 10-year investment in our highway infrastructure. I'm sure there were maybe some people in this building who probably fell out of their chair when they got the report. But I can tell you one thing: We not only adopted that recommendation—and the member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lemieux) was the minister at that time—we've exceeded it. Every single year we have put in place our highway plan, and how does that work out? The last three years this government—and this is prior to this session of this year—has invested more money

than the Conservatives invested in the entire time they were in office; three years beat their 10 years. That speaks volumes. Not the talk, Mr. Speaker, but the actual walk on infrastructure.

So what was significant about this session, Mr. Speaker, and with this particular—

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Lakeside, on a point of order.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Yes, I would like to ask the Minister of MIT to be relevant to the bus bill; that's what we're talking about. That really has nothing to do with what we're talking about today. If he wants to talk about something else, let him do that another time.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, on the same point of order?

Mr. Ashton: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I can't think of anything more relevant than talking about the highway system that our buses have to operate under. And I know the members are sensitive about the 1990s. You know, we don't want to go back to 1990s any more than they do—been there, done that. But I think it's absolutely relevant, and I'm more than pleased to speak not only about the immediate impacts of Bill 27 but the historic investments we're making on our highway system.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the honourable members for their advice on the point of order raised by the honourable member for Lakeside. Normally, it's—my practice, as your Speaker, is to permit a bit of latitude when individual members are debating matters before the Assembly. So I will take the advice of the honourable member for Lakeside and listen very carefully to what honourable members are saying with respect to the debate on this particular bill, and I would ask the honourable Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to follow along in keeping with the spirit of the bill under consideration here this afternoon, and we'll let matters unfold as they will.

And, in that regard, I thank the honourable member. He does have a point of order, and I'll be watching very closely.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Indeed, Bill 27 is a very important bill. It talks about the charter bus industry, and I was

talking about the fact that if you want to have improved safety in terms of charter buses, which is a major provision to this bill, you have to have a government that's going to invest in our highway system.

And I know, Mr. Speaker—you know, I find it interesting the member opposite, the member for Lakeside, I thought he was actually going to get up on a point of order and congratulate this government for the investments on Highway 6. You know, he actually represented much of the southern portion of Highway 6—still represents part of it. You know what, when you're investing the biggest single investment on that portion of Highway 6 since it was constructed in the 1950s, you'd think the member for Lakeside would be standing up and being part of the hallelujah chorus.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm digressing. I am digressing and, you know, the member mumbled something in his comments about the gas tax. One of the things we did early on in or mandate—we actually had to bring the gas tax accountability act in because the Conservatives, when they were in government, spent less on highways than they raised on the gas tax. We're spending double what we raise on the gas tax, and mark my word—and I want the member opposite, the member for Lakeside to be—to note this down—we are going to guarantee that people are going to see the difference on highways like Highway 6, with—a part of a highway which he actually supposedly represents—

An Honourable Member: And so do buses.

Mr. Ashton: —and the buses will definitely benefit from that.

And I want to stress as well, by the way, that what's interesting is the way the members opposite—we saw it earlier today, you know—have they no shame? You know, they vote against—well, we know they don't. They vote against the investment that we're putting in our highway system, but then they come in with a straight face and they bring in petitions asking for us to do more on the highway system, Mr. Speaker. You know what, in government, you can't have it both ways, but, when it comes to Conservatives, you know, they start question period saying, spend more. They get up in question period saying we're spending too much, and, at the end, they'll—they have no shame at all. They'll be saying go spend more.

* (16:10)

You know what, the bottom line is they proved in the 1990s they have no commitment to our infrastructure.

And I do say, Mr. Speaker, there's an ultimate irony with the members opposite, especially those who represent rural ridings, because, you know, I thought the highlight of this session, one of them was the Leader of the Opposition stood up—and what about when he stands up and there's always that flourish, you know, that sense that he knows best, often that only he knows best, and I think members of the Conservative caucus probably know more about that than we do. But I thought the ultimate highlight of the session is when he tabled a 20-year old picture of a bridge and said, oh no, you already built this. Well, it was ironic because that bridge was built back in the '90s; it was a million-dollar project. That was their idea of a major project in the 1990s, \$1 million. What are we spending on Highway 75? We're spending over \$200 million to finish the job and bring it to interstate standards. So members opposite they can trot out 20-year-old pictures, but we're getting the job done.

Now I also think there's an irony when members opposite speak as well because, you know, this sort of righteous indignation that we see from them, we see it a lot, we see it especially from the Leader of the Opposition. What strikes me about it, by the way, is have they not realized they have no credibility whatsoever anymore when it comes to infrastructure. How can anyone believe them when they would immediately, if they were in government, take out the revenue that's going to be put in place to go the next level in terms of infrastructure? Do they not understand what they have put forward?

I often wonder, by the way, if they keep track of what the Leader of the Opposition is actually putting forward as an agenda for this province. I'm not sure how much input they have on it, Mr. Speaker.

But, you know what, the Leader of the Opposition, people may remember him for his interview with Natalie Pollock over the last few days from this session, but, Mr. Speaker, that's just the tip of the iceberg. What people saw there is the real Leader of the Opposition. And let's understand what the, when the Leader of the Opposition talks as he does again you know, with this fulsome sense of himself, what he also has is he has a record. He was not only part of the government that cut the funding for infrastructure, but I find it incredible when he gets up earlier today and talks about living up to sort

of, you know, to campaign promises. He was part of a government that privatized MTS, never ran on it, not once; he stood up, along with the rest of the members opposite. So I always say, you know what, you wait for what they'll say in the next election, I'm sure on Manitoba Hydro they all stand and they all say we have no plans to privatize Manitoba Hydro. My response to that is, yeah, right, you said the same thing on MTS, and no one trusts you on anything when it comes to Manitoba Hydro.

We see this, we even see members opposite attacking Manitoba Hydro personnel, Mr. Speaker, talking about bullying, et cetera. You know what, I've got a lot of Manitoba Hydro people working my—for my constituency, I'm proud of the work they do. They don't need members opposite attacking them, their professionalism and Manitoba Hydro. I know they want to drag Manitoba Hydro down. They're constantly criticizing what it does with the expansion of sales; they're criticizing what it's doing in terms of its day-to-day activities. But I want to put on the record we're proud of Manitoba Hydro, and we're going to make darn sure that the members opposite never get the opportunity to privatize it. We know that's part of their agenda.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I could run through a lot more of what members opposite did in the '90s. I, you know what, I don't even have to go back to the '90s, though, because they're continuing to put forward the same kind of failed ideology. When I say failed ideology, it's failing around the world; it's failing around the world. I want to stress one thing: when we took one of the difficult decisions which was to go into deficit after 10 years-plus of balanced budgets, we did it because we knew we had to stimulate the economy. Now I want to stress that was a tough decision; similarly, raising the sales tax by 1 cent on the dollar was a tough decision. But, without that kind of investment, how did they think we're going to bring our highway system up to interstate standards on Highway 75? How are we going to get Highway 6 to national highway system standards?

Mr. Speaker, you know what, I was really pleased in AMM to meet with the councillor of the Town of Boissevain. And you know what, they have a sign and I can't repeat what it says, but it comments on the condition of the highway. But you know, how are we going to get Highway 10, a key trade route to the US, up to proper standard? The Perimeter Highway, built in the late '50s, how are we going to get the southwest perimeter up to standard—the standard of this century?

How about Highway 9—biggest single investment on Highway 9 since it was constructed. How are we going to get it up to that level without the one cent on the dollar, without the kind of additional investment we're going to see, Mr. Speaker? The reality is, you cannot have it both ways when it comes to governing this province. You can't get up and pretend to talk about infrastructure like the Conservatives do and then turn around and vote against the money that's going to be invested in that.

And I'll say one thing, by the way. I found it really ironic today when we're talking about investments, that the member for Portage actually got up and in a question on the situation facing flood victims, criticized the 1-cent-on-the-dollar increase. And I—you know, I did respond at that time. Clearly, this is—the No. 1 job of what we're doing is investing in flood infrastructure. But I want to put it on the record the degree to which we have the Manitoba model.

Now, right here in the city of Winnipeg, anybody in the city of Winnipeg is here for, you know, is basically protected to a one-in-700-year flood. You saw what happened earlier this year, Mr. Speaker, in Calgary, the key financial centre. I want to stress that in those—that community, they have a one-in-25-year flood protection, and I've got relatives in Alberta, and I tell you, we all felt for people in the province, what they went through.

Mr. Speaker, we have a sales tax brought in in the '60s; we have flood protection. Alberta has no sales tax and, right now, not a heck of a lot of flood protection. And whether it's Winnipeg with one-in-700-year protection, Brandon with one-in-300-year protection, the Red River Valley—one in a hundred years, or Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin, where we are going to be putting in a minimum one in a hundred year flood protection, even up to one-in-200, I am really proud that this government has invested in infrastructure because job No. 1 is to protect those flood-affected communities. They can talk; we're doing the walk.

So, Mr. Speaker, well, and, you know, the member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) will get up and talk about, you know, Wilkes. You know, again, I mean, you know, part of the—trying to have it both ways side, the bottom line is unless you had the revenue to back it up, you're not going to see, you know, any real difference in terms of infrastructure.

And I want to finish by stressing one thing: infrastructure is not just about roads and bridges and

flood protection. It's important, but it's also about steady growth, something we didn't have in the '90s, something we have today. It's about good jobs, Mr. Speaker, good jobs for our kids, jobs with a future. It's about building the province. And I know the member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen), I see him, you know, I see him warming up; I wonder if he's going to get up and put on the record again, you know, the tremendous growth we're seeing in this province, including in his community. And I think the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald)—and he's applauding it.

You know what, bottom line: Didn't just happen. It's because in this province, Mr. Speaker, we've got the right combination of circumstances. We have a great people. We've got from First Nations—you know, the people have come throughout the world to come to this province—tremendous diversity. And we also—we've got a great future. But the bottom line here is very clear: If members opposite were given the chance, and I got to say I'm not sure I want to give the keys to the Leader of the Opposition on this one. I wouldn't want him driving the bus. I wouldn't want him driving anything, because one of the first things he would do is jam on the brakes. He would cut back. He would cut back on Infrastructure; we know that. But watch out for Health. Watch out for Education, the services people rely on.

But I want to say to members opposite: The recipe for disaster in this province would be to jam on the brakes on the steady growth we've experienced. So what I want to suggest to members opposite, they can start with this bill. I suspect they might even vote for this one. There's going to be a number of other bills coming up, Mr. Speaker. But I do want to put on the record, there's one bill that I will be voting for, and you know what? I will go door to door. I will go to any public meeting anywhere in my constituency and I will say to members opposite that they have a choice. It's called, under the PCs, it's back to the '90s. I would describe that as the been-there-done-that, ain't-going-back-to-that-anytime-soon option. Or they have another option, and it's what we have put forward in this session.

* (16:20)

Day after day, you know, month after month, and we've gone now virtually to the end of the year doing this. And yes, there was a tough decision. But if we're going to grow this province—[interjection] Well, the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, I can see

their crocodile tears coming up. But I want to put on the record that when it comes to highways in this province, basic infrastructure, when it comes to flood protection, we made the tough decision. But I want to say, we're not giving the keys to the Leader of the Opposition for the bus. We're lining up all 37 of our MLAs to speak here; they're on the bus. We got room for some of them even in the back of the bus. We might even let them sit in the front. We don't care where. But this is a bus that's headed towards a future of steady growth, good jobs, progress for Manitoba.

My message to members opposite on Bill 27 is: get on the bus, get on board, get with the plan, support this government's investment in the future.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) talks about getting on the bus, and what they did is throw all Manitobans under the bus. They throw Manitobans under the bus. Each one of these 36 NDP MLAs, they went door to door in the 2011 election; they weren't talking about a tough decision then. I know I—I've looked at the literature. I've looked at the brochures, and I don't remember the brochures saying vote for us. We've got a tough decision to make. I've looked. Maybe I've missed it—maybe I've missed it. The Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard) keeps talking about her tough decision. I saw her brochures too. Didn't see anything about a tough decision on there. No, in fact, I saw quite the opposite, quite the opposite.

Minister of Finance, the member for—the minister—the member for Thompson, minister of highways, they said no. In fact, they said they had a five-year plan, and they said the five-year plan was—now, this'll surprise you, Mr. Speaker—on track—on track. Not off track, not kind of halfway on the track, halfway off the track. On track, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) said. And the plan was to balance the budget in five years without—without what? Without raising taxes. That was the five-year plan. That was the five-year plan. No, not the tough-decision-five-year plan, not the tough-choices-five-year plan. No, the five-year plan of balance the budget and we're not going to raise your taxes. That was the plan. That's what this debate has been about, about the government keeping their word—about the government keeping their word.

How hard is it for even one, can we find one of—one MLA, one NDP MLA out of the 36 who will keep their word? I don't actually expect that, you

know, that the Cabinet's going to vote against the bills this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, in particular Bill 20. I'm just looking for one, one honest NDP MLA who campaigned. That's it. I would take one. I'd be happy with five, but I'd even take one who would say, that's not what I campaigned on. It's not what I said, and it is important to actually keep your word. Only one. Can we find one strong NDP MLA to say, I'm going to support my constituents, the people who I went to door to door. When I was at their doorsteps, I may have walked into the home, they maybe even sat down at their table to talk to those voters, and say, we are going to keep our word. Just one. I'd be—I would take that as—well, not even a moral victory, but a victory for democracy.

Now, I appreciate, you know, we had a nice moment of silence. That's important, I appreciate that, and we talked about civil rights and democracy. But it's not enough just to talk about it. You actually have to demonstrate it—you actually have to demonstrate it. You know, it's not enough to say, no, we're going to—we want to celebrate democracy, want to celebrate those things as long as we're not held accountable for that personally—long as we're not held accountable for that personally, and that is what these NDP MLAs are doing.

And I've heard lots of talk from the Minister of Finance about tough decisions. Now, what is the tough decision? The tough decision wasn't whether or not to—deciding whether or not to raise the PST from 7 per cent to 8 per cent, that wasn't the tough decision. The tough decision was whether or not to follow the law—just to follow the law. Because that was long—that is something that had—should've happened long before the decision on the PST increase. The government just had to follow the law. What the Minister of Finance is saying is it was a tough decision for her to decide whether or not to follow the law. And the law is—it still stands, even at this moment, is to have a referendum before increasing the PST. Is it really that tough a decision to decide whether to follow the law?

Maybe the Attorney General (Mr. Swan) could answer that for us. Does he believe that for Manitobans it's a tough decision to decide whether or not to follow the law, that's a struggle? Is that his new policy as the Attorney General? Is that his new policy that we should have a lot of sympathy for criminals because it's a real tough decision whether or not to follow the law? That is really what the Minister of Finance is talking about. It was a tough decision for her to decide whether or not to follow

the balanced budget law. That's not a tough decision. I mean, that's a decision that Manitobans—not on a conscious level, but on an unconscious level—make every day. They lead their lives honestly. They lead their lives in a way that's respectful and they—a lot of things are done, I think, still in Manitoba on a handshake, where people's word is worth something.

I know I've seen this happen to many people. And in some ways that's what an election is—in some ways that is what an election is—somebody going and saying, this is my word to you. And this was raised by the member for—the Minister of Infrastructure. He raised this issue about infrastructure and having the PST. That was his words. I'm talking about what he said in his speech. It's not that hard—it's not that hard, actually, I think, to keep your word. It's not a tough decision. It's a real tough decision to break your word, I'd say, Mr. Speaker. That's a real tough decision, that would be a hard thing, but that's not what the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard) is saying. She's saying it was a hard decision to raise the PST. Well, that was a secondary decision. The decision around that Cabinet table, the first decision, long before they ever discussed about the PST, would have been whether or not we should follow the law. That was the initial decision and, in fact, they got device—they got advice. They got advice from their own department officials. Their own department officials gave them advice that said, you need to change the balanced budget law before you increase the PST. And then they made a decision—a decision that the Minister of Finance would classify as a tough decision; the decision that the Attorney General (Mr. Swan) would say is a tough decision; that the Minister of Infrastructure, in his speech a few minutes ago, said was a tough decision. They made a tough decision not to follow the law. Well, that's not a tough decision.

You know, there were other decisions that were made. There was a decision made by the Premier (Mr. Selinger). Premier made a decision not to come to any committee hearings, not one. We had nine, 10 days of committee hearings on Bill 20. Now, I understand the—you know, the Premier has—he's—you know, he's got obligations, he's got things to do. I'm not naive about that, but nine days? The nine days he couldn't find a time where he could have poked his head—poked his head—into the hearings. He's actually the guy who demanded it. The Premier stood in this House and demanded that those hearings go forward. He said, oh, you're stalling the hearings, you're stalling the hearings, we want to hear from

Manitobans. And then he didn't hear from one of them, not a single one of them, and the Minister of Finance and all of this Cabinet and the minister—or member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the Minister of Infrastructure, would want us to believe that it was a tough decision for the Premier not to go to those community hearings.

Well, that was the easiest decision he could have made, because 95 or more per cent of the people who presented at those hearings made their voices very clear in terms of what their preference was. They wanted the government to follow the law. That's it, just follow the law. Leave it to the people in a referendum. You know, maybe the people would have voted for a PST increase. I doubt it, and I think the government doubts it, but follow the law and give them that opportunity. But the Premier said, no, I'm too busy. I don't think he was too busy. I frankly think he just didn't want to go there because he knew it would be a tough meeting. He knew it would be a tough meeting because people weren't there to support him—weren't there to support him. Now, let me—I've seen the Premier show up at meetings when everybody's on side with something, oh, he's happy to go to those meetings, you know, happy to show up if he's handing out a cheque for somebody, but if you want to go to a meeting where people actually don't agree with you, he doesn't think that's his job, it's not his responsibility. Tough decision—tough decision, hey? To go to a meeting where people might not actually agree with you, Mr. Speaker—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): We are debating Bill 27, and I know there's a lot of latitude given to members but I've been listening carefully to the member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), I haven't heard one word about buses, I haven't heard one word about roads. I know the member for Steinbach often takes a long time to make a point, but perhaps he could stick to the bill at hand, Mr. Speaker.

* (16:30)

Mr. Speaker: On the same point of order, the Official Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): You know, I suspect this is a sensitive

topic for the Attorney General (Mr. Swan), but I didn't see him spring to his feet and raise a point of order when the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the minister of industry, was talking about the PST increase and defending it, Mr. Speaker. I would say what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

I'm responding to the comments that 'minner'—the member for Thompson, the minister of industry, made. If he didn't want them responded to, he shouldn't have made them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order that's raised by the honourable Government House Leader, I thank honourable members for their advice in this matter.

As I said earlier this afternoon, I do give a fair amount of latitude when members are debating matters before the Assembly, but I do caution honourable members to at least talk about the matter under consideration more directly. From time to time, that would help me make sure that matters proceed smoothly through the House.

So, while I appreciate the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, I must say that there is no point of order, but I want to caution honourable members to at least talk at least in general terms about the matter under consideration.

And, of course, we have before us right now Bill 27, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service)—Bill 27, so I would ask the honourable member for Steinbach to confine at least a portion of his comments to that matter under consideration

* * *

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): No problem, Mr. Speaker.

So, the minister of industry talked about how this issue of the bus charter is a priority. Well, there's other priorities for Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, and that is having their word kept by their government. That's a priority—that's a priority. And this Premier (Mr. Selinger) had an opportunity—he had an opportunity to hear about the priorities of Manitobans—could've come to the hearings, could've heard somebody, could've listened to anybody, you know.

So, even, I mean, you know, the government was able to get a couple of their union friends—their union leaders to come and support the PST increase. Interestingly, those union leaders didn't actually ask

any of their members what they thought about the PST increase, didn't ask one of them, but came and said that all of their members were in favour, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we asked—we asked. We said, did you survey any of your members? Well, no, why would we do that? That would be like a referendum or something. We wouldn't want to—we wouldn't want to have a referendum on this issue.

And—but, you know, the Premier could've come, you know. The Premier didn't even have to get on a bus to go to the hearings. He just had to leave his office, you know. He didn't have to go and look for a Greyhound or any other kind of bus. He just had to walk out of his office over on the second floor—didn't even have to walk up the stairs or down the stairs—could've just walked out of his office, down the hall, poked his head into the hearings and listened. And listened. And, you know, he could've—we would've offered him a seat at the table. We would've made room for him and [*inaudible*]. Ah, but he made a tough decision—made a tough decision to stay in his office—made a tough decision, a hard decision not to listen, Mr. Speaker. You know, he probably got on a bus somewhere, though, got on a bus and went far away from the Legislature as he could get. You know, probably boarded the first bus and said, where are you going? What's the end of your run? Just take me to the end, because I want to be as far away from this building as I can.

You know, he did the same thing when there were protests in the front of this building. Manitobans come in to this building and saying we want to have our voices heard. Couldn't have our voices heard on a referendum. Oh, no. No, no, couldn't have our voices heard there. So they came here, to the people's house, Mr. Speaker, to the people's house. And they were on the front of the steps of the Legislature. They were holding signs. Maybe the Attorney General—his office faces the front—maybe he poked his head out and saw a couple of signs, you know, moved the curtains or something and then saw some people and figured, oh, what are all those people down there for? Maybe he read the sign, you know, that said that people didn't want to have a PST increase. Maybe he didn't. Maybe he jumped on a bus and went as far away as he could, too. Maybe he got on a bus and got as far away from the Legislature as he wanted to as well. But he could've looked out the front.

And, you know, what he also could've done, could've gone down, talked to some of those people,

could've asked some of them and said, you know what, what brings hundreds of people in the summer to the Legislature to protest, Mr. Speaker? What could that be? What could that possibly be? But he didn't do that, because you know what he did? He made a tough decision. He made a tough decision to stay in his office—made a tough decision to get on a bus and go as far away as he possibly could—made a tough decision to go to a reception where maybe people were supportive of whatever it was that he was doing at that particular time, but not to go and talk to people—not to go and—well, and I—and actually, I wouldn't have wanted him to go and talk to people; I would've wanted him to go and listen to people. I would've wanted him to go and listen to people, because that's what it's about. That's what you get elected for.

Now they didn't listen to them when they went door to door in 2011. They didn't listen to them then, because those people would've been saying, we don't want to be having more taxes. That's what most Manitobans would've said. And they would've told them, oh, don't worry about it; we're not going to raise any more taxes. Don't worry about it. You're all okay here. You're okay here.

But they wouldn't go down and listen to people there, wouldn't talk to those people there who came to the Legislature here, Mr. Speaker. You know, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), he says, oh, well, you know, what would you do? What would you do?

Well, what is every other province in the country doing? You know, I don't understand what—*[interjection]* well, you know the minister of—Attorney General (Mr. Swan), right? That's his answer for everything. He might want to look around. He might want to look around and see what some of the other provinces are doing, and, you know, some of them actually have something called priorities. He wouldn't have to go that far. He could travel to Saskatchewan and talk to the people. Now, I'm trying to remember now. I don't read the news as closely as I used to. Did Brad Wall increase the PST rate in Saskatchewan?

An Honourable Member: No, he didn't.

Mr. Goertzen: Well, how did he do it? And—well, I guess the PST in Saskatchewan must be like 10 per cent, then, I suppose, right? Must be that. Must be much higher than—oh, no, it's actually 5 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

You know, the minister responsible for highways, the member for Thompson, says, oh, well, you know, there's no other way we could do it.

Saskatchewan's finding a way, and their PST is actually 5 per cent; it's less than what we have here. In fact, I did a, you know, casual survey, looked around at the other countries—or looked around the other provinces, sorry, Mr. Speaker. None of them. None of them raised the PST to match the program that the federal government is bringing forward. How did they do it?

Now, there's one difference. There's one difference, and I will acknowledge it, Mr. Speaker. But I want to be fair. I want to be fair. There's one difference between Manitoba and every other province. Well, we're the only one with an NDP government. That's the difference. That's the key difference. Every other province, in some fashion or the other, has been able to do these sorts of things without raising the PST.

And here's a funny thing for the government, Mr. Speaker. This will be difficult for them to understand, another tough thing, another tough decision. When you look at surveys—and there's been lots of them, and there might be more—80 per cent of Manitobans understand. Eighty per cent of Manitobans say that they don't think the increase of the PST was necessary—was necessary—80 per cent.

Now, what the member for Thompson—what the Minister of Infrastructure is saying is that those people don't know what they're talking about. They don't know what they're talking about. He told us to get on the bus. Well, what about the 80 per cent of Manitobans? I guess those 800-and-some-thousand Manitobans, he thinks they're fools. He thinks they don't understand anything. He thinks that he's smarter than them. Well, he's been a minister; oh, he must be very smart. Well, you know, I have a lot of faith in Manitobans. I have a lot of faith in those 80 per cent of Manitobans who have said in surveys, we think the government could have found a different way to do it other than raising the PST on us. We think the government should've followed the law. I have a lot of faith in those 80 per cent of Manitobans, even though the member for Thompson doesn't.

Now, he can rail away here in the Legislature, and he can make it sound like he's pontificating all wisely, Mr. Speaker, but, you know, there's a lot of wisdom out there in Manitoba as well. There's a lot of wisdom in the coffee shops of Manitoba. If you go

to a Tim Hortons, probably go to a Tim Hortons in Southdale and talk to some of the residents there, I bet you, you know, they'd have a different view. I'm sure the Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Ms. Oswald), if she would swagger into a Tim Hortons in Southdale and sit down with some of the 'reserenences' there and ask them about the PST, I'm pretty 'persure' that 80 per cent of them would say, we think you could've done it a different way; we don't think it was necessary. In fact, you said it wasn't necessary; you said it when you came to our door in 2011. That's what I think would happen.

Now, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton)—or he, you know, he can scream in the Legislature here, and he can yell in the Legislature here, but it doesn't change people's opinions out there because they get it. They understand. And you know why they understand, Mr. Speaker? Oh, sure, I mean, I heard the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), she says, oh, you know, lots of people take the bus, and all that kind of stuff. Lots of people make decisions.

You know where the tough decisions are made? They're not made at the Cabinet table of the NDP. That's not where the tough decisions are made.

An Honourable Member: How would you know?

Mr. Goertzen: That's not where they're made. Well, how will I know? The Minister of Finance says, how do I know? And I've seen the results. I've seen the results. You don't have to be sitting at the table when you see the legislation that they bring forward. That's how I know. Because I know that they had an option. They had an option between following the law and calling a referendum or not have following the law and introducing the PST. And I saw the results. I saw what they did.

* (16:40)

You can't hide from your actions, Mr. Speaker. You can't hide from your vote. And they won't be able to hide from their vote later on this afternoon. You can't hide from that. You know, you can't hide from the receipt that says 7 per cent to 8 per cent. You can't hide from that. You can't hide from the fact you didn't hold a referendum or the fact that your own officials in your own department told you, if you wanted to do—to follow the law, you had to call a referendum. You can't hide 'fro' that.

You know, you could make all sorts of speeches in here, and 36 NDP MLAs, they can be—give thunderous 'appraise' during a question period. You can do all that. You know, the echo of that applause

doesn't go two feet outside of this building. The echo of that applause doesn't reach two feet outside of the Legislature. And Manitobans don't hear that because Manitobans know. They know that they're paying more. They know that it's harder for them. They know that they're making the tough decisions, because where the tough decisions are made, Mr. Speaker, are in the homes, in the communities of people. Those tough decisions are made in the homes of our friends in the Filipino community, some of them who've been here in the—in our great province for longer than others, some who are new to Manitoba. Oh, they're tough decisions—tough decisions—as they try to, you know, start up a new life, try to find a way to make ends meet. Those are hard decisions. That's a tough decision.

I've talked to many new Filipino families, Mr. Speaker, some just recently. I wanted to talk to them about—[*interjection*] I hear the former minister—there's a few former ministers over there chirping that we haven't talked to them. Well, we have, and they tell us. They tell us that they're understanding. They're learning—they're learning—that this is a government that doesn't stand up for them, that this is a government that doesn't represent them because they know what it's like to try to start a new life in a province when you don't have much to start with. They know what it's like to—maybe have to take that bus all the time because you can't afford a car. They know what it's like to have to work a couple of jobs and try to make ends meet. That's a tough decision. That's a difficult decision.

That's not the decision this government made. This government was presented with the decision between whether or not they should follow the law or break the law, and they decided to break the law, Mr. Speaker. It's not the—it's not a right decision. It's not the—it's not a justified decision. It's not a moral decision. And it certainly isn't a tough decision. It should be the easiest decision to decide to follow the law.

And so we have compassion for those Manitobans, for those new Manitobans who are—come here to make a new life for themselves, Mr. Speaker, who want—who came to Canada because they want better for their children than they may have experienced in their life. That's who we have compassion for. That's who we are standing up for. That's why we've done what we've done on this bill.

We've given this government nine months to think about it, Mr. Speaker—nine months—to decide

whether or not they were going to stand up for the very people they said they would do that for in an election, or whether they'd throw them under the bus, to bring it back. That's the decision they have. That's a decision they're going to make, and, ultimately, it's the decision that they're going to have to live with and that they're going to have to justify.

I'm not going to justify it for them. I'll do the opposite. I'll do the opposite. I'm going to go and I'm going to tell all of their constituents exactly what these members did. Oh, we'll find a way to get the message. We'll make sure they know that when they had an opportunity to keep their word, follow the law, do the right thing, they chose not to. They took the tough decision of taking the money, Mr. Speaker.

And I think those new Canadians are going to understand. I think those new Canadians are going to understand because those Canadians expected something different. They expected something different, and I'd say they deserve something different, Mr. Speaker; absolutely, they deserve something different.

They didn't deserve to have the member for Riel (Ms. Melnick) reach into their pockets through voting for this bill and making it harder for them to be able to send their kids to a sporting event. They didn't deserve to have the member for Southdale (Ms. Selby) reach into their kitchen table and take money off that table so that they had to decide whether or not they could go on a vacation or they could buy groceries.

An Honourable Member: How about Seine River?

Mr. Goertzen: They didn't have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to make the decision when the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald) came and said, I need to take more money from you because I'm not willing to make the tough decision at the Cabinet table. They had no say in that. They had absolutely no say. They were powerless, they were voiceless, but we are their voice here today, just like they should have been their voice. They were elected in their own constituencies to be the voice for those new Canadians. And they were elected to be the voice for those Canadians who've been here their entire lives, who maybe have given their lives to service, who we know—we recognize service people when they come to the Legislature here. And we all give them a standing ovation, as we should, because they deserve it. They also deserve licence plates that show we can support them and the government won't support that either. But I digress, I digress.

But they deserve a voice. They deserve a voice. You know, they came here through their protests. They came here through their emails. They came here through their letters. They came through the committees, Mr. Speaker, thousands of them did in their own various ways. And then there's many people who wouldn't feel comfortable doing any of those things, and they're represented in the polls that we see that say 80 per cent disagree with the decision of this government. But in some way their voice has been heard.

Now, the question isn't whether their voice has been heard, the question is whether the government is listening, Mr. Speaker. Nine months, and if there was ever a demonstration that this government isn't listening or doesn't care or that it's arrogant, it's because of the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and what he did on the record—after nine months to hear that speech.

And the minister of Finance said to the media yesterday, oh, we take no pleasure in voting for this bill. Well, I saw a lot of pleasure from the minister of Finance. Oh, he went and trumpeted it. He went and trumpeted what a great decision it was. Minister of Finance tells the media, oh, this is terribly hard and we're not proud of it, Mr. Speaker, and the minister of Finance says it's one of the best things he's ever done—

An Honourable Member: Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr. Goertzen: Sorry, the Minister of Infrastructure stands up and says it's one of the best things he's ever done. Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, we will take the responsibility to let Manitobans know, we'll let them know what this government did. We'll let them know that when they were faced with the easy decision of following the law, they called it a tough decision to choose to break the law. We'll let them know, we'll let them know over the next couple years.

We'll let those Manitobans know, those new Canadians, my friends in the Filipino community, in the African community and many other communities, Mr. Speaker, we'll let them know. Because the member for Minto (Mr. Swan) won't let them know, and I know many of them many in his own community, and he won't let them know. He'll try to say, oh no, no, no, we had to do this. We had to do this, even though no other province did that. You know, it was so hard for me; it was so difficult for me. We'll let them know.

All they had to do was call a referendum—all they had to do was call a referendum, let people do something—this is going to shock the members—let them do something called vote, voting, Mr. Speaker. Now, I know we have been waiting for almost a year for the Morris by-election, so I think the whole concept of voting has been lost on the NDP government. But, you know, give them a vote. That's all we ask for, that's all we ask for. We'll let them know, we'll let the people know in those communities.

We're going to let them know and we're going to remind them that the Premier (Mr. Selinger) didn't even have the respect to come and listen to them at a committee, that he thought that was a tough decision whether or not he should come and listen. We're going to remind them, it wasn't a tough decision; that was the easy decision. He got on a bus and went as far away as he could.

We're going to remind them that the Premier could have walked down the front steps and talked to the people who were here, who gave up their evenings or their afternoons to come and rally at the Legislature, something most of the them said they would never have considered doing on any other issue. We'll remind them that the Premier didn't want to come out and talk to them, didn't mean enough to them to come and speak to them, we'll remind them.

And when they come to us, as they have in the thousands and said it's tough, it's hard for us, it's hard for us to make ends meet. We feel the pressure, we feel the pressure within our families to try to make ends meet. We feel that we don't have as much as we once did, we're struggling. We're going to remind them one of the reasons why is because this government didn't make the right decision. Oh, and I've heard members opposite say, and we heard it in question period, you know. Oh, what would you do, what would you change? *[interjection]*

Well, the Attorney General (Mr. Swan) knows. He knows already we would take away the vote tax. I commend him, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the message is finally getting through, maybe there's hope in our land when the Attorney General actually recognizes that, yes, we would take away the vote tax. We may have had a breakthrough. And, yes, we would—yes, we would—take away the vote tax, because if there's any saying that's symbolic, if there's anything that's symbolic about a government that's not willing to make tough decisions, it's the vote tax.

* (16:50)

The tough thing to do is go and ask for your own support for your own political party, Mr. Speaker; that's a tough thing to do. It's really tough to do when you've got the track record of this government; that's a tough thing to do. They turned around and did the easiest thing possible: We'll take their money right off your table, off the table of people in Dawson Trail. Good people in Dawson Trail who didn't deserve to have the member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lemieux) say, I'm going to take money off your table and out it into our political party. That was not a tough decision by the NDP; that was an easy decision by the NDP.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm an optimistic person, and it's not too late—it's not too late—we're going to vote on a number of bills this afternoon, and one of those bills will be Bill 20. And I started off my comments by saying I'm looking for one brave New Democrat, just one, you know. I know that wouldn't defeat the bill, but it would send a message. It would send a message that there was one person in the NDP who was willing to stand up for their word, who was willing to stand up for their constituents, that's it. The bill would still pass. You know, they still get all their money. They still get all their money, but is there one brave person? You know, I've heard the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) talk about, you know, how it's important to do the right thing. Will he be the one? Will he be the one?

What about the member for Southdale (Ms. Selby), will she be the one who stands up and says, I'm going to be there. I'm going to be there for your constituents. The member for Dawson Trail doesn't live far from me, you know, I consider him to be a decent fellow. Will he be the one who stands up for the people in Lorette and Ste. Anne and Landmark and say, I'm going to stand up for you. Will he be that one? Well, we're going to find out very soon, Mr. Speaker. What about the member for Southdale, will she be the one who will say, you know, I didn't campaign on raising the PST. I didn't campaign on that. Will she be the one who stands up and does it?

You know, we talk about the member for Rossmere (Ms. Braun). The member for Rossmere who earlier today talked as though she was, you know, 'indignified' by something that had happened. She was so outraged, you know, she talked about this sort of moral indignation. Well, will she stand up? Good people in Rossmere, I've had the opportunity to talk to them recently at how upset they are about the PST. Will she stand up? Will she be the one?

I'm not looking for the whole caucus, I'm not looking for the whole Cabinet, I'm not looking for five, I'm not looking for 10. I'm just looking for one New Democrat—one New Democrat—because I can tell you there'll be members of this caucus, every one of the members of this caucus will stand up for Manitobans. All I want to know is there one New Democrat who has a shred of integrity who will vote against Bill 20, Mr. Speaker?

House Business

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Government House Leader, on House business.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): On House business, I'd like to announce the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, December 16, 2013, at 2 p.m., to consider the annual report of the Children's Advocate for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2013.

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs will meet on Monday, December the 16th, 2013, at 2 p.m., to consider the annual report of the Children's Advocate for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2013.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now, is there further debate on Bill 27?

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I have to say I've never seen a bill about buses have so much interesting comments in it, and it really is quite fascinating that we can have such enthusiasm about buses when we stand in this Legislature and speak.

And one of the things that really did come to my mind when we did have committee hearings in the Legislature about the PST hike, there were a lot of people that came on buses to present that night. There were a lot of people that didn't have a lot of money. There were some seniors—actually, a lot of seniors. There were some veterans that had been wounded in the war. There were working poor. There were people representing Winnipeg Harvest. A lot of them came on buses because they couldn't afford much else in their lives. A lot of them were talking about the difficult decisions they have to make in managing their money every day, and some of them can't afford insurance. Some of them couldn't afford insurance on cars, and a lot of them, then, are stuck having to take buses because they can't even afford to carry on in their ordinary lives

because this NDP money is taking away disposable income that they had.

So a lot of them were stuck having to take a bus, and even though some of those people were here late at night, including this one young man who had cancer, and this man who had cancer was a very young man. He was so upset by the PST hike that he did come to this Legislature, got out of his sick bed so that he could be here, hoping that this NDP government would listen to him. I have never in my whole life seen somebody so upset about something who had cancer, that got out of a bed and hoped he could convince this government—convince this government to do the right thing—to do the right thing and stop the PST hike.

But, Mr. Speaker, they threw all of these presenters—over a hundred presenters, under that bus. There were some veterans there, and you know, when we had veterans in the gallery today, there were a lot of people that spoke about democracy. And, in fact, we just heard the bad news this afternoon about Nelson Mandela, and I would note that the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Selinger) was making comments on Twitter this afternoon about what a wonderful man Nelson Mandela was and how he fought for democracy. And yet what we have with this government and this Premier of Manitoba, who's got the gall to make those statements on Twitter about some other, you know, government someplace else, when right under his own nose he didn't even carry out a democratic decision to actually call the referendum and keep the law here. How is that democratic? How is it democratic to go door to door in the last election and maybe some of the volunteers went on buses and maybe some of the NDP candidates went on buses, and if they're going door to door and—[interjection]

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a point of order.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, there's been a lot of time taken up, starting with the very loud and lengthy speech from the MLA for Thompson, and what's happened is that we have, you know, quite a number of bills at third reading which we haven't had a chance to speak on. And, you know, I would suggest that it would be appropriate, you know, notwithstanding the agreement that we've got, and the agreement has been changed already over Bill 2, I would ask that there be leave so that we could continue to speak on these bills and then, you know,

have the vote in sequence. So perhaps you could ask members if there would be such leave.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to permit the continued debate on the bills that are on the Order Paper that require concurrence and third reading?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no. Leave has been denied.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Charleswood, to continue with her comments.

Mrs. Driedger: Well, thank you—thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, when—when we saw the NDP in the last election maybe taking buses and going door to door to promise Manitobans they weren't going to raise the PST hike, and then what did we see them do? Within a short period of time after that, they raised taxes in Manitoba and, in fact, raised taxes by the highest amount in a quarter of a century. How is that respecting democracy?

And, you know, to have the Premier (Mr. Selinger) talking about Nelson Mandela and how Nelson Mandela was so important to democracy, it just really is quite offensive to see his own behaviour in this province when he, in fact, didn't respect democracy, didn't respect the rule of law, and isn't respecting what the people of Manitoba want, and that was no PST hike in Manitoba. People have said that over and over, and this government is running around everywhere telling people how much they're listening to people and how much of a hard decision they have. My colleague from Steinbach, I think pointed out very eloquently that it wasn't much of a hard decision for the lazy NDP government.

* (17:00)

All they did was take people in Manitoba and throw them under the bus, because they never truly, honestly listened to people. It's just a lot of empty rhetoric, a lot of empty spin from a government that is not keeping its word to Manitobans. And you can bet, like that lady whose letter I read today, she said—and she was a senior, and she was—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please.

The time being 5 p.m., in accordance with item 15 of the sessional order, I must interrupt the

proceedings and take steps necessary to conclude concurrence and third readings for the bills that were reinstated from the second session.

In situations where the concurrence and third reading motions have already been moved, the question will be put without further debate or amendment. The bills that fall into this category are Bill 20, The Manitoba Building and Renewal Funding and Fiscal Management Act (Various Acts Amended); and Bill 27, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service).

For the reinstated bills still needing the concurrence and third reading motions to be moved, the sessional orders specify the Speaker will allow the motion to be moved with the question then be put without debate or amendment. The bills that fall into this category include: Bill 6, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Flexible Short-Term Regulation of Vehicle Weights and Dimensions); Bill 7, The Planning Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Affordable Housing); Bill 36, The Public Guardian and Trustee Act; Bill 38, The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act; Bill 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhanced Safety Regulation of Heavy Motor Vehicles); Bill 42, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhancing Passenger Safety); Bill 43, The Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation Act and Liquor and Gaming Control Act; Bill 45, The Competitive Drug Pricing Act (Various Acts Amended); Bill 46, The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2013; and Bill 47, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013.

We shall now proceed to the completion and concurrence of third reading for the reinstated bills.

**Bill 6—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act
(Flexible Short-Term Regulation of
Vehicle Weights and Dimensions)**

Mr. Speaker: Starting with Bill 6, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Flexible Short-Term Regulation of Vehicle Weights and Dimensions), is it the—

The honourable Government House Leader—honourable Minister of Justice.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), that Bill 6, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Flexible Short-Term Regulation of Vehicle Weights and Dimensions); Loi modifiant le

Code de la route (réglementation provisoire des poids et des dimensions des véhicules), reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On division.

**Bill 7—The Planning Amendment and
City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act
(Affordable Housing)**

Mr. Speaker: Now, proceed to call Bill 7, the planning amendment and City of Winnipeg charter amendment, affordable housing.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Struthers), that Bill 7, The Planning Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Affordable Housing); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg (logement abordable), reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

Order, please. I'm—one hour allocated for the ringing of the division bells has expired, and I'm instructing that they be turned off.

Now proceed to the vote. And the question before the House is Bill 7, The Planning Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Affordable Housing).

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Gerrard, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 33, Nays 17.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

**DEBATE ON CONCURRENCE
AND THIRD READING**

**Bill 20—The Manitoba Building and Renewal
Funding and Fiscal Management Act
(Various Acts Amended)**

Mr. Speaker: Now we'll proceed to call, under concurrence and third readings, of Bill 20, The Manitoba Building and Renewal Funding and Fiscal Management Act (Various Acts Amended).

All those in favour of the motion will—is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

Order, please. The one-hour allocation for the ringing of the division bells has expired, and I'm instructing that they be turned off and we'll now proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 20, The Manitoba Building and Renewal Funding and Fiscal Management Act (Various Acts Amended).

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Ashton, Bjornson, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Kostyshyn, Lemieux,

Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

* (19:10)

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 31, Nays 18.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS

(Continued)

**Bill 27—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act
(Charter Bus Service)**

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call Bill 27 for concurrence and third reading, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service).

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (20:10)

Order, please. The one-hour allocation for the ringing of the division bells has expired, and I'm

instructing that they be turned off. We'll now proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 27, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service).

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Ashton, Bjornson, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Gerrard, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 32, Nays 17.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Bill 36—The Public Guardian and Trustee Act

Mr. Speaker: We'll now call bill number—for concurrence and third reading, Bill 36, The Public Guardian and Trustee Act.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Ms. Selby), that Bill 36, The Public Guardian and Trustee Act; Loi sur le tuteur et curateur public, reported from the Standing Committee on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify it by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Declare the motion carried.

We'll now—

An Honourable Member: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On—the honourable—it's already been declared.

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

Mr. Speaker: The—we'll now proceed to call Bill 38, The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Struthers), that Bill 38, The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act; Loi sur les infractions provinciales et Loi sur l'application des règlements municipaux, as amended and reported from the Standing on Justice, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

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

Bill 41—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhanced Safety Regulation of Heavy Motor Vehicles)

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to call for concurrence and third reading, Bill 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhanced Safety Regulation of Heavy Motor Vehicles).

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton), that Bill 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhanced Safety Regulation of Heavy Motor Vehicles); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité accrue liée aux véhicules automobiles lourds), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify it by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division.

**Bill 42—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act
(Enhancing Passenger Safety)**

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to call for concurrence and third reading of Bill 42, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhancing Passenger Safety).

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton), that Bill 42, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhancing Passenger Safety); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité accrue des passagers), reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

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

**Bill 43—The Manitoba Liquor and
Lotteries Corporation Act and Liquor and
Gaming Control Act**

Mr. Speaker: Now proceed to call for concurrence and third reading of Bill 43, The Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation Act and Liquor and Gaming Control Act.

* (20:20)

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Chomiak), that Bill 43, The Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation Act and Liquor and Gaming Control Act; Loi sur la Société manitobaine des alcools et des loteries et Loi sur la réglementation des alcools et des jeux, reported from the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): On division.

Mr. Speaker: We'll record it as on division.

**Bill 45—The Competitive Drug Pricing Act
(Various Acts Amended)**

Mr. Speaker: Now, proceed to call for concurrence and third reading Bill 45, The Competitive Drug Pricing Act (Various Acts Amended).

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Ms. Selby), that Bill 45, The Competitive Drug Pricing Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur les médicaments à prix concurrentiel (modifications de diverses lois), 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.

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

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

Mr. Speaker: We'll now proceed to call, for concurrence and third reading, Bill 46, The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2013.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Howard), that Bill 46, The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2013; Loi corrective de 2013, reported from the Standing Committee on Human Resources and subsequently amended, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

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

Bill 47—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013

Mr. Speaker: We will now proceed to call Bill 47.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that Bill 47, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2013 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (21:20)

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

The one-hour allocation for the ringing of the division bells has expired, and I am instructing that they be turned off and we'll now proceed to the vote.

The question before the House is concurrence and third reading of Bill 47, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013.

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Allum, Ashton, Bjornson, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nays

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 31, Nays 18.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Speaker: I believe that concludes the concurrence and third readings and that the House can now prepare for royal assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

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

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

Mr. Speaker: Your Honour:

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

* (21:30)

Clerk Assistant (Mr. Claude Michaud):

Bill 2 – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Safety of Workers in Highway Construction Zones); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité des travailleurs dans les zones de construction)

Bill 4 – The Personal Health Information Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les renseignements médicaux personnels

Bill 5 – The New Home Warranty Act; Loi sur la garantie des maisons neuves

Bill 6 – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Flexible Short-Term Regulation of Vehicle Weights and Dimensions); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (réglementation provisoire des poids et des dimensions des véhicules)

Bill 7 – The Planning Amendment and City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment Act (Affordable Housing); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg (logement abordable)

Bill 8 – The Provincial Court Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale

Bill 9 – The Teachers' Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Association des enseignants du Manitoba

Bill 11 – The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les procédures contre la Couronne

Bill 12 – The Community Schools Act; Loi sur les écoles communautaires

Bill 13 – The Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Fund Act; Loi sur le Fonds de mise en valeur du poisson et de la faune

Bill 14 – The Education Administration Amendment and Public Schools Amendment Act (Parent Groups for Schools); Loi modifiant la Loi sur

l'administration scolaire et la Loi sur les écoles publiques (groupes de parents œuvrant en milieu scolaire)

Bill 15 – The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Minimum Wage Protection for Employees with Disabilities); Loi modifiant le Code des normes d'emploi (protection du salaire minimum pour les employés ayant des incapacités)

Bill 16 – The Department of Justice Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le ministère de la Justice

Bill 17 – The Consumer Protection Amendment and Business Practices Amendment Act (Motor Vehicle Advertising and Information Disclosure and Other Amendments); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur et la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales (publicité et communication de renseignements visant les véhicules automobiles et autres modifications)

Bill 19 – The Waste Reduction and Prevention Amendment and Environment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réduction du volume et de la production des déchets et la Loi sur l'environnement

Bill 20 – The Manitoba Building and Renewal Funding and Fiscal Management Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur le financement du renouvellement des infrastructures et la gestion financière (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)

Bill 22 – The Planning Amendment Act (Subdivision Approval); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (approbation de lotissements)

Bill 24 – The Endangered Species Amendment Act (Ecosystem Protection and Miscellaneous Amendments); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les espèces en voie de disparition (protection des écosystèmes et diverses modifications)

Bill 25 – The Statutory Publications Modernization Act; Loi sur la modernisation du mode de diffusion des publications officielles

Bill 26 – The Accessibility for Manitobans Act; Loi sur l'accessibilité pour les Manitobains

Bill 27 – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Charter Bus Service); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (services d'autobus nolisés)

Bill 28 – The Health Services Insurance Amendment and Hospitals Amendment Act (Admitting Privileges); Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie et la Loi sur les hôpitaux (privilèges d'admission)

Bill 29 – The Land Surveyors and Related Amendments Act; Loi sur les arpenteurs-géomètres et modifications connexes

Bill 30 – The Forest Health Protection Amendment Act (Heritage Trees); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de la santé des forêts (arbres remarquables)

Bill 35 – The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Compliance and Enforcement Measures); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur (observation et exécution)

Bill 36 – The Public Guardian and Trustee Act; Loi sur le tuteur et curateur public

Bill 38 – The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act; Loi sur les infractions provinciales et Loi sur l'application des règlements municipaux

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)

Bill 41 – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhanced Safety Regulation of Heavy Motor Vehicles); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité accrue liée aux véhicules automobiles lourds)

Bill 42 – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Enhancing Passenger Safety); Loi modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité accrue des passagers)

Bill 43 – The Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation Act and Liquor and Gaming Control Act; Loi sur la Société manitobaine des alcools et des loteries et Loi sur la réglementation des alcools et des jeux

Bill 44 – The International Education Act; Loi sur l'éducation internationale

Bill 45 – The Competitive Drug Pricing Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur les médicaments à prix concurrentiel (modifications de diverses lois)

Bill 46 – The Statutes Correction and Minor Amendments Act, 2013; Loi corrective de 2013

Bill 47 – The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2013 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

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

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

* (21:40)

Mr. Speaker: Please be seated.

Prior to the adjournment, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very merry Christmas, and may you enjoy peace, health and happiness in 2014, and please come back safe to us in the springtime.

And the hour being past 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until March the 6th, or call of the Speaker.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 5, 2013

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